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**Zdeněk Urbánek and His  
Controversial Translation of  
*Hamlet***

Master's Diploma Thesis

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*I declare that I have worked on this thesis independently,  
using only the primary and secondary sources listed in the bibliography.*

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Author's signature

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# 1. Introduction

The 20<sup>th</sup> century noted several periods of time when the Czech translations of Shakespeare's plays meant a great turning point for the Czech translating studies and the Czech theatre. One of the periods was the 1960s of which the most controversial and influential translations were those by Zdeněk Urbánek. In the first chapter of my thesis I would like to present the persona of Zdeněk Urbánek, and the way the events of his life and the political and social situation influenced him as a person as well as a writer and translator.

Zdeněk Urbánek (1917-2008), a writer, journalist, dramatist and translator, although without a completed academic degree, started translating from English, German and other languages as a result of his passion for foreign (especially Anglo-Saxon) literature and his understanding of the need to translate the works into Czech and make them available to Czech readers and audiences. His interest in Shakespeare and his work will be discussed in the following chapters as well as his view of the way in which translating the Renaissance Shakespearean language into 20-century Czech is possible. By this attempt he earned much criticism by numerous reviewers, theoreticians and other translators in the 1960s, who attacked his non-conventional translation of *Hamlet*. They held critical dialogues on the release of the new translation of *Hamlet* for the performance at the National Theatre in Prague in 1959. The dispute between the theoreticians Alois Bejblík, Milan Lukeš and Zdeněk Urbánek was published in the *Divadlo* magazine in 1960 and a conference was summoned on translating drama afterwards. On this occasion Urbánek's translation of *Hamlet* was discussed mainly in order to criticize the style, which seemed unacceptable at that time, in public by the then Czech translation organization. Bejblík, Lukeš and other translators criticized Urbánek's

plain style, deprived of Shakespearean poetry, and pointed out the derailed thematic, stylistic and expressive interpretation. My focus will be on the different views of interpretation of some of the characters discussed by Bejblík and Urbánek – Hamlet and Fortinbras.

The above mentioned discussion, together with the analyses of the available critical reviews, which were provoked by the performance of *Hamlet* in the time of its opening, will serve as the introduction to the actual analysis of Zdeněk Urbánek's translation of *Hamlet*. This introductory process may help to investigate and demonstrate the impact the “new” language had on the audience of the 1960s. It may also serve to help better understand the contradictory views translation theoreticians had on translating Shakespeare's plays for theatre performances at that time in comparison with the new tendencies of the directors, dramaturgists and actors who wanted to treat Shakespeare in a different way than before.

In the main part of my thesis I want to proceed with the analysis of the play *Hamlet*, translated by several chosen translators. The essential focus will be on the way language is used for different interpretations of individual characters of the play. For this I would like to make use of the theoretical discussion between Bejblík, Lukeš and Urbánek and show the examples of several translators' interpretations of the characters of Hamlet and Fortinbras, supported with my own practical analysis. I will compare the translations made by Zdeněk Urbánek in 1959, an earlier one by his predecessor Erik Adolf Saudek in 1941, and a later one by his successor Břetislav Hodek in 1970s, in order to find the possible common features, or more likely the differences that marked the new era of translation the most. I will especially focus on the contradictory views of the character of Hamlet as either a resolute or an emotional man, and of Fortinbras as

either a fastidious or a noble man, held by the different personalities of Czech translatology in the 1960s.

In spite of all the criticism and disapproval Urbánek's innovative way of translating drama aroused a new wave of translation in the former Czechoslovakia, gave way to substituting archaic language with a more contemporary one in translations of Shakespeare's plays, and inspired Urbánek's successors to start translating in a new way of updating the Shakespearean style to a modern and for contemporary people more comprehensible language.

## 2. Zdeněk Urbánek – his life and work

### 2.1. Life and influences (12<sup>th</sup> October 1917 – 12<sup>th</sup> June 2008)

Zdeněk Urbánek was born into a Protestant family on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 1917 in Prague. After four-year studies at the Academic Grammar School (Akademické gymnasium) in Prague he continued studying at the Business Academy, from which he graduated with the School-leaving Certificate in 1938. In 1939 he started studying Czech and English philology at the Faculty of Arts at Charles University. Unfortunately, in the same year, soon after that, universities in the country were closed by the Nazis, and Urbánek had to start work as a journalist for *Evropský literární klub* and *Sfinx* publishing houses. He managed to avoid the recruitment to the army by working at his father's farm as a carter during the Second World War. During the war he was sheltering several Jewish girls, an action for which he was honoured in Israel by the medal *Chasid Umot HaOlam* ("Righteous Among The Nations") in 1993.

When the war ended, Urbánek worked for the newspaper *Svobodné slovo* and later at the Ministry of Information, thanks to his friendship with the poet František Halas, who gave him his recommendation. Then he became a journalist for the independent newspaper *Národní osvobození* and in 1949-1957 he was employed by *Čs. státní film* as an editor. Later he was promoted to the post of a Secretary of dramaturgy at the Art Council, which was approving screenplays. From 1959, after a recovery from tuberculosis, Urbánek earned his living by translating mainly English and American literature. He also contributed to the journal *Divadlo* in the 1960s.

In 1968-1969 Zdeněk Urbánek was doing research at *All Souls College* of Oxford University for six months. A year before that, in 1967, he took part in the forth congress of *Svaz čs. spisovatelů* (the Union of Czechoslovak writers), which he was a member of,

together with other reputable Czech writers, such as Ludvík Vaculík, Milan Kundera, Ivan Klíma, or Pavel Kohout, who also participated and made their speeches at the congress. They criticized the then political system, its inadequate use of power, its control over the cultural life and the censorship of the written word in Czechoslovakia. After the congress the participants were subjected to the disciplinary control by the Communist party. In the 1970s, during the so called “normalization”, Urbánek became engaged in the political and cultural dissent, collaborating with Václav Havel, who was one of his closest friends, Jan Patočka, Zdeněk Mlynář, Jiří Hájek, Pavel Kohout and others. Together with them Urbánek initiated and signed *Charta 77*, as one of the first signatories, the informal Czechoslovak civil initiative, which criticized the “political and state authorities” for violating human and civil rights. From that time on Urbánek started to be politically fully persecuted and could publish neither his own work nor his translations. The only way his translations could be circulated was by “samizdat” (self-publishing) or by other people, who helped him publish his translations under their names, as for example Jarmila Emmerová, Zdeněk Kirschner, Eva Kondrysová and Josef Schwarz. Urbánek did not get a chance to break the barriers of political persecution until 1989, when the Communism in Czechoslovakia broke down.

In 1989-1990 Urbánek made several study journeys to the USA and visited several different universities. In 1990 he habilitated in dramaturgy at AMU (the Academy of Performing Arts) in Prague and became the Rector of the Academy a year later. In 1992 he resigned from this post because of the obsolete policies, prevailing at the Academy from the times of Communist leadership, which he did not agree with. In 1991 Urbánek was awarded the *T. G. Masaryk Order* of the 3<sup>rd</sup> class for the merit of the development of democracy, humanity and human rights. In 1993 he received the Israeli

medal *Chasid Umot HaOlam* (“Righteous Among The Nations”) and at the same time he officially became an honorary citizen of Israel for the help to Jewish people in the times of the Holocaust.

On 12<sup>th</sup> June 2008 Zdeněk Urbánek died after a short illness at the age of ninety years. Until the end of his life he remained socially active, did not stop writing and collecting his work, and managed to publish the memoirs of his life and primarily of significant people he had met.

## 2.2. Work – historical and social perspective

Urbánek began to be active in the field of literature in 1936, when he started contributing to *Studentský časopis*. He also published his essays and articles in the magazines *Panorama*, *Kritický měsíčník*, *List mladých*, the newspapers *Svobodné slovo*, *Národní osvobození*, *České slovo*, *Svobodné noviny*, and literary and theatre magazines *Divadlo*, *Tvář*, *Světová literatura* and *Literární noviny*. Occasionally, he published articles in foreign magazines in Munich, London and Rome. During the times of the prohibition of Urbánek’s work, his articles were published in “samizdat” (self-publishing) magazines, such as *O divadle* and *Obsah* (1983–89), and in the collection *Hodina naděje* [The hour of hope]. After 1989 he could again freely contribute to newspapers and magazines, such as *Literární noviny*, *Lidové noviny* (where he ran his own column *Diář*, 1990–92), *Židovské ročenky*, *Fragment K* (Bratislava), and *Die Verwandlung. Věstník Společnosti Franze Kafky*.

Zdeněk Urbánek began to be active as a writer by the end of the 1930s, when he started thinking about his generation and its main focus – the awareness of chaos, feelings of despair and insecurity in the world devoid of values. In his work Urbánek

was trying to capture the existential and artistic state of his time, and to create a new myth of mankind, which could be freed from its social functions and shown just in its pure humanity. These are the main themes of Urbánek's essay *Člověk v mladé poezii* [The human in young poetry] (1940), which was a reaction against *Jarní almanach básnický 1940* [The spring almanac of poetry], which appeared as a literary manifesto of young authors around Kamil Bednář. They wanted to express their views of the state of young people and the place young authors were occupying at that time. They were asking themselves about the fact of what had happened to the attitudes of young generation of writers and why these young people were so "passive" and "timorously quiet", as Bednář as the initiator of the group put it. Urbánek reacted to and shifted Bednář's main idea of the necessary future state of man as the "naked man", freed from social bounds and functions, and in his paper he talks about the "new man", who should resist the progress of civilization. Urbánek was aware of the imperfections the group around Bednář were suffering from. As the most essential issue which deserved the most attention Urbánek considered to be the lack of theoreticians who should start writing theoretical articles and programme papers instead of poets. In his paper, Urbánek tries to get to the core of the term "poetry" and its functions. According to him, poetry should primarily be concerned with the idea of "humanity", and understanding the humanity, which has the role as the criterion for everything. After publishing these articles Urbánek became involved and his name often appeared, either praised or doomed, in the discussions in the *Kritický měsíčník* magazine.

Urbánek's philosophy of the place "humanity", authors and poets had in the world, especially in the world of literature at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, is expressed in Urbánek's first book, *Jitřenka smutku* [The morning star of sadness],

which was published in 1939 as a collection of lyrical, mainly subjective prose. The author endorses the style of Vladislav Vančura, while describing the feelings of downheartedness and aching distress. In 1940 Urbánek published a rather epic work *Úžeh tmou* [A sunstroke from darkness], which is a collection of prosaic “dreams, studies and stories”. The short stories in the book are symbolically simplified and Urbánek is trying to say by them that our lives are going nowhere, they are without stories, and we are hurt by the falseness of words. One should choose silence in case words are not sufficient. Though, in desperate times one tries to break through with the power of words, which should be full and significant. Under the influence of the story *Florian a mlčení* [Florian and the silence] from *Úžeh tmou*, Urbánek wrote, together with the poet Jiří Orten, a four-act play *Blahoslavení tiší* [Blessed are the silent]. At the turn of the 1930s and the 1940s Urbánek also attempted to write a novel. Its title was *Příběh bledého Dominika* [A story of the pale Dominik] (1941) and the main character of the novel was again a man, confused and exacerbated by the world he was wandering through, which was full of falsehood. Through the hero of the book Urbánek expresses feelings of chaos and existential insecurity. This more extensive piece of work showed the difficulties of the author’s method as well as of the artistic programme of his generation. Urbánek maintains the continuity of this attitude and style in his following short-story book *Životy a svědomí* [Lives and conscience] (1945), which decreased in figurativeness and the narrator changed, having ceased using the exalted exclamations and professed discourse. The second novel of this author was *Cestou za Quijotem* [On the way to Quijote] (1949), which introduced a new hero – young Cervantes: an individual, who decides for the life in this mundane world in spite of the treason and disappointment he experienced. The novel is an allegory again, although the history

gave the story more real background.

In the 1950s the group around Kamil Bednář found much in common with the members of the art and literary formation *Skupina 42* [Group 42]. Urbánek was influenced by this situation and changed his poetical style of writing into an authentic diary style. This new style of his includes story-telling, which is based on memories and these memoirs move over to the fiction again, as well as to the theoretical essays, especially in the places where the topics of the texts are literature and theatre. Zdeněk Urbánek never published these works until the Revolution in 1989. He, however, continued writing and collecting his thoughts and essays and preparing their final versions for decades to be published one day. The first texts were published in 1992 under the title *Ztracená země* [The lost country], in 1993 as *Zvláštní případy* [Special cases], and in 1993 as *Domy plné událostí* [Houses full of events]. In 1989 Urbánek published the first volume of *Stvořitelé světa* [Creators of the world] in Toronto and in 1995 in the Czech Republic. In 1996 was published the second volume *Stvořitelé světa pokračují* [Creators of the world continue] and in 1997 the third and the last volume *Stvořitelé světa. Díl třetí* [Creators of the world. Volume three]. These works are dedicated to significant people whom Urbánek met in his life and who influence him, his thinking and convictions the most. In the preface Urbánek clarifies his choice of the word “stvořitelé” [creators] as the term for all the important people, who appeared in his life and left a great mark there. Urbánek believes that these people are the ones who make the world around his look the way it does. Another reason for this choice was that Urbánek, as a non-believer, views *his friends* and *his family* as “creators” of the world around, not the traditionally acknowledged Creator – God.

From 1969 to 1989 Urbánek’s work was prohibited to be published. However,

apart from his notes, memoirs and columns, he continued his work on translations of American and British literature of the twentieth century, which he started in the 1950s. The only difference was that from 1969 the translations were published under other people's names as has been mentioned earlier in this thesis. Urbánek translated works written by James Joyce, Walt Whitman, Eugene O'Neill, T. S. Eliot, William Saroyan, John Galsworthy, William Faulkner, Charles Dickens, Theodore Dreiser, Francis Scott Fitzgerald, Henry James, Mark Twain, Irving Stone and other British and American authors. From the 1950s to the 1980s Zdeněk Urbánek was particularly working on translations of William Shakespeare's plays, which will be given the main focus further on this thesis.

## 3. Urbánek's translations of Shakespeare's plays

### 3.1 Introduction

#### 3.1.1. Translations and their theatre performances

Zdeněk Urbánek started translating Shakespeare's plays and thus making his living as a freelance man in 1959 after gaining a vast experience in translating works by British and American writers. Altogether he also translated six plays written by William Shakespeare. Having had a lot of practice in translating fiction, non-fiction and poetry, although hardly any in translating theatre plays, Urbánek got an offer by the director Jaromír Pleskot and his co-workers, the director of drama, Otomar Krejča, and Karel Kraus, the dramaturge, to translate William Shakespeare's tragedy *Hamlet* for the National Theatre in Prague, which was finished and published in 1959 under the Czech title *Tragický příběh dánského prince Hamleta* [The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark] at Československý spisovatel publishing house. The play was directed by Jaromír Pleskot and performed in the year of its publishing. The main part was acted by Radovan Lukavský. The translation for this performance aroused a lot of criticism among Czech translators, theatre reviewers and theoreticians. Discussions were held in scholarly as well as public magazines and newspapers and this particular translation eventually meant the beginning of a new wave in the field of drama translation in Czech. The main part of this thesis will be dedicated to this play and its translation by Zdeněk Urbánek in comparison to other translators' views, theories and practical work.

In November 1971 *Hamlet* in Urbánek's translation was also performed at Slezské divadlo Zdeňka Nejedlého in Opava, in May 1974 at Divadlo Vítězslava Nezvala in Karlovy Vary, and in November 1975 at Divadlo bratří Mrštíků in Brno with

the title *Tragický příběh dánského prince Hamleta* [The tragic story of the Danish prince Hamlet].

At the beginning of the 1960s Urbánek finished a translation of Shakespeare's tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*, which was published at Dilia in 1961 and at Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury a umění in 1964. The translation, which Urbánek altered to several versions according to the requirements of different directors, was used for the theatre performances in Hradec Králové and Varnsdorf in the early 1960s. Although Urbánek was translating the play also for the performance at the National Theatre in Prague, which was eventually directed by Otomar Krejča, he was not aware of another translator Josef Topol, working on the play at the same time. Thus in 1963 Topol's translation instead of Urbánek's was chosen to be used for the play at the National Theatre in Prague. In the 1970s there were performances of *Romeo and Juliet* in Urbánek's translation in Prague at Divadlo Jiřího Wolkerá (première in March 1972) and in Olomouc at Státní divadlo Oldřicha Stibora (opening night in March 1976).

In 1962 Urbánek translated Shakespeare's historical play *Richard III.*, which was published at Dilia publishing house. The translation was used for the performance at Divadlo E.F. Buriana in Prague, with the opening night in August 1962.

In 1967 a tragedy *Julius Caesar* was translated and published at Dilia, although Urbánek's translation was not used for a theatre performance until November 1992, when there was a première of *Julius Caesar* in Urbánek's translation at Jihočeské divadlo České Budějovice.

In February 1972 Urbánek's translation of *Richard II.* was used for the production in Prague at Městská divadla pražská, and later in 1976 was published at Dilia.

In May 1976 the translation of another historical play *Henry IV* was used for the performance called *Falstaff a princ Jindra* [Falstaff and Prince Henry] in Prague's Divadlo E. F. Buriana. In 1981 the translation of the first part and in 1982 the second part of *Henry IV* were published in the way of "self-publishing" under the title *Jindřich IV*.

### 3.1.2. General characteristics of Urbánek's translations of Shakespeare

There are several ways Urbánek's translating can be viewed. One is the kind of stylistics, which he, together with the lexical choice, tried to update in contrast with some of his contemporaries or predecessors. Another way of viewing the style is the translator's understanding and interpretation of the play, its characters and the plot.

In general, Urbánek's way of translating Shakespeare meant a great step forward in the area of Czech drama translation in the 1960s, starting with his translation of *Hamlet* in 1959. Until that time Czech theatres opened Shakespeare's plays translated mainly by such translators as Josef Václav Sládek (from the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century to the 1930s), Bohumil Štěpánek (from the 1920s to the 1930s) or Erik Adolf Saudek (from the late 1930s to the early 1960s). Sládek's translation was honoured as the academic, historical translation, which tried to be as true to the original as possible. From the view of today's translation criticism Sládek preferred using the literal way of translation and even added words, lines or whole paragraphs. This seems to have been in an effort to bring Shakespeare's words and thoughts closer to readers or audience and help them understand the meaning better. However, he did not only hesitate to add his own interpretation in the form of explanatory words or parts of the text, but also to

substitute the expressions which he considered sounding harsh for more lyrical words. Sládek intended to create a beautiful language in the places of Shakespeare's sometimes ordinary, sometimes even expressive text. On the other hand, Bohumil Štěpánek, as a representative of the younger generation, presented a language, however poorer in a poetical sense, though closer to the public, informal language. He stopped using archaisms and refused adorning Shakespeare's sometimes rough language. At the beginning of the Second World War Erik Adolf Saudek came with a more modern, lyrical text, which had to be published under the cover name of Aloys Skoumal due to the Jewish restrictions during the World War. His translations have come to stay as standardized "Saudek" translations of Shakespeare for Saudek's as well as for the following generations. Many Czech people, theatre lovers, translators, and even theoreticians, got used to Saudek's highly conventionalized language, and some of his translated verses got embedded in people's minds, having been used at theatre performances for many years and quoted in Czech Shakespearean texts. In the 1940s and 1950s, in spite of the language having rather baroque tendencies, mainly Saudek's translations were used on the Czech stage.

Zdeněk Urbánek's name appeared under the translation of *Hamlet* at the very end of the 1950s. It was publicly considered as having the sound of a too simple, dry and factual language. Czech audiences had a difficulty to come to accept the new language the translator had offered to them. This was not the Shakespeare they had known. But what was "their" Shakespeare really? What was his language like? How did *his* generation perceive and react on the language of his plays? These were the questions Urbánek was asking himself as well as the audience, theoreticians, and other Shakespeare scholars through his own translations or other writings. The important

issue for Zdeněk Urbánek, as he mentions in his memoirs, was the fact that Shakespeare was a modern person, thinking in an up-to-date way, enunciating the problems of his generation by the modern language of his day. Urbánek's concept was later supported by the thoughts of the Polish theoretician, Jan Kott, who published a book of Shakespearean essays *Szkice o Szekspirze* in several languages, among others in Czech as *Shakespearovské črty* (1964) and in English as *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*. "Contemporaneity" was the key word in Urbánek's understanding Shakespeare, his world and his language. Urbánek often emphasizes the idea of "Shakespearovy neodbytně trvalé či znovu a znovu objevované aktuálnosti" [Shakespeare's persistently continuing or again and again discovered topicality] (Urbánek, 1995) and tries to search for the cause of this topicality in Shakespeare's work as well as in the reactions to Urbánek's translations and the following theatre premières. He finds the answer to this question in Kott's essays in *Shakespearovské črty (Shakespeare Our Contemporary)*, where he says: "V Shakespearově světě existuje protiklad mezi řádem činu a mravním řádem. Tento protiklad je lidským osudem. Nelze mu uniknout" [There is an antagonism between the code of acting and the moral code in Shakespeare's world. This antagonism is human fate. It is not possible to escape from it], (Kott, 1964). Urbánek is confident that the human fate with its codes of morality and acting is the same today as in the past, however distant it is. The world of Shakespeare is not different from the world of today, with all its problems, tragedies and joys. Urbánek agrees with Kott when he reads in his *Shakespearovské črty (Shakespeare Our Contemporary)* that "Shakespeare je jako svět nebo jako život. Každá epocha v něm nachází to, co sama hledá a co chce sama uvidět" [Shakespeare is like the world or like the life. Every epoch finds in him the things it itself is searching for and wants to see] (Kott, 1964). For this

reason, when translating Shakespeare's language into Czech, Urbánek decides to bring Shakespeare nearer to the contemporary audiences by using the language which is understood by them and by getting rid of the obsolescence and archaisms contained in the language of his predecessors, however beautiful and acknowledged it once used to be.

When asked to translate *Hamlet* for the National Theatre, Urbánek decides, in his own words, “mluvit v tomto textu řečí co nejpřítomnější a nepachtící se v rozporu s dlouhověkým přirozeným růstem jazyka po umělém sestrojení jakési alžbětinské češtiny” [to speak in this text with the language as up-to-date as possible and not toiling in the contrast with the long-aged natural language growth for an artificial construction of a kind of Elizabethan Czech] (Urbánek, 1995). However, this language became an eyesore to many people, after the release of the translation and its performance on the stage, who did not accept the language deprived of the shakespearean lyricism and felt that it should maintain the imagined nature of Elizabethan English. Urbánek's translation style will be approached and discussed more specifically in the extended parts of the thesis analysing the translation of *Hamlet*.

## 3.2. Controversial translation of *Hamlet*

### 3.2.1. Historical background and the reception of Urbánek's translation

When the director Jaromír Pleskot asked Zdeněk Urbánek to provide a translation of *Hamlet* for his performance at the National Theatre, he had an idea of the performance as a social play, a play without mysteries, where Hamlet would be displayed as a positive hero – a thinking man among acting people, as Radovan

Lukavský, the leading actor, says in his book about acting *Být nebo nebýt* [To be or not to be]. According to Lukavský's memoirs, *Hamlet*, in Pleskot's view, was meant to be a play about taking off masks – all characters would be observed through Hamlet's eyes and “normal, decent people” would become exposed. The new translation was supposed to serve the same purpose the innovative conception of the performance was going to fulfil. As Lukavský mentions, from the position of an actor, Urbánek's translation was “přirozeně mluvný, srozumitelný na první poslech” [naturally speakable, comprehensible at first hearing] (Lukavský, 1985).

The play, after its first night, found its supporters as well as objectors. As Lukavský recalls, the opponents of the new concept argued that it was a courageous experiment that should have no place on the stage of the National Theatre in Prague. According to them, this stage requires a “decent and serious” production. The performance of 1959 was described by the theoretician Jiří Hájek as follows: “Přísné sevření koncepce zjednodušuje text, omezuje básnickou košatost a mnohorozměrnost autenticky shakespearovské dikce, k níž se má překlad Zdeňka Urbánka (nebo spíše přepis) asi jako telegrafní sloupy k živoucímu stromoví” [the strict structure of the conception is simplifying the text, limiting the poetical patulousness and multidimensionality of the authentically shakespearian diction, to which the translation by Zdeněk Urbánek is like telegraph posts to living trees] (Hájek, 1959/60). Radovan Lukavský suggestively interpreted Hájek's words in his book *Být nebo nebýt* by the notion that “Shakespeare je jako košatý strom (dramatu, filozofie a poezie) – a my jsme z něho udělali telegrafní tyč” [Shakespeare is like a spreading tree (of drama, philosophy and poetry), and we have made a telegraph post out of it] (Lukavský, 1985), which he commented on by an agreement that Hájek might be actually right, however,

Lukavský views as essential and highly useful the fact that the post is used for telegraphing, making it possible for us to communicate (!). He ensures the public that “mysleli jsme na sdělnost a srozumitelnost, mysleli jsme na lidové divadlo” [we wanted it to be communicative and comprehensible, we wanted it to be a theatre for people] (Lukavský, 1985). In his memoirs he mentions his own experience with ordinary, middle- or working-class people from the country, visiting the theatre in the city only occasionally, who assured him after having seen the performance in 1959 that it had been the first time they started to understand Shakespeare. The language seemed clearer to them than they had expected from Shakespeare ever before. It was particularly Zdeněk Urbánek’s intention to create a translation (or an adaptation of the original) which is closer to his contemporaries – the theatre-goers who in most cases are common people. He had in mind Shakespeare and his intention of creating a language and making a performance, which *his* contemporaries were able to understand. Jaromír Pleskot recalls a situation from the time of his visiting England when people around English theatre told him they considered a great advantage of Czech theatre that Shakespeare’s plays can be translated “do moderní řeči, protože jejich divák aspoň třetině textu v původním znění nerozumí” [into modern language, for their (English) audience does not understand at least a third of the original text] (Träger, 1959). In order to make English theatre-goers understand Shakespeare’s language better, an *adaptation* made in contemporary English would perfectly serve the purpose, however much it would be criticized for making Shakespeare’s beautiful language sound vague and simple. In fact, Urbánek created a *Czech* adaptation of the original Shakespeare, for translating *Hamlet* literally and preserving the Renaissance sounding and wording would be, in Urbánek’s opinion, quite incomprehensible. Pavel Drábek comments on

the term *adaptation*, which is possible to be used for any translation or transposition of a text from one language into another. As he says in his prepared book *České pokusy o Shakespeara*: “Každá inscenace (...) v Shakespearově hře škrtnat musí. (...) Překlad není nikdy ekvivalence.” [Every staging (...) must edit Shakespeare’s play. (...) A translation is never an equivalence.] (Drábek).

The reviewers and theoreticians of the 1960s, however, did not take into account nor understand, nor would they accept the term *adaptation* in their view of Urbánek’s translation of *Hamlet*. They expected preserving the poetry and richness of Shakespeare’s text. Sergej Machonin, a reviewer and theatre theoretician, acknowledged Pleskot’s endeavour for updating Shakespeare in the sense of interpreting the main character of Hamlet in a different way than his predecessors. In Machonin’s words, Pleskot created a different Hamlet than the one from previous performances which emphasized his “tragickou rezpolcenost, nemocný spiritualismus, melancholii a (...) tíživý lyrismus” [tragic disunity, pathological spiritualism, melancholy and (...) ponderous lyricism (Machonin, 1959). Pleskot interprets the character of Hamlet as the tragic hero of life and the whole play as the tragedy of Hamlet’s revolt against the power of evil, lies, treason and intrigues. The director emphasizes the protest, wrath and hatred in Hamlet’s character as the forces which drive Hamlet to revenge. Machonin views this approach to the essence of *Hamlet* as completely new – the main character stops being viewed as a man who is “tápající, slabý, rozštěpený tragédií své nerozhodnosti (...). Naopak je to člověk vědomý, celý, s napjatou vůlí k činům” [fumbling, weak, split by the tragedy of his own indecision (...). On the contrary, he is a self-conscious, whole man with a highly-strung willingness to act] (Machonin, 1959). On the other hand, Machonin criticizes the translation of *Hamlet*, made by Zdeněk

Urbánek, in his attempt to be modern and up-to-date. Machonin thinks that the endeavour of Urbánek's updating Shakespeare ended with a completely different result than Pleskot's new view and up-to-date interpretation of the play. The reviewer rejects the translation for intensifying the feelings of coldness and simplicity which are included in the whole performance. He disagrees with the translator, who, according to Machonin, voided the Renaissance language of "smysly" [senses] and left it only with "rozum" [reason]. As he says, the language of the play lost the atmosphere of Shakespeare's imaginativeness and poetry, and all that for the sake of comprehensiveness and approaching modern audience. This was the opinion advocated not only by Sergej Machonin, as well as by other reviewers, for example Zdeněk Stříbrný and Jaroslav Opavský, who in their review *Dva nové pohledy na Shakespeara* [Two new views of Shakespeare] noted that Urbánek "zjednodušil poezii originálu až k libivé hladkosti, oslabující jak Shakespearovu bojovnou myšlenku, tak i její renesančně syté obrazné vyjádření" [simplified the poetry of the original up to the appealing smoothness, weakening Shakespeare's warlike idea as well as its Renaissance rich figurative expression] (Stříbrný-Opavský). Zdeněk Stříbrný had a perspective similar to other theoreticians who tended to compare the new translation to translation work by Erik Adolf Saudek, who was Urbánek's immediate predecessor. They admired Saudek's translation work and considered it to be the master piece of Czech modern translating. In his review of Urbánek's translations, which were newly published as a collection of plays *Šest her* [Six plays] in 1992 and 1995, Zdeněk Stříbrný admits the necessity of a progress from Saudek's translating to Urbánek's new style. Zdeněk Stříbrný reflects on Saudek's translations as "nejlepší naše moderní vyjádření Shakespearovy renesanční košaté, dramaticky vzrušené a stylově pestře rozvrstvené

poezie i prózy” [our best modern expressing of Shakespeare’s Renaissance spreading, dramatically excited and stylistically varied poetry and prose] (Stříbrný, 1995), which, according to him, Urbánek was lacking. At the same time Stříbrný acknowledges Urbánek’s attempt to create a translation, which he considers as being “osobitý, dobře srozumitelný a umělecky hodnotný pokus o nový přístup k Shakespearovu dílu” [a distinctive, well-comprehensible attempt of an artistic value to approach Shakespeare’s work from a new perspective]. (Stříbrný, 1995). Stříbrný was aware of the fact that it would be appropriate to have more than one translator of Shakespeare into Czech, whose work is being published and performed. The opening of the play in 1959 earned also approval and appreciation by other theoreticians and reviewers, such as M. M. Dedinský. Dedinský says in his article *Rozpory v Hamletovi a s Hamletem* [Conflicts in Hamlet and with Hamlet] that Urbánek “právom sa usiloval urobiť prekladom Hamleta všeobecne zrozumiteľným, dnešku zrozumiteľným” [had the right to make Hamlet generally understandable, understandable to the present] (Dedinský). On the other hand, he criticizes Urbánek’s tendency to abridge the language of the characters of its Renaissance sounding, even though he disagrees with the tendency to use other Renaissance prompts – the outlook and the scene. Dedinský agrees with the translation having the function of the most contemporary interpretation of a classic text, but criticizes Urbánek to be too subjective in favouring it.

Urbánek caused disputes in the public who would or would not accept his translation of *Hamlet*, yet in the 1990s, after some of his translations of Shakespeare’s plays had been published, many drama theoreticians and shakespeareologists, came to understand Urbánek’s translating intentions and accepted them. Even back then, between 1959 and 1965, the high number of re-runs of the play at the National Theatre

proved the popularity of the play as a whole, including the acting, the work of the director, set, as well as the new shakespearean language – in Urbánek’s translation. As Zdeněk Beran says in his review: “Nakonec ale přece jen rozhodl divák sám” [Finally it was the audience themselves who had decided] (Beran, 1993). At that time Stříbrný himself considers the performance to be “jednou z nejpamátnejších shakespeareovských inscenací v dějinách našeho divadla, zřejmě nejvýznamnějším českým *Hamletem* druhé poloviny dvacátého století” [one of the most memorable shakespearean performances in the history of our theatre, probably the most significant Czech *Hamlet* in the second half of the twentieth century] (Stříbrný, 1995). Stříbrný believes that Urbánek’s translation became popular for its informal character, which was closer to people who were glutted by the lofty and rhetoric interpretation of Shakespeare’s tragedies, which had been used by the Czech translators until the 1950s.

### 3.2.2. Discussion – interpretation of the characters

#### 3.2.2.1. View of the interpretation by Alois Bejblík and Milan Lukeš

Alois Bejblík and Milan Lukeš, two reviewers and translation theoreticians, reacted to Urbánek’s translation of *Hamlet* in 1960 in the *Divadlo* magazine. In their critical article *Hamlet a pojetí* [Hamlet and interpretation] they pointed out the often discussed and criticized stylistic, verbal and conceptual discrepancies of the translation. Bejblík and Lukeš’s reviews concur with those already expressed by other reviewers describing Urbánek’s translation as grey, succinct, unemotional, depriving Shakespeare’s language of its typical imaginativeness and poetry. Bejblík and Lukeš’s paper, however, focuses mainly on the concept of interpretation. Although believing that “[k]aždý překlad (...) je svým způsobem interpretace” [every translation is an

interpretation in a way] (Bejblík-Lukeš, 1960), they consider the work of a translator causing harm to the original text especially in case it damages “objektivní ideově estetický obsah díla v jeho podstatných součástech” [the objective, ideologically aesthetic contents of a work in its essential components] (Bejblík-Lukeš, 1960). This case is then assumed to be no more an *interpretation*, though rather literally “ochuzení” [deprivation], in Bejblík and Lukeš’s words. They claim that one of the hardest missions of the critique is “vyměřit meze, kde končí pojetí a začíná pokřivení a ochuzení” [to define the borders where interpretation ends and distortion and deprivation begin] (Bejblík-Lukeš, 1960).

What is considered as highly important by Bejblík and Lukeš is a general connection between the work of the director and actors, and the translator. Not only every translation, but every play directed by a different director, is actually an interpretation of the original. Similarly, the relation between a play and its director is seen by Václav Havel, who says in an interview with Marta Švagrová for *Lidové noviny* that “autor dává hru k dispozici a každý si s ní může dělat, co umí (...) Divadelní hra má v sobě přímo zakódovánu výzvu k tomu, aby ji režisér pojednal jinak a po svém” [an author places a play at others’ disposal and everyone can do with it as he/she can (...)] Encoded in a theatre play is a challenge for the director to handle it in a different and in his own way] (Švagrová, 2008). A director is literally entitled to imprint his own views and understanding into the play he is directing and all that under the influence of a written word he chooses, in this case under the influence of a translation. Bejblík and Lukeš comment on this feature by stating that it is generally agreed that “co napoví překlad, dořekne a zvýrazní režisér a herci” [what is hinted at by a translation, is uttered and accentuated by the director and actors] (Bejblík-Lukeš, 1960). They, however, take

notice of a certain shift in the interpretation, expressions and style both in the translation as a whole and in the interpretation of different characters.

In their criticism of the interpretation of characters in the translation of *Hamlet*, Bejblík and Lukeš focus on the main character of Hamlet and his “protipóly” [counterparts] Laertes and Fortinbras. The reviewers comment on Urbánek’s depicting Hamlet’s character as a warrior, who fights for justice and who requires revenge for the injustice cast upon his family. We can pursue the source of Urbánek’s approach to Hamlet’s character already in his early work when he tried to understand and explain “man” as a “new man” in his natural state, freed from social bounds and shown in his pure humanity, as he says in his article *Člověk v mladé poezii*. This man is meant to be strong and convinced of his own truth, ready to fight, and not weak and depressed by his own incapability. For Hamlet, revenge was something essential that could satisfy his need for righteousness.

Bejblík and Lukeš argue that for people in Elizabethan times revenge was something unnatural, something that one has no right to perform. However, in Lukavský’s acting they can see a character of Hamlet as an impassive man, who is ready to protect the truth, which, though, was an interpretation that kept Lukavský from showing Hamlet’s emotions. The reviewers sense this kind of deprivation beginning already in the translation. They blame Urbánek for depriving Hamlet of humour and speech diversity, which characterize Hamlet’s natural inclination to art and theatre in the original play. This is probably a result of Urbánek’s overly explaining the parts where metaphor is used in the original. It could as well be caused by his omitting the allusions to drama and theatre completely.

Apart from that, Bejblík and Lukeš reproach Urbánek and Pleskot for the fact

that they cross out whole lines and passages from the translation, which eventually changes the overall interpretation of the characters of not only Hamlet, but Ophelia, Laertes and Fortinbras, as well. The final part of the play seems to them to be harmed the most by Urbánek's crossing out the whole of Horatio's speech and by his wrong and distorting interpretation of the character of Fortinbras, who has been cast a different light upon than originally intended by Shakespeare. Bejblík and Lukeš say that "[to] odporuje duchu humanistických a optimistických zakončení Shakespearových tragédií" [it contradicts the tone of the humanistic and optimistic endings of Shakespeare's tragedies] (Bejblík-Lukeš, 1960). They are sure that Shakespeare understood Fortinbras as a "white prince", an embodied catharsis of the play, and the guarantee of establishing order in the country. After having seen the translated play they blamed Urbánek for depicting Fortinbras in a completely different light as:

(...) zhýčkaný princ, jenž stojí v jejím čele,  
se v pyšné ctižádosti směje všemu,  
co skrývá budoucnost (...) (4.4.20-22)

[a spoilt prince, standing in the lead, who in his proud ambition laughs at everything the future has in store] instead of Shakespeare's original description of Fortinbras as:

(...) delicate and tender prince;  
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd  
Makes mouths at the invisible event; (...) (4.4.48-50)

According to the reviewers, Bejblík and Lukeš, this is the place of Urbánek's translation, where interpretation definitely ends and a totally inverse sense is installed. It can be agreed that the part of Fortinbras is not properly psychologically elaborated in the original text. Therefore the character does not necessarily have to be understood as the unambiguous one. Bejblík and Lukeš, however, consider it necessary to preserve

Shakespeare's unclear interpretation rather than to imprint in Fortinbras the kind of characteristics which would fundamentally affect the wrong understanding of the finale of the play.

### 3.2.2.2. Urbánek's interpretation

Zdeněk Urbánek defends himself in his article *Fortinbras a pojetí* [Fortinbras and interpretation], published as a reaction to Bejblík and Lukeš's review in the *Divadlo* magazine, by saying that it is not possible to present the interpretation of Fortinbras, a supporting, marginal character, as the one who should determine the overall final tone of the play. He exemplifies this by mentioning other Shakespeare's plays, which were not closed in the final catharsis by any of the characters from the outside, but by the heroes themselves. Furthermore, Urbánek refuses the appropriateness of using the term "white prince" for characterizing any of those heroes who had essential influence on the final catharsis of various Shakespeare's plays. According to him, it was none of Shakespeare's tendencies to close his plays with the arrival of the "white prince" (a good and righteous man), who "would save the world" and put everything in order. Urbánek characterizes Bejblík and Lukeš's using the term "white prince" as a convention which they succumbed to and the labouring of which "vede jen k povrchním povšechným soudům" [only leads to superficial, general conclusions] (Urbánek, 1960). Rather than referring to conventions, Urbánek suggests, the readers (and reviewers) should explore the text itself to see the inner nature as well as the outlines of the characters. Thus, Urbánek views the character of Fortinbras as a man, who "chce nečestně dobýt zpátky to, co jeho otec prohrou ztratil" [wants to dishonestly seize back what his father had lost] (Urbánek, 1960), and who is acquiescent to the will of his

uncle for the money he gives him, as we learn from Valtemand's message.

Urbánek also tries to explain the part where Bejblík and Lukeš see a distortion of the interpretation of Fortinbras's character in the translation of "delicate and tender prince (...)" by Urbánek's "zhýčkaný princ" [spoilt prince]. Regarding this meaning, they view Hamlet's final giving a vote to the future king Fortinbras as contradictory to his previous contempt. They consider this distortion to be the most confusing moment of the translation. Urbánek gives an explanation by pointing out Hamlet's admiration for Fortinbras who, in Hamlet's words "pro maličkost vydává křehký život na pospas zásahům osudu a hrozbě smrti" [for a trifle gives his fragile life in chance to the strokes of fate and threat of death] (Shakespeare: translated by Zdeněk Urbánek, 1959). According to Urbánek, Hamlet realizes that he has missed the chance to act in a designed revenge, although *his* purpose was much greater and more important than the purpose Fortinbras had when he went to conquer a small and valueless piece of land with all the vigour Hamlet was lacking. Although Hamlet does not regard Fortinbras to be worth his social and personal status, being "zhýčkaný" [spoilt] and "pyšný" [proud], in this moment he looks up to the young warrior and regrets his own inability to act. Urbánek blames Bejblík and Lukeš for extracting of context. He thinks that the following monologue of Hamlet, which takes place on a plain in Denmark, makes it clear that Shakespeare wanted to emphasize Hamlet's inner struggle and contemplation in the first place and only marginally deal with the evaluation of Fortinbras: "Být velký neznamená bouřit se bez velkých příčin (...)" [To be great does not mean to make revolt with no great reasons] (Shakespeare: translated by Zdeněk Urbánek, 1959).

As regards Urbánek's particular lexical choice, he defends his translation of the words often discussed, such as "tender", "puff'd" or "divine", which, according to

Shorter Oxford Dictionary, include also other meanings which serve Urbánek's purposes better. This, as he says, does not, however, change the general view of Fortinbras's character. Hamlet only expresses his momentary viewing of Fortinbras, but by that he cannot change the facts which the readers perceive and understand as given throughout the whole play – Fortinbras being a straightforward warrior who has the ability “společensky účinně jednat” [to be productively socially active] (Urbánek, 1960), which Hamlet only desired to have at that time. From that moment on Hamlet, however, starts to act as well. It seems to Urbánek that his meeting with Fortinbras had a great effect on his later acts. This conclusion contradicts Hamlet's viewing Fortinbras as a “white prince”. I think that Fortinbras was the right man in the right place at the right moment – that of both Hamlet's seeing him ready to fight for small things and of his death. According to Urbánek, Hamlet's opinion of Fortinbras changes with the appearance of the hope that Fortinbras will take over the leadership over the destroyed country, and with the knowledge that “ideál je neuskutečnitelný, ale svět, jaký je, trvá dál a potřebuje vládce” [the ideal is infeasible, but the world, as it is, continues and needs a leader] (Urbánek, 1960). In other words, what Urbánek means is that Fortinbras is not perfect as neither of men are, but he impersonates the hope that things can improve if there is somebody to take care of them.

In their final article *Pojetí a pojetí* [Interpretation and interpretation], published as a reaction on Urbánek's defensive article *Fortinbras a pojetí*, Bejblík and Lukeš explain that their term “white prince” was previously used in a rather general way, with a meaning of a person prepared for “obnovení státního pořádku a řádu” [restoration of the hierarchy and order] (Bejblík-Lukeš, 1960). They agree that they used this term under the influence of a supposed convention of other Shakespeare's plays in order to

characterize the final catharsis and Fortinbras, as the main hero who participated on it. According to them, it is important to “sledovat v Shakespearovi i některé ‘konvence’, neboť jejich výčet doloží ideovou náplň díla” [follow certain ‘conventions’ in Shakespeare too, for their enumeration testifies to the ideological content of the work] (Bejblík-Lukeš, 1960). This prevents some places in the text from being considered to be questionable.

As regards the relation between Hamlet and Fortinbras, Bejblík and Lukeš agree that in the play Hamlet is confronted not only with Laertes and the Actor, but also with Fortinbras, in the sense that all of them “mají menší důvod k činu (...), a přece jednají” [have lesser motives to act (...), and yet they act] (Bejblík-Lukeš, 1960). And in this sense Hamlet regards Fortinbras as not the “white prince” in the general sense but as “muže činu, schopného dobře řídit stát” [the man of action, able to govern the state well] (Bejblík-Lukeš, 1960).

In the final part of the play, Bejblík and Lukeš regard Horatio’s speech as one of the most important places, which should serve as the evidence of the previous events. They must, however, admit, that because Urbánek omits part of the speech, the final catharsis loses its point. In Pleskot’s production of Urbánek’s translation Fortinbras interrupts Horatio in his final testifying of the previous events at the Elsinor castle. This could be viewed as substantiating the way Urbánek depicts Fortinbras’s character of a “pyšný a ctižádostivý” [proud and ambitious] (Bejblík-Lukeš, 1960) prince, which was, however, not *Shakespeare’s* (though Urbánek’s) convention of finishing the play, as Bejblík and Lukeš say. They see Fortinbras’s acting (in Urbánek’s translation) as distorting the final message from Hamlet and as dishonouring his memory.

In their criticism, Bejblík and Lukeš focused on the overall tone of the

translation, which they consider to be simplified compared to the original and previous Czech translations, as well as on the interpretation of the attitudes of some of the characters. Principally, they discuss the interpretation of Fortinbras in relation to Hamlet. Bejblík and Lukeš disagree with some places in Urbánek's translation of Hamlet's depicting Fortinbras's character, which they regard as distorting the following conception of the final catharsis of the play. They support their thoughts with evidence, quoting some parts of Urbánek's translation.

In the following part of my thesis I will choose some controversial parts of Urbánek's translation, starting with the parts sustaining the conception of Fortinbras, to demonstrate the main differences in the translation of *Hamlet* by Urbánek and by other translators.

### 3.3. Analysis of the translation of *Hamlet*

#### 3.3.1. Introduction

When creating a literary or drama translation, a translator is responsible, apart from the verbal and semantic translation of the text, also for the ideological transmission of the original concept – interpretation of the main ideas, characters and other elements included in the text. According to Jiří Levý, a theoretician of Czech translation studies, interpretation of the original requires an objective approach of the translator. In his book *Úvod do teorie překladu*, Levý talks about the necessity of a translator to be willing to search for an objective ideology and artistic value of the work as a whole, as well as of the characters themselves. A translator should be able to interpret the ideas the writer intended to transmit towards the readers.

In their critical review, Bejblík and Lukeš draw our attention to Urbánek's

interpretation of some of the characters of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, which they consider to have a distorted meaning in Urbánek's presentation. In this part of my thesis I want to focus on the particular examples from Urbánek's translation of *Hamlet*, which aroused a discussion. Furthermore, I would like to contemplate on the fact whether the required objectivity should be kept within the translation, or not. I will draw examples of the controversial parts of the text from translations of *Hamlet* by Urbánek as well as by other Czech translators in order to compare the results.

### 3.3.2. Interpretation of Hamlet: *resoluteness* versus *poeticity*

Although the character of Hamlet was not the main issue of Bejblík and Lukeš's articles *Hamlet a pojetí* and *Pojetí a pojetí*, he was also mentioned by them and mainly by other reviewers who commented on the première of the play at the National Theatre in 1959 in their critical reviews. The conception presented by the director Jaromír Pleskot, as well as by the performer of the main part, Radovan Lukavský, differ from the conceptions advocated by the representatives of the previous performances of *Hamlet*. As I have already mentioned, Pleskot's and Lukavský's idea of depicting Hamlet's character is that of a mature man, who has grown to the stage where he knows what he wants and what he should do. In comparison to the previous interpretations of Hamlet being an indecisive man, too weak to take action, Pleskot's performance emphasizes Hamlet's strengths rather than weaknesses and depicts him as a man prepared for revenge for his father's death and for the disgrace of his family. The director's work is supported by the translation, as Bejblík and Lukeš agree.

In the following analysis I will point out the most frequent features of Urbánek's language in depicting the character of Hamlet. I will focus on the way Urbánek adds

emphasis to Hamlet's words by using short, mostly one-syllable words at the end or the beginning of a verse. Further on, I will proceed in pointing out the examples of expressive language, which reinforces understanding Hamlet's emotions. Finally, the language expressing Hamlet's sense of duty will be focused on.

For the analysis I will use Shakespeare's original text from the standard Globe edition of 1866 and the translation by Zdeněk Urbánek (1959). For a comparison I used the translations by Urbánek's predecessor, Erik Adolf Saudek, who translated *Hamlet* in 1941 and published it under the name of Aloys Skoumal, and Urbánek's follower, Břetislav Hodek, whose translation of Hamlet was first published in 1982, although the date of the translation is not known, yet estimated to be in the 1970s.

### 3.3.2.1. Adding emphasis

In Hamlet's speeches Urbánek uses short, exclamatory clauses, which express Hamlet's emotional determination to fight his weaknesses and which, in connection to the actor's ferocious performance, help create a vigorous character. We can see Urbánek's intention to use expressive exclamations. They consist of usually short, rhythmical verses used in tense situations of Hamlet's inner struggle. The following examples present this case.

<i>Shakespeare</i>	<i>Saudek (1941)</i>	<i>Urbánek (1959)</i>	<i>Hodek (1982)</i>
O, that this too too solid flesh would <b>melt</b> / Thaw and resolve itself into a <b>dew!</b> (1.2.129-130)	Kéž by to příliš hutné tělo <b>tát</b> / a <b>rozplynout</b> se chtělo v pouhou <b>rosu!</b>	Proč jenom toto poskvrněné tělo / nemůže <b>roztát</b> , <b>proměnit se v dech!</b>	Ach, kéž by toto příliš, příliš hmotné tělo / se mohlo <b>rozpustit</b> a <b>roztát, zjihnout</b> v <b>rosu</b>
O God! God! / How	Panebože! / Jak	Ten zdejší <b>svět</b> / jako	Bože! Bože! / Jak

<i>Shakespeare</i>	<i>Saudek (1941)</i>	<i>Urbánek (1959)</i>	<i>Hodek (1982)</i>
weary, stale, flat and unprofitable, / Seem to me all the uses of this <b>world!</b> (1.2.132-134)	<b>trapný, plytký, planý, bezúčelný</b> / mi připadá ten celý svět! Ó, fuj!	by neměl vůbec žádný smysl. / Připadá mi tak <b>prázdný, pustý, mdlý.</b>	<b>skličující, plytké, zvětralé</b> / a <b>neužitečné</b> mi připadá to všechno,
But break, my <b>heart</b> ; for I must hold my <b>tongue.</b> (1.2.159)	Leč <b>pukej</b> srdce, neboť musím mlčet!	Ty, srdce, <b>křič</b> , / protože moje ústa musí mlčet.	Jenomže <b>pukni</b> srdce, já musím jen mlčet.

Urbánek often finishes a verse with a short one-syllable word (marked in bold): *dech* [breath], *svět* [world], *mdlý* [dim], *křič* [shout – imperative]. This practice of his emphasizes Hamlet’s resoluteness and speeds up the speech as well as the sequence of thoughts. We can assume that Urbánek tried to maintain the same style of Shakespeare’s text in this sense: *melt*, *dew*, *world*, *heart*, *tongue*. Saudek’s and Hodek’s translations include more poetical words, which supports the conception of the character of Hamlet as an emotional person, not able to take a stand. We can see it in Saudek’s translation of “would melt / Thaw and resolve itself into a dew” (1.2.129-130) as “*tát a rozplynout se* chtělo v pouhou rosu” [*melt* and *dissolve* it would into a mere dew]. Similar expressions are used by Břetislav Hodek, multiplied by one more, even more poetical, verb than the ones used in Saudek’s version, which adds more emotional effect to the speech: “*se* mohlo *rozpustit* a *roztát*, *zjihnout* v rosu” [could *dissolve* and *thaw*, *relent* into a dew]. The poetical word *zjihnout* [relent] is in Czech used when talking about a heart which melts, thaws. Urbánek’s choice for “nemůže *roztát*, *proměnit se* v dech” [cannot *melt*, *change* into a breath] seems to be more pragmatical.

A similar situation arises in the following example, in which Hamlet expresses his view of the world. Hamlet describes it in Shakespeare’s words as “weary, stale, flat and unprofitable” (1.2.133), in Saudek’s translation as “*trapný, plytký, planý,*

bezúčelný” [awkward, shallow, futile and purposeless] and in Hodek’s translation as “skličující, plytké, zvětralé a neúčelné” [gloomy, shallow, stale and useless]. Saudek and Hodek keep the same number of adjectives of the original line and try to use slightly more poetical words than Shakespeare originally did, such as *skličující* [gloomy], *plytký* [shallow], or *planý* [futile]. Urbánek used only three adjectives instead of the original four. These are one- to two-syllable, simple words of a very similar meaning, with a rather pragmatical sense: “prázdný, pustý, mdlý” [empty, bleak, dim]. By Urbánek’s choice the cadence of the speech is more intensified and the speech itself has a more resolute ending than in Saudek’s and Hodek’s translations.

As regards Hamlet’s resoluteness, it is also well expressed by the following example, already mentioned in the above chart. The beginning of a new exclamatory clause “But break my heart” (1.2.159) is translated by Urbánek very simply by again one- to two-syllable words “Ty, srdce, křič” [You, heart, shout]. It cannot be denied that this solution, especially with using the imperative one-syllable word *křič* at the end of the line, has a great emotional impact. Both Saudek and Hodek used a much more poetical, two-syllable form of a Czech verb *pukat*, here used in the imperative, *pukej* [burst, crack] (Saudek) or the perfective form of the imperative *pukni* (Hodek) as the translation of *break*. The two-syllable words used by Saudek and Hodek at the end of the verse could help the speaker slow down the speed of the speech and fall behind in expressing Hamlet’s emotions.

As I have already described, in Urbánek’s translation Hamlet’s emotions are often expressed by exclamatory clauses of one or only a few short expressions. Instead of translating the beginning of a line “O, from this time forth” (4.4.65) by a Czech, usually unnaturally sounding, version of an English sighing – “O”, as Hodek’s archaic

“Ó” appears in the translation of the line “Ó, od této chvíle” [Oh, from now on], Urbánek decides to use another way how to express Hamlet’s emotions in this case. Hamlet’s sigh was made in desperation to act. “Urbánek’s” Hamlet gives out a powerful and fighting roar “Krev!” [Blood!] before he proceeds with his decision – “Chci myslet jenom na ni” [I only want to think about it], which gives opportunity to the actor to make a dramatic pause before proceeding to the next line. Saudek, however, starts the line with an emotionally quite neutral prepositional phrase “Ode dneška” [From today on], which adds a narrative character to the speech, and misses out the chance for a dramatic pause after the initial sigh “O” at the beginning of the verse.

<i>Shakespeare</i>	<i>Saudek (1941)</i>	<i>Urbánek (1959)</i>	<i>Hodek (1982)</i>
O, from this time forth, / My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth! (4.4.65-66)	<b>Ode dneška</b> pranic / krom krve nechci znát, či nestát za nic!	<b>Krev!</b> Chci myslet jenom na ni. / Od této chvíle nemám jiné přání.	<b>Ó</b> , od této chvíle / budou mé myšlenky jen krvavé mít cíle!

Urbánek approaches the character of Hamlet as a resolute man by using short, exclamatory expressions at the beginning or at the end of his speeches. This way, the emphasis is added to the places which should be highlighted in the speech. The emphasis is also brought to the expressions which are essential for the overall effect of the speech. The verses seem more rhythmical and help the performer to express the emotions of a mature, decisive character.

### 3.3.2.2. Expressive language

Another example of Hamlet’s resoluteness is well depicted in Urbánek’s

translation of the following parts of his soliloquy. First, he uses very expressive words for insulting himself and stirring up his emotions to make himself act, as for example: *rogue* – *darebák* [rogue], *peasant slave* – *trapný ničema* [awkward scumbag], *ass* – *hlupák* [blockhead], *whore* – *děvka* [whore], *drab* – *stará běhna* [old slut], *scullion* – *mužská kurva* [men's slag]. For the same English expressions Saudek and Hodek use slightly less emotional words in some places. Saudek's *tatrman* [buffoon] and Hodek's *moula* [wally], chosen as translations of the original *ass*, have a rather archaic sounding and together with Urbánek's *hlupák* are quite moderate variants of an expressive word *ass* meaning *cretin*, *idiot* etc. Moreover, the words *tatrman* and *moula* are used mainly in folk lexis as words of a vernacular form of the more neutral *hlupák*.

Also, the translations of the words *rogue* and *peasant slave* differ in expressiveness as well as archaic sounding. Where Saudek uses a dramatic, as well as poetic expressions, enriched by one additional adjective, *bezpečný chám* [spineless cad] and *sprostý podlec* [coarse caitiff], Hodek omits adjectives completely to translate the original by *darebák* [rogue] and *pohůnek* [scullion]. In Czech *chám*, *podlec* and *pohůnek* are rather archaic words, whereas *darebák* is more neutral in terms of archaism and expressiveness. Urbánek decides for preserving the same number of nouns and adjectives and uses the neutral *darebák* and more expressive collocation *trapný ničema* [awkward scumbag]. A similar situation arises with translating the expression 'Swounds by archaic and at the same time poetical clause "VÍ BŮH" [God knows] in Saudek's version and "Pro pět ran" [My goodness] in Hodek's version. Urbánek chooses more expressive and more angry variant of cursing, which is "U čerta" [What the hell].

<i>Shakespeare</i>	<i>Saudek (1941)</i>	<i>Urbánek (1959)</i>	<i>Hodek (1982)</i>
O, what a <b>rogue</b> and <b>peasant slave</b> am I! (2.2.584)	Já <b>bezpáteřný chám!</b> Já <b>sprostý podlec!</b>	Jsem <b>darebák</b> a <b>trapný ničema.</b>	Ach já jsem přece <b>darebák</b> a <b>pohůnek!</b>
‘ <b>Swounds</b> , I should take it (...) (2.2.612)	<b>Ví Bůh,</b> já bych to spolkl!	<b>U čerta,</b> přijmu to!	<b>Pro pět ran,</b> vždyť já bych to snes!
O, vengeance! / Why, what <b>an ass</b> am I! This is most brave, / That I, the son of a dear father murder’d, / Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell, / Must, <b>like a whore</b> , unpack my heart with words, / And fall a-cursing, <b>like a very drab</b> , / <b>A scullion!</b> / <b>Fie upon’t!</b> foh! About, my brain! (2.2.618-625)	Och, pomstít se! / Já <b>tatroman!</b> To se mi líbí! Já, / kterému zavraždili otce, já, / kterého k pomstě pudí Bůh i peklo, / si musím slovy ulevit <b>jak děvka,</b> / úplně <b>jako ženská,</b> načisto / <b>jak štěkna nějaká!</b> / <b>Fuj!</b> Dost už! Rozum do hrsti!	To volá o pomstu! / Jaký jsem <b>hlupák!</b> A jak statečný! / Zabili mého otce, Bůh i peklo / volají na mne: pomsti ho, a já / si <b>jako děvka</b> ulehčuji slovy, / jenom tu spílám <b>jako stará běhna,</b> / <b>jak mužská kurva!</b> <b>Hnus!</b> / Mám ještě rozum? Sem s ním!	Ona tě stihne odplata! / Ach já jsem přece <b>moula.</b> Tomu říkám chrabrost, / když já, syn, jemuž zavraždili otce, / nebem i peklem vybízený k pomstě, / si musím <b>jako kurva</b> ulevit jen slovem / a začnu klít jak <b>holka od škopku,</b> / jak <b>trhovkyně!</b> / Ta hanba! <b>Fuj!</b> Zapracuj mozkou!

As regards the translation of Hamlet’s very expressive self-evaluation of his own character as: *like a whore, like a very drab, a scullion*, who needs to “unpack [his ] heart with words”, the translators decided for stronger or weaker forms of the Czech translation of the English expression *whore*. Where Saudek and Hodek use only one Czech variant for a *whore*: *děvka* (Saudek), and slightly stronger *kurva* (Hodek), and choose expressions with quite a different meaning for English *drab* and *scullion*, Urbánek decides to use three synonyms as a translation only of the term *whore*: *děvka* [whore], *stará běhna* [old slut] and *mužská kurva* [men’s slag], whereas he omits other meanings of the original *drab* and *scullion*. Those are translated by Saudek as *ženská*

[woman] (for *a very drab*) and *štěkna nějaká* [some hell-cat] (for *a scullion*) and by Hodek as *holka od škopku* [girl from the pail – laundress] and *trhovkyně* [market woman]. All the above mentioned expressions by Saudek and Hodek depict a person of a “womanly” character, who talks a lot and speaks out her heart in public, whereas Urbánek’s preserving the meaning of the word *whore* in all three cases is lacking other meanings implied by Shakespeare. This variant of a repetition of the same thing in different words, however, increases the rhythm of the speech and the feeling of rage against himself Hamlet tries to express.

Urbánek does not hesitate to use expressive language in Hamlet’s soliloquies, by which he gives way to expressing his real emotions. In comparison with Saudek and Hodek, Urbánek does not look for expressions which would be more acceptable for a decent audience. When Shakespeare uses an expressive word, Urbánek tries to find a similar way of expressing the original wording. In the moments of his loneliness Hamlet does not need to hold back with his language, but can say openly what he thinks and how he wants to say it. Urbánek is well-aware of that and adjusts the language to Hamlet’s own emotions.

### 3.3.2.3. Interpretation of *sense of duty*

Other signs of Hamlet’s determination to act can be clearly seen in the following examples of his soliloquy and a dialogue between Hamlet and Horatio. Urbánek understands the sense of duty expressed by Hamlet and uses a very determined statement “Musím odhalit / věcnější důkaz” [I must reveal a more factual evidence] as a translation of “I’ll have grounds / More relative than this” (2.2.640-641). The sense of duty is expressed in Urbánek’s translation by the verb *musím* [I must], which is much

stronger in terms of determination than Saudek's *chci* [I want] or Hodek's *potřebuju* [I need].

Also, as seen in the next example, Urbánek's use of the verb *dokázal* [could / manage / contrive / achieve] in the translation of the line "now *could* I drink hot blood" (3.2.415) as "Teď bych *dokázal* / pít krev" [now I could / would manage to drink blood] emphasizes Hamlet's decision and sense of duty stronger than in translations by Saudek and Hodek. Saudek omits the translation of the verb *could* and only joins the conditional *would* to the main verb *drink*, which loses the sense of expressing the ability. Hodek translates the verb *could* literally by *bych moh* [I could], which in Czech lacks the other meaning of the English verb *can* as *to be able to*. Similar to Saudek's version Hodek's translation lacks the character of ability, duty, resoluteness of Hamlet.

Although shortening some of the original verses contributes to the rhythmical character and fluency of the speech, Urbánek's decision to omit some of the phrases was considered to be depriving the original text of other meanings by some theoreticians. The next example testifies to Urbánek's effort to pour into Hamlet the spirit of action, following from his sense of duty. It, however, lacks some of the original poetry, including Shakespeare's highly appreciated metaphors, which, as I have already mentioned, Urbánek was also reproached for. Urbánek decided to condense the original "now could I drink hot blood, / And do such bitter business as the day / Would quake to look on" (3.2.415-417) into "Teď bych dokázal / pít krev a páchat činy, děsivé / pro oči dne" [Now I *could* / *would manage to* drink blood and commit deeds, terrifying for the eyes of the day], leaving out the subordinate clause "as the day / Would quake to look on", yet substituting it with the adjective phrase "[činy] děsivé pro oči dne". By this he managed to create an impressive new rhythm of the line, however, could be criticized

for changing and adjusting the original to his own views.

Both Saudek and Hodek tried to elaborate the last line and maintain the metaphor. Saudek translated “such bitter business as the day / Would quake to look on” with respect to the original structure, although with additional, more expressive meaning of the word *quake* = *štítil* [loathe], as “skutky, že by na ně den / se štítil pohledět!” [acts a day would loathe to look upon]. Hodek chose an even longer version translating the original as “hrůznosti, že kdyby je den viděl, / sám by se začal třást” [monstrosities that if the day saw them, it would itself start to quake]. He also used a more expressive word *hrůznosti* [monstrosities] for translating the phrase *bitter business*, thus supplying the original with other meanings not intended by the author. On the other hand, Hodek used a literal translation of the verb *quake* = *se třást*, holding onto the original more than Saudek.

<i>Shakespeare</i>	<i>Saudek (1941)</i>	<i>Urbánek (1959)</i>	<i>Hodek (1982)</i>
I'll have grounds / More relative than this (...) (2.2.640-641)	<b>Chci</b> mít důkaz, / jenž plyne z věci samé!	<b>Musím</b> odhalit / věcnější důkaz!	<b>Potřebuju</b> mít / věcnější důvody než jenom tohle.
(...) now could I drink hot blood, / And do <b>such bitter business</b> <b>as the day / Would</b> <b>quake to look on.</b> (3.2.415-417)	ted' živou krev <i>bych</i> lokal / a páchal <b>skutky, že by na ně</b> <b>den / se štítil</b> <b>pohledět!</b>	Teď <i>bych dokázal</i> / pít krev a páchat <b>činy,</b> <b>děsivé / pro oči dne.</b>	Teď <i>bych moh</i> pít horkou krev / a dělat <b>hrůznosti, že kdyby</b> <b>je den viděl, / sám by</b> <b>se začal třást!</b>

Hamlet's feelings of duty are literally expressed by the following example of Urbánek's translation of “And with such cozenage – is't not perfect conscience, / To quit him with this arm?” (5.2.67-68) as “řekni mi: není moje *povinnost* / a nežádá snad samo svědomí, / abych s ním touhle paží skoncoval?” [tell me: is it not my *duty* and

does not my conscience itself ask me to quit him with this arm?]. Although not exactly mentioned in the original, Urbánek decided to support Hamlet's inner change by obeying his conscience and his sense of duty. Saudek omits expressing Hamlet's sense of duty and exchanges the meaning of the word *conscience* for the expression *oprávněn* [entitled] in “nejsem, / ptám se tě, *oprávněn*, abych mu splatil / zde touto paží?” [am I not entitled to punish him with this very arm?]. Hodek maintains the meaning of the phrase *perfect conscience* = *s nejčistším svědomím* [with the clearest conscience] in “nemohl bych ho / s nejčistším svědomím já touto paží ztrestat?” [could I not with the clearest conscience punish him with this arm?]. As we can see from the verse discussed, Urbánek occasionally tends to add other words and meanings to the places where they are missing in the original as well as in the other translators' versions. By this he manages to over-explain some of the metaphors which were meant to be uncovered by the audience themselves.

<i>Shakespeare</i>	<i>Saudek (1941)</i>	<i>Urbánek (1959)</i>	<i>Hodek (1982)</i>
(...) And with such cozenage – is't not perfect <b>conscience</b> , / To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be damn'd, / To let this canker of our nature come / In further evil? (5.2.67-70)	nejsem, / ptám se tě, <b>oprávněn</b> , abych mu splatil / zde touto paží? Není-li to hřích / tou rakovinou na svém těle nechat / si žití uhlodat?	(...) řekni mi: není moje <b>povinnost</b> / a nežádá snad samo <b>svědomí</b> , / abych s ním touhle paží skoncoval? / Nechat tu hnusnou rakovinu růst – / což by to nebyl hřích?	nemohl bych ho / s nejčistším <b>svědomím</b> já touto paží ztrestat? / A neznamená věčné zatracení nechat / tu rakovinu v lidství bujet dál / do nových špatností?

However, in most cases Urbánek rather shortens and omits verses in order to express the thought in a more condensed and often more expressive way, as we can see in the following line “Nechat tu hnusnou rakovinu růst” [to let the disgusting cancer

grow], used as a translation of “To let this canker of our nature come / In further evil?” (5.2.69-70). From Urbánek’s translation it is not clear what kind of cancer (or canker) it is, for he does not develop the noun by neither any attributes. Nor does he express the way the canker could develop into “further evil”.

The last example of Hamlet’s understanding and expressing his sense of duty is shown below in the translation of part of one of the final Hamlet’s speeches before losing his life during the battle with Laertes. In this moment Hamlet is at the peak of his resoluteness in thinking and acting. He is ready to let the fate take over, yet is not willing to withdraw without revenging his father’s death. In reaction to Horatio’s doubts and his warning against the anticipated unsuccessful end of the fight, Hamlet replies: “we defy augury” (5.2.232), translated by Urbánek by an exclamatory clause “Předtuchy at’ jdou k čertu!” [let premonition go to hell]. Urbánek’s version is more expressive with Hamlet depicted as much more resentful against his enemies than in Saudek’s or Hodek’s translations. Saudek’s translation of this statement as “Nedbám předtuch” [I don’t care for premonition] sounds neutral and rather indifferent. Hodek translated the same line as “my se přece neřídíme věštbou hadačů” [surely we don’t follow the prophecy of visionaries], which sounds meek as if a master was patiently explaining his apprentice some common rules.

<i>Shakespeare</i>	<i>Saudek (1941)</i>	<i>Urbánek (1959)</i>	<i>Hodek (1982)</i>
(...) <b>we defy augury:</b> (...) If it be now, / ’tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be / now; if it be not now, yet it will come:	(...) <b>Nedbám předtuch.</b> (...) Bude-li to teď, nebude to napříště; nebude-li to napříště, bude to teď; nebude-li to teď, přece	(...) <b>Předtuchy at’ jdou k čertu!</b> (...) Co se stane teď, nestane se jindy – když ne jindy, stane se to teď – a když ne teď, stejně	(...) <b>my se přece neřídíme věštbou hadačů.</b> (...) Jestli to má být teď, nestane se to jindy, jestli se to nemá stát jindy, bude

<i>Shakespeare</i>	<i>Saudek (1941)</i>	<i>Urbánek (1959)</i>	<i>Hodek (1982)</i>
<b>the / readiness is all</b> (5.2.232-236)	to jednou bude; <b>být připraven je vše.</b>	nás to nemine – <b>být připraven, jen na tom záleží.</b>	to teď, jestli to nemá být teď, jednou se to přece stane. <b>Být připraven je všechno.</b>

Next, Hamlet starts to express his conviction about the things which are to happen, may he or may he not like them. Hamlet avows his need for readiness to accept anything that may come next. In comparison to Saudek and Hodek, who both translate the last line of this speech “the readiness is all” (5.2.236) almost literally as “být připraven je vše” [to be ready is all] (Saudek) and “Být připraven je všechno” [to be ready is all] (Hodek), Urbánek chooses a longer, more explanatory version: “být připraven, jen na tom záleží” [to be ready is the only thing which matters].

Apart from adding emphasis, using expressive language and expressing the sense of duty in Urbánek’s interpretation of Hamlet, I have also mentioned Urbánek’s tendency to simplify and shorten up some of the original verses, and his inclination to sometimes put additional meanings or to overly explain Shakespeare’s language on the other hand. In my opinion, Urbánek does so in order to be faithful to his intended presentation of Hamlet in the new light. From his point of view, Hamlet should be seen as a man who despite his initial doubts matures into a strong-minded person. This new man is able to express his feelings and his rage over the death of his father and over the conspiracies at his home castle, and consecutively take an action to fight the evil. The language Urbánek decides to use is expressive, emotional and quite simple on the other hand, with the purpose to say clearly what Hamlet intends to do. I dare to say that in the above presented examples Hamlet’s emotions might be seen even more clearly than in the “more poetical” language of Urbánek’s colleagues, Erik Adolf Saudek and Břetislav

Hodek. Here, Hamlet's emotions are of a more warlike kind than the sometimes rather gloomy and sentimental variants created by some other translators.

#### 3.3.2.4. Conclusion: Interpretation of Hamlet

All the above stated examples explain the reasons why the reviewers and translation theoreticians, Bejblík and Lukeš being two of them, opposed Urbánek's translation. In comparison to Saudek it is adjusted to the contemporary, more informal language, often lacking the poetry Shakespeare's texts offer. On the other hand, this interpretation of Hamlet cannot be denied a certain emotional effect, although reached by different means than in previous translations, for example by adding emphasis at the end of a sentence, using mostly short, one- to two-syllable words. Urbánek succeeded in transmitting Hamlet's emotional sides of his inner processes by shortening his speeches as well as the length of individual expressions to make the speech more rapid and more rhythmical. Urbánek does not hesitate to repeat the same meaning in the sequence of different expressions for the same matter. Instead of preserving Shakespeare's poetical language he rather uses more straightforward expressive language, which shows Hamlet's sense of duty and his resoluteness to act.

Overall, Urbánek's and Lukavský's interpretation of Hamlet seems to be more rational than emotional, though more mature and complex than the view held by other translators. Bejblík and Lukeš, however, criticize Lukavský's Hamlet's rational concentration being "tak silné, že mu zabraňuje rozžít postavu v její životní plnosti – ať už (...) rysy Hamletova přátelství a laskavosti a zase ironie a sarkasmu" [so strong that it hinders him from living the character into its full liveliness – both Hamlet's friendship and kindness, as well as irony and sarcasm] (Bejblík-Lukeš, 1960). The reviewers feel

that Hamlet is lacking some essential sides of the character implied originally by Shakespeare, which, according to them, cannot be justified only by stating that Urbánek understood Hamlet in a different way and his interpretation of his character was enriched by his view of a Hamlet-warrior, or a Hamlet-revenger.

### 3.3.3. Fortinbras's *fastidiousness* versus *nobility*

In order to see the nature of Fortinbras in the way it is depicted in the translation by Zdeněk Urbánek, I will look at the character from the diachronic perspective. I will start from the first mention of his name by Horatio in the first act of the play, where he reminds his friends of the famous battle between Hamlet's father and Fortinbras, the king of Norway, who lost his life as well as all his lands there. However, when his son, young Fortinbras, gets to power after his father's death, he starts to claim his rights to the lost lands. A similar notion is made by Claudius in the second scene of the first act. Unlike Horatio in the previous scene, whose statement was a more or less unbiased observation of the past events, Claudius expresses his opinion of the young Fortinbras and evaluates his acting. The next reference of Fortinbras takes place on a plain in Denmark, where Hamlet meets Fortinbras's army, which passes along to gain a small piece of land in Poland. In the time when Hamlet sees a decisive warrior, prepared to fight hard to gain an unimportant piece of land, he is led to contemplation on his own hesitation whether to fulfil a great task of revenge or resign. When Hamlet meets Fortinbras for the last time, it is at the very moment of Hamlet's death, when Fortinbras appears at the Elsinor castle and Hamlet assumes it to be the right occasion for passing the reign onto him.

I would like to show most of the examples in which Fortinbras's character

appears, whether mentioned or not by Bejblík and Lukeš in their critical review. I again chose texts translated by E. A. Saudek and Břetislav Hodek so that I may analyse the differences or similarities of interpretation of Fortinbras by Czech translators from different periods of time. I also want to investigate in the possibility that any of the translations / interpretations might have approached the views of the character, adopted by Alois Bejblík and Milan Lukeš. They showed these views in the mentioned critical review, which focused mainly on the discrepancy between interpreting Fortinbras as a person who is proud and proprietary and as a person of a noble character (a “white prince”), who serves as a catharsis of the play.

#### 3.3.3.1. Interpretation of *desire to act*

In the first act of the play Horatio describes young Fortinbras and his behaviour to his friends. We are aware of the fact that Horatio has probably never met the prince Fortinbras in person, therefore it can be assumed that Horatio’s view of him is the same as how he is viewed by the general public. Fortinbras is publicly known as a nobleman “of unimproved mettle hot and full” (1.1.96), who “Shark’d up a list of lawless resolute” (1.1.98) in order to “recover of us, by strong hand / And terms compulsative, those foresaid lands / So by his father lost” (1.1.102-104). According to Hodek, Fortinbras is known as a man “žiháný nešlechtěnou odvahou” [streaked by an uncultivated courage], whereas both Saudek’s and Urbánek’s version talk about Fortinbras’s desire to act as “pln žízně po činech, jež spát mu nedá” [full of thirst for acts that do not let him sleep] (Saudek) and “toužící horkokrevně po činech” [longing hot-bloodedly for acts] (Urbánek). The collocation *hot and full* expresses Fortinbras’s readiness and desire to act, as well as Urbánek’s and Saudek’s translation of this phrase

do. Hodek, however, speaks “only” about his courage, which is uncultivated, or one might say rough, wild, or hot-blooded. This is the label, under which Fortinbras is generally known in public. However, to this comment on Fortinbras Shakespeare adds a note of the first step to action in this play: “Shark’d up a list of lawless resolute”. Fortinbras not only has the desire to act, but also acts. However, in each of the presented translations, he acts with a slightly different vigour. In Saudek’s version he “sehnal (...) bandu dobrodruhů” [hunted a band of adventurers], in Urbánek’s translation he “shromáždil (...) žoldnéřské tlupy” [collected mercenary band], and as per Hodek Fortinbras “jak žralok schlamstl bandu desperádů” [like a shark he swallowed a band of desperadoes]. In the latter example Fortinbras’s vigour of gathering his army for the battle “to recover (...) those foresaid lands” (1.1.102-103) is bigger than in the previous ones. Hodek preserves the metaphor of *a shark*, or of *to shark up*, used in the original, which expresses more of a ferocious nature of the leader of the army, whereas Urbánek is inclined to the more pragmatic act of gathering (“shromáždil”), on the contrary to Saudek’s more expressive “sehnal”.

As we can see almost from the beginning of the play, Fortinbras has the character of a courageous leader, who believes has rights to the lands lost by his father, and is ready to win them back, should he do so “by strong hand / And terms compulsory” (1.1.102-103). Urbánek’s translation, being the most condensed one of the presented translations, shows also the last cited part of this speech shortened to “násilným vpádem zabrat” [to take by forcible invasion]. Compared to Saudek and Hodek’s versions of this part it, however, does not decrease the meaning of the original. Saudek’s translation “vyrvat / nám násilím a ozbrojenou mocí” [to tear from us by force and armed power] is more faithful to the original wording, as well as even more literal

Hodek's translation: "dobýti od nás ozbrojenou rukou a vynucenou dohodou" [to capture from us by armed hand and forced treaty].

<i>Shakespeare</i>	<i>Saudek (1941)</i>	<i>Urbánek (1959)</i>	<i>Hodek (1982)</i>
<i>Horatio</i> . Now, sir, young Fortinbras, / <b>Of unimproved mettle hot and full, (...)</b> <b>Shark'd up a list of lawless resolute, (...)</b> <b>to recover of us, by strong hand / And terms compulsatory,</b> those foresaid lands / So by his father lost (1.1.95-104)	<i>Horacio</i> . (...) Jeho syn, princ Fortinbras, / <b>pln žízně po činech, jež spát mu nedá, / ted' sehnal (...)</b> <b>bandu dobrodruhů, / (...)</b> <b>vyrvat / nám násilím a ozbrojenou mocí</b> (...) ty kraje zas, jichž pozbyl jeho otec / svou porážkou.	<i>Horacio</i> . Ale jeho syn, / <b>toužící horkokrevně po činech, / shromáždil (...)</b> <b>žoldnéřské tlupy (...)</b> <b>násilným vpádem zabrat</b> území, / prohraná kdysi v onom souboji.	<i>Horatio</i> . A ted': mladý Fortinbras, / <b>žíhaný nešlechtěnou odvahou / (...)</b> <b>jak žralok schlamstl bandu desperádů (...)</b> <b>dobýti od nás ozbrojenou rukou / a vynucenou dohodou</b> ty kraje, / o které jeho otec přišel.

Similarly, though with a more personal view, Fortinbras and his intentions are described by king Claudius, who gained the royal crown by marrying the queen after his brother's death. By the same token, he became responsible for the international affairs of Denmark. Its current ruler, Claudius, is aware that Fortinbras wants to gain back the lost lands owned by Claudius now, and that he will do so in the belief that Claudius's state has been more "disjoint and out of frame" (1.2.20) since the death of his brother, and therefore more vulnerable. Together with the notion that Fortinbras is aware of his "advantage", and that he "hath not fail'd to pester" (1.2.22) the king, we get a picture of him being a self-conscious man, not afraid to reach what he believes belongs to him. Urbánek maintains this idea, and even reinforces it, by adding another meaning to the translation of the phrase "colleagued with the dream of his advantage" (1.2.21) as "se

dal vést klamnou vyhlídkou” [he let delusive expectations be his guide]. Urbánek’s translation shows that Fortinbras’s advantage was only illusionary, as Claudius believes. Similarly, Saudek and Hodek understand the phrase “the dream of his advantage” as “přelud své výhody” [illusion of his advantage] (Saudek) and as “iluzí své nadřazenosti” [chimera of his superiority] (Hodek). As per Urbánek’s version, Fortinbras is also perceived by Claudius as an insolent man, as we can see in his translation of “he hath not fail’d to pester us” by “drze mě teď žádá” [he asks me now proudly], whereas Saudek chooses *sužovat* [torment] as a translation for *pester* and Hodek *otravovat* [bother]. Both the latter translations express the unpleasant way of Fortinbras’s bothering, whereas Urbánek adds the nature of impertinence to his character.

<i>Shakespeare</i>	<i>Saudek (1941)</i>	<i>Urbánek (1959)</i>	<i>Hodek (1982)</i>
<i>King.</i> (...) Collegued with the <b>dream of his advantage</b> , / He hath not fail’d to <b>pester</b> us with message (1.2.21-22)	<i>Král.</i> (...) s tím <b>přeludem své výhody</b> se spiknuv, – / nic neváhal nás honem <b>sužovat</b> / poselstvím (...)	<i>Král.</i> (...) a tak se dal vést <b>klamnou vyhlídkou</b> / na snadný zisk a <b>drze</b> mě teď <b>žádá</b> (...)	<i>Král.</i> (...) spojil se s <b>iluzí své nadřazenosti</b> – / a začal nás hned <b>otravovat</b> (...)

Urbánek managed to depict Fortinbras as a warrior who does not hesitate to act. His character is in his translation approaching the character of Hamlet, described as a man longing for action as well. Here we can see the difference between Urbánek’s interpretation of the relation between Fortinbras and Hamlet and the similarities of their characters and the other translators’ interpretations of their contradictory characters: Fortinbras as a decisive and Hamlet as an indecisive man.

### 3.3.3.2. Interpretation of *delicacy* versus *fastidiousness*

Before scene 4.4, Fortinbras is shown mostly as a decisive man, a mighty leader, although slightly naive (“Colleagued with the dream of his advantage”), yet brave enough to “pester” his enemy. Zdeněk Urbánek maintains this image, although his translation is rather simplified and the phrases condensed in a shorter text than the original. However, Urbánek already indicates in the first act that Fortinbras not only pesters king Claudius, but he is also perceived as an insolent man, asking for his supposed rights.

The beginning of the fourth scene of the fourth act takes place on a plain before the battle campaign, where Hamlet meets Fortinbras, though not in person, and gets a more precise picture of him. This is also the part, which was criticized in Urbánek’s translation by Alois Bejblík and Milan Lukeš the most. Having learnt about Hamlet’s description of Fortinbras as “a delicate and tender prince” (4.4.48), translated as “zhýčkaný princ” [fastidious prince], they could not understand the change of Fortinbras’s character as implied in Urbánek’s translation. They would neither approve of the further description of his character, “whose spirit with divine ambition puff’d” (4.4.49) seen by Urbánek as “*pyšn[á] ctižádost[í]*” [*proud* ambition]. Even if it was not for the controversial translation, I see the scene on the plain as the breaking point of Hamlet’s attitude. He is confronted with a warrior who is willing to fight for a small land, with the risk of losing his life, because it is a question of honour for him. Hamlet can see himself as unable to take a stand and act for a much greater reason.

In Shakespeare’s text Hamlet describes Fortinbras as “a delicate and tender prince, whose spirit with divine ambition puff’d / Makes mouths at the invisible event” (4.4.48-50). From these two adjectives, *delicate* and *tender*, we learn that Fortinbras

might be viewed by Hamlet not only as an “iron” warrior, which he later admires, but also as a vulnerable man made of flesh and bones. Despite his fragile body and soul he is still ready to act. Hamlet admires the contrast of the physical or mental conception and the eagerness to do something despite all his weaknesses. This is what I understand under the terms “delicate and tender prince”. Urbánek probably imagines a similar meaning of the terms, but by translating them by the adjective phrase *zhýčkaný princ* [fastidious / spoilt prince] and by adding “se v pyšné ctižádosti směje (...)” [he laughs in proud ambition] as a translation of “with divine ambition puff’d / Makes mouths”, he, probably unintentionally, puts Fortinbras in a rather distorted light. Urbánek explains in his defence against Bejblík and Lukeš’s critical attack that he chose the word *zhýčkaný* after investigating the meanings of the expression *delicate*, which according to Shorter Oxford dictionary, can also be used in the sense of “given to pleasure or luxury”, “self-indulgent” or “effeminate”. The word *tender* is used as the second part of the doublet and according to Urbánek only reinforces the meaning of the first adjective – *delicate*. Urbánek’s intention, however, was not to contradict the “given” character of Fortinbras, previously presented by Horatio and Claudius as a vigorous warrior, for he does not believe that anything as a “given” character in this case exists. He wanted to show also “the other side” of Fortinbras – a capricious and vainglorious man. Urbánek supports his belief by mentioning the commentary made by the captain of Fortinbras’s army: “We go to gain a little patch of ground / That hath in it no profit but the name” (4.4.18-19), as well as Hamlet’s commentary which follows: “This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace” (4.4.27), translated by Urbánek: “To je ten vřed zpychlého blahobytu!” [this is the imposthume /ulcer of prideful wealth]. These statements prove, as Urbánek says, the nature of the military campaign: “Fortinbrasovo tažení je vrtoch a

marnost.” [Fortinbras’s campaign is a whim and futility] (Urbánek, 1960). Urbánek believes that Hamlet’s view of Fortinbras is not unambiguous, as neither Shakespeare’s intention for presenting this character in a certain light was. On the one hand, Hamlet despises Fortinbras’s pride and fastidiousness, with which the young prince assumes he can gain whatever he wishes. On the other hand, Hamlet looks up to him in the time he knows he should be at least as brave and active as Fortinbras is.

It is interesting to compare Urbánek’s translation of the discussed description of Fortinbras with Saudek’s and Hodek’s versions. Both Saudek and Hodek decide to stay faithful to the previously gained knowledge of Fortinbras as a brave and noble character. Saudek translates the phrase “delicate and tender prince” as “útlým princem” [tender / thin prince] and Hodek as “jemným, ušlechtilým knížetem” [gentle, noble prince]. Both translations restrain from adding other supposed meanings to the original, expressing the character of Fortinbras similarly to “delicate and tender”.

The second important part of the description of Fortinbras in this speech, “Whose spirit with divine ambition puff’d” is also interpreted differently by Urbánek, and by Saudek and Hodek. The main difference lies in the translation of *divine ambition*, which is *v pyšné ctíždosti* [in proud ambition] in Urbánek’s version and *božskou ctíždostí* [by divine ambition] in both Saudek’s and Hodek’s versions, who stayed closer to the original by translating the phrase literally. Urbánek shifted the meaning of *divine* – *godly* to another meaning, understanding the word *divine* in the context of “spirit with divine ambition puff’d” as a sarcasm. Hamlet, according to Urbánek’s translation, is not a perfect man, with godly virtues. Holding onto the previously mentioned side of Fortinbras’s character, Urbánek carries on depicting him as a proud, ruthless and conceited person. Urbánek again supports his decision by

referring to other meanings of the words *divine* (more than human) and *puff* (*puffed up* – pompous), offered by the Shorter Oxford dictionary. He also notices that the word *ambitious* is already used in another context, when Hamlet talks to Ophelia about the monastery, with the meaning of self-accusation.

<i>Shakespeare</i>	<i>Saudek (1941)</i>	<i>Urbánek (1959)</i>	<i>Hodek (1982)</i>
<i>Hamlet. (...) Witness this army of such mass and charge / Led by a delicate and tender prince, / Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd (4.4.47-49)</i>	<i>Hamlet. (...) To velké vojsko třeba, / vedené útlým princem, jehož duch, / nabitý božskou ctižádostí</i>	<i>Hamlet. (...) Co třeba tahle mocná armáda: / zhýčkaný princ, jenž stojí v jejím čele, /se v pyšné ctižádosti</i>	<i>Hamlet. (...) Hle, toto vojsko, rozsáhlé a drahé, / vedené jemným, ušlechtilým knížetem, / jehož duch, nadšen božskou ctižádostí</i>

Urbánek's Hamlet feels both contempt and admiration for Fortinbras, unlike Saudek and Hodek, who depict Fortinbras as a noble and delicate man, full of "divine" virtues. In Bejblík and Lukeš's words, Fortinbras is seen also by Saudek and Hodek more as a "white prince", heading towards the finale of the play as a future ruler of Denmark.

### 3.3.3.3. Catharsis

In their review *Hamlet a pojetí* Alois Bejblík and Milan Lukeš express their perception of Fortinbras as the usual shakespearean "white prince", serving the finale of the play as "ztělesněná tragická katarze díla, záruka, že bude opět nastolen pořádek a obnoven mravní řád" [embodied tragic catharsis of the play, a guarantee that order will be established again and moral code restored] (Bejblík-Lukeš, 1960). Throughout their

critical article on Urbánek's translation they believe that Urbánek misunderstood and consequently misinterpreted the character of Fortinbras. They build their opinions on the excerpts from *Hamlet*, shown above, approving of the more literal translation by Saudek, who perceived Fortinbras as a noble and "healthily" proud man, whose virtuous ambition was to fight for something he felt had rights to. Bejblík and Lukeš see Fortinbras's role, besides in his inspiring Hamlet to act, also in his appearance in the finale as "embodied catharsis", offering a redeeming solution to the tragic situation, as well as salvation, to the kingdom of Denmark. As has already been said, Zdeněk Urbánek could not agree with this interpretation, saying that "ke katarzi ve smyslu odhalení 'světla v tmách', jímž je 'ryzost velkých srdcí', došlo už před jeho příchodem na Elsinor" [catharsis in the sense of exposure of 'the light in darkness', which is 'the purity of great hearts', took place already before his arrival at Elsinore] (Urbánek, 1960).

Catharsis as such is a subjective conception, perceived by individual viewers as happening in different moments of the tragedy. Generally, the catharsis enters upon the climax of a tragedy as a purgative resolution of a conflict. As perception of catharsis is an individual issue, it cannot be denied that Bejblík and Lukeš may feel it should take place by the end of the play, whereas Urbánek puts it long before that. Of course, they try to prove their claims by supporting them by the overall, different perceptions of the characters and their roles in the play. Bejblík and Lukeš are convinced the catharsis appears with Fortinbras entering the Elsinore castle and offering a solution to the situation of the tragedy, in which the country lost its rulers and now is lacking a strong personality, which would become its next leader. Urbánek, on the other hand, views catharsis before the finale, within the plot and characters already.

In case the climax of the play is in the final duel between Hamlet and Laertes and in the consequent tragedy of multiple murder, in which the entire royal family die, the following catharsis may be seen in the piety act of dying Hamlet talking to his friend Horatio. Hamlet dissuades Horatio from killing himself and gives him instructions on what to do next. The act of Hamlet contemplating on the situation includes his remembering the prince Fortinbras and calling him the future king of Denmark. This scene could be viewed as a relief expected by the audience after the climactic moment of death. Hamlet peacefully and without emotions, appoints the future king by “giving him a vote”. Yet, in different translation his conviction about this future may be weaker or stronger. Shakespeare’s “But I do prophesy” includes Hamlet’s conviction in his opinion, with the help of the emphasizing auxiliary verb *do*. Saudek translates this by a less emphatic “Leč prorokuji” [but I prophecy] and Bejblík by “jedno však předvídám” [but I foresee one thing], whereas Urbánek gives Hamlet a stronger belief by using the verb *vědět* [know] in “Vím jenom to” [I only know this]. Hamlet “knows” that Fortinbras is supposed to lead the country and entrusts the government to him. The worries about the future are gone and the peace is installed in this kind of catharsis.

<i>Shakespeare</i>	<i>Saudek (1941)</i>	<i>Urbánek (1959)</i>	<i>Hodek (1982)</i>
<i>Hamlet. (...) But I do prophesy</i> the election lights / On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice (5.2.369-370)	<i>Hamlet. (...) Leč prorokuji</i> , dánským králem zvolen / že bude Fortinbras; <i>svůj</i> mroucí hlas mu dávám.	<i>Hamlet. (...) Vím jenom to</i> , / že dánským králem bude Fortinbras. / V minutě smrti pro něj hlasuji.	<i>Hamlet. (...) jedno však předvídám</i> : volba padne / na Fortinbrase: má můj zmírající hlas.

Bejblík and Lukeš place the catharsis in the final Fortinbras’s entry to the scene sighing (shouting or stating): “This quarry cries on havoc. / O proud death, / What feast

is toward in thine eternal cell, / That thou so many princes at a shot / So bloodily hast struck?” (5.2.378-381). Clearly, they see Fortinbras as a saviour who comes to the place of death to redeem it from total destruction – a “white prince”. Bejblík and Lukeš put emphasis on this last scene of the future king, who sees the situation, understands his role and saves the kingdom by “embrac[ing] [his] fortune” (5.2.402), which he has “some rights of memory for” (5.2.403) anyway. With this notion in mind they would not agree with Urbánek’s previous interpretation of Fortinbras as, apart from a man of action, a proud and fastidious prince. This, according to the critics, contradicts the final effect of the “white prince” on the scene. I would agree more with Urbánek’s argument that there is no such term as “white prince” that would be typical of Shakespeare’s plays and that Fortinbras should have his strengths as well as weaknesses. Only this helped Hamlet to take action in the previous fight and also in his final act of giving the vote to Fortinbras, whom Hamlet sees a man of flesh and bones, who is able to fill in a place of a ruler and help the almost helpless situation. Hamlet realizes, as Urbánek says, that “ideál je neuskutečnitelný a svět, jaký je, trvá dál a potřebuje vládcu” [the ideal is unrealizable and the world as it is goes on and needs a ruler] (Urbánek, 1960).

## 4. Conclusion

In my thesis I wanted to focus on the translation style of Zdeněk Urbánek, a Czech writer, translator and intellectual. First, my intentions were to introduce him as a unique personality, to describe his life and work, which were supposed to outline his intellectual, philosophical and artistic tendencies in his later works of translation. Zdeněk Urbánek was an energetic man, who, especially in the field of poetry and art, tried to show the way young generation of poets and artists should proceed in their thinking and their understanding of their role in the Czech intellectual world. In his philosophy, Urbánek presented the need of Czech society to create a new “man” who would be freed from his social bounds, who would act from his own inner conviction. In this way of Urbánek’s innovative thinking I see the source of and the reason for his later innovative way of writing, translating and interpretation of the translated works.

I chose Urbánek’s translations of Shakespeare as the main part of my thesis to depict his art of drama translation applied in the time of stagnancy of Czech shakespearean translating on translations by Erik Adolf Saudek. Urbánek broke Saudek’s privilege on translating Shakespeare in the 1950s and 1960s, starting with his translation of *Hamlet* in 1959. Apart from Saudek’s poetic and baroque style, full of beautiful Czech languages and preserved metaphors, Urbánek’s translations were perceived as too much simplifying the original language, too vague and brief. This was the reason why, besides other reviewers and theoreticians, two translation scholars, Alois Bejblík and Milan Lukeš, started to criticize his translations after the opening night of *Hamlet* at National Theatre in Prague in 1959. I wanted to draw the main points of their discussion with Zdeněk Urbánek on the pages of *Divadlo* magazine and show their individual views of this particular translation.

In order to compare the theoretical criticism and the particular disputable elements of the translation, mentioned in the Bejblík-Lukeš review, I decided to draw the individual features Bejblík and Lukeš did not agree with and analyse them in the chapter, following the theoretical analysis. By this elaborate comparison I meant to manifest in which parts of their criticism either Bejblík and Lukeš, or in his defence Urbánek might have been right. As the main focus of my study I chose the interpretation of characters and the aspects which influence different understanding of individual characters in a play. For this analysis I chose the most discussed and most controversial characters of Urbánek's translation: Hamlet and Fortinbras. The first question asked was: Is Hamlet viewed as an unbalanced, indecisive man, wading in his helpless emotions, or is he a brave and inspired man, fighting against his emotions and for a deserved revenge? Urbánek's view was the latter one, which I supported by many examples from Urbánek's translation of Hamlet's language, compared with the translations by other Czech translators, Urbánek's predecessor, E. A. Saudek, and successor, Břetislav Hodek. The second question asked in the analysis was: Is Fortinbras a proud, ambitious and fastidious warrior, fighting only for his own interests, or is he a noble, decisive and brave man, ready for any noble or forcible action needed for the fortune of the country he was entrusted the reign over?

The main two questions were conceived from different semantic views. By the end of the analysis I tried to summon the main features of the interpretation of these characters, compared with the previously described theoretical views. It cannot be said that the characters can only be interpreted in a particular way, because in the field of interpretation there is no right or wrong way. Interpretation of characters from the interpretation of the whole play, however, it is always a very subjective, though very

important matter. For this reason, I consider essential that individual interpretations are supported by further discussions and explanations of the translators and theoreticians, in case the drama translating should proceed in new, innovative ways.

## 5. Czech résumé

Zdeněk Urbánek (1917 – 2008) byl českým spisovatelem, překladatelem a veřejně činným člověkem. V roce 1939 začal studovat českou a anglickou filologii na Filozofické fakultě Univerzity Karlovy v Praze, kterou buhužel nedokončil kvůli uzavírání univerzit nacisty za 2. světové války. Zdeněk Urbánek nato začal pracovat jako redaktor několika nakladatelství. Za pomoc židovským občanům za války mu bylo v roce 1993 v Izraeli uděleno ocenění *Spravedlivý mezi národy*. Po válce pracoval Urbánek v redakci *Svobodného slova* a poté jako redaktor nezávislého listu *Národní osvobození*. V letech 1949-1957 byl zaměstnán u *Čs. státního filmu*.

Kromě příspěvků do novin a literárních časopisů publikoval Urbánek již od 30. let také vlastní tvorbu. V 30. a 40. letech mu vycházely sbírky básní a lyrických či epických textů. Nejdůležitější místo v jeho myšlenkovém rozvoji zaujímá jeho esej *Člověk v mladé poezii*, jímž v roce 1940 reagoval na vydání *Jarního almanachu básnického 1940*, jenž se objevil jako literární manifest mladých autorů sdružených kolem Kamila Bednáře. Po zveřejnění těchto článků se Urbánkovo jméno často objevovalo v diskuzích v časopise *Kritický měsíčník*.

Překládat začal Zdeněk Urbánek po roce 1959 převážně anglickou a americkou literaturu, jako např. dílo Jamese Joyce, Walta Whitmana, Eugena O'Neill, T. S. Eliota, Williama Saroyana, Johna Galsworthyho, Williama Faulknera, Charlese Dickense a dalších. Hry Williama Shakespeara začal překládat také v roce 1959, kdy mu byla nabídnuta příležitost přeložit tragédii *Hamlet* pro inscenaci Národního divadla v Praze. Režisér Jaromír Pleskot a spolupracovníci Otomar Krejča a Karel Kraus Urbánkovi sdělili svou představu o novém pojetí celé hry i jednotlivých postav a dohodli se s ním na stejném pojetí plánovaného překladu. Urbánek na tuto dohodu přistoupil a přispěl tak

ke vzniku představení, které se v té době stalo pro české divadlo přelomovým. Hra byla v roce 1959 také publikována s českým názvem *Tragický příběh dánského prince Hamleta*. Překlad sám se setkal jak s obdivem tak s nepochopením mezi českými kritiky a teoretiky, kteří o něm vedli bouřlivé diskuze ve veřejných periodikách. Další Shakespearovy hry, které Urbánek přeložil, byly *Romeo a Julie* (1960), *Richard III.* (1962), *Julius Caesar* (1967), *Richard II.* (1972) a *Jindřich IV.*, publikovaný pod názvem *Falstaff a prince Jindra* (1976).

V letech 1968-1969 navštívil Zdeněk Urbánek studijně *All Souls College* Oxfordské univerzity. O rok dříve se spolu s dalšími významnými českými spisovateli, jako byli např. Ludvík Vaculík, Milan Kundera, Ivan Klíma nebo Pavel Kohout, zúčastnil kongresu *Svazu čs. spisovatelů*, jímž byl členem. Spisovatelé na kongresu vyjádřili svůj kritický postoj k tehdejšímu politickému systému a zneužívání moci nad kulturním životem a cenzurou psaného slova v tehdejší Čkoslovensku. Po kongresu byli účastníci stíháni komunistickou stranou a od roku 1977, kdy Urbánek spolu s dalšími podepsal *Chartu 77*, platil i pro něj zákaz jakékoli veřejné činnosti, včetně publikace. Urbánkovy překlady tak od té doby mohly vycházet pouze pod krycími jmény osobností jako byly např. Jarmila Emmerová, Zdeněk Kirschner, Eva Kondrysová a Josef Schwarz. Pouze po roce 1989 mohl Urbánek opět začít publikovat a cestovat po univerzitách v zahraničí. V roce 1990 habilitoval z dramaturgie na AMU v Praze a o rok později se stal jejím rektorem. V roce 1992 z Akademie odešel. 12. června 2008 Zdeněk Urbánek zemřel.

Ve své práci jsem se zaměřila na překladatelskou činnost Zdenka Urbánka, jmenovitě na jeho kontroverzní překlad *Hamleta*, který stál v opozici k tehdy zažitým překladům Erika Adolfa Saudka. Urbánek zlomil saudkovské privilegium na překládání

Shakespeara v 50. a 60. letech tím, že zaujal zcela odlišnou překladatelskou metodu, oproštěnou od tehdy typického saudkovského poetizujícího a barokizujícího stylu. Urbánek přišel s mnohem modernějším a zjednodušeným jazykem, který měl mít blíže k porozumění široké veřejnosti. Jeho styl byl však zpočátku spíše chápán jako příliš ochuzený o poetiku a typicky shakespearovské metafory, jako jazyk jako vágní a příliš jednoduchý. Jeho největšími kritiky z řad překladatelů a teoretiků byli Alois Bejblík a Milan Lukeš, kteří s Urbánkem na toto téma, konkrétně o jeho překladu *Hamleta*, vedli zostřenou polemiku na stránkách časopisu *Divadlo*.

Ve své práci jsem se rozhodla provést rozbor této polemiky jak z teoretického, tak z praktického hlediska, kdy jsem se konkrétní úryvky kritizovaného Urbánkova překladu snažila porovnat jak s originálem, tak s překlady Urbánkova předchůdce E. A. Saudka a také následovníka Břetislava Hodka. Tímto jsem chtěla prezentovat oddíly, které Bejblík s Lukešem kritizovali a obhájit v konkrétních případech jak kritiky, tak samotného překladatele. Hlavním zaměřením mé studie byla různá pojetí postav, konkrétně postavy Hamleta a Fortinbrase, a aspekty, které ovlivňují různé chápání těchto postav. První otázkou, kterou jsem si pokládala, spolu se Zdeňkem Urbánkem a dalšími tvůrci inscenace Národního divadla z roku 1959, bylo, zda lze Hamleta pokládat spíše za nevyrovnaného, nerozhodného člověka, plného zoufalých emocí, či zda je Hamlet spíš statečným mužem, rozhodnutým pomstít smrt svého otce. Toto byl spíše Urbánkův postoj a ten jsem chtěla podpořit několika příklady jeho překladu. Další otázkou, kterou se v části analýzy překladu zabývám je postava Fortinbrase, nahlíženého buďto jako pyšného, ambiciózního válečníka, nebo jako šlechtetného, rozhodného muže, který použije sílu k dobytí štěstí a míru pro svou nebo jemu svěřenou zemi.

Na konci analýzy se snažím shrnout hlavní stránky pojetí těchto dvou charakterů ve srovnání s hlavními body zmíněné kritiky Bejblíka a Lukeše. Docházím k závěru, že není možné vytvořit konkrétní neměnné pojetí postav, protože v oblasti interpretace není správná nebo špatná cesta. Každý autor překladu může původní dílo pochopit jinak a překlad nikdy nebude kopií originálu, ale opět jen dalším originálním textem. Interpretace, zde konkrétně pojetí jednotlivých postav, bude vždy subjektivní, ať už byl původní záměr autora originálu jakýkoli. Z tohoto důvodu pokládám za důležité, aby jednotlivé interpretace byly podpořené diskuzemi překladatelů a teoretiků, které pomohou najít nové, inovativní způsoby pro překládání.

## 6. Works cited

In my thesis I used articles and critical reviews from various periodicals mostly from the time after the opening night of *Hamlet* at National theatre in Prague (1959, early 1960s). For the source was not available sometimes, I quote as the source Divadelní ústav (Theatre Institute) in Prague.

The source of the translations of *Hamlet* by E. A. Saudek and Břetislav Hodek is Kapradí Project (<http://www.phil.muni.cz/kapradi/>).

For English-speaking readers, the translations of the quotations from Czech into English were made by the author of this thesis herself and have not been published anywhere else yet.

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