

## The Appropriation and Some Recent Uses of the Shakespeare Canon I: Jan Kott and Traditional Shakespeare Criticism\*

Janja Ciglar-Žanić  
Faculty of Philosophy, Zagreb

The present essay attempts to examine the relation in which traditional Shakespearean criticism stands to some rival discursive practices in the same area of study. Concentrating on the position which Jan Kott's Shakespearean texts occupy in the Shakespearean universe of discourse, the author believes to discern the outlines of a hierarchical power configuration in this area, with traditional Shakespearean criticism placed in a position of overdetermination in relation to rival discursive practices and using representatively ideological strategies to protect its primacy in the appropriation and the uses of the Shakespeare canon. The author claims the traces of a hegemonistic nature of traditional Shakespearean criticism are clearly revealed in the rhetorical cast of the admonitions levelled at Jan Kott by prominent Shakespearean traditionalists. A few examples are briefly analyzed to demonstrate the point.

"Inexorable as the changing year 'contemporary' versions and interpretations of Shakespeare come forth as by a natural process".<sup>1</sup> It is in this overtly ironical vein with a more than slightly Chaucerian ring that Robert Adams begins his review of a new book on Shakespeare in 1987. Incidentally, (or not so incidentally in view of our present context) the "contemporary" version of Shakespeare" prompting Adams' introductory snub happens to be Jan Kott's recent Shakespearean study provocatively entitled *The Bottom Translation*.

In his *Short History of Shakespearean Criticism*, published in 1965, Arthur Eastman comments on the phenomenon of the ever mounting Shakespeare criticism in the following way: "The sun does not set on Shakespeare. The criticism mounts. The *Annotated World Bibliography* for 1965 of the *Shakespeare Quarterly* lists no less than 1356 items, ranging from "Shakespeare's Kaufmann von Venedig in unserer Zeit", to

\* This essay is a slightly revised and expanded version of a paper read at The Fifth International Conference: New Trends in English and American Studies (Cracow, April 2-7, 1990).

1. Robert M. Adams, "Much Ado About Everything", *The New York Review*, November 1987, p. 46.

“The Impact of Shakespeare on Urdu literature”, to an article in Japanese on “Ritual Elements in Shakespeare History Plays”, to the query “Was the Bard an Obstetrician?” (...) “The bibliography of dissertations and studies devoted to *Hamlet*”, says Jan Kott (*Shakespeare Our Contemporary*), “is already twice the size of Warsaw’s telephone directory”.<sup>2</sup> Though we may not be fully acquainted with the size of Warsaw’s telephone directory in 1964, the emphasis in these statements on the amount and diversity of interest in Shakespeare in the past couple of decades is quite unmistakable.

If anything, the last decade has witnessed an even more intensive resurgence of interest in the “tombless Monument”, an interest characterized, moreover, according to Robert Weimann’s assessment of it, by both “the intensely theoretical orientation and the methodological awareness, as well as by the extraordinary breath and diversity”.<sup>3</sup> The new contributions by the representatives of cultural materialism (Dollimore’s term for a new critical paradigm in cultural studies) and its American equivalent, new historicism, at present include dozens of individual Shakespearean studies, notably such, for example, as Jonathan Dollimore’s *Radical Tragedy* (1984), Leonard Tennenhouse’s *Power on Display: The Politics of Shakespeare’s Genres* (1986), Catherine Belsey’s *The Subject of Tragedy* (1985) or Stephen Greenblatt’s *Shakespearean Negotiations* (1989) as well as several collections of essays such as Dollimore-Sinfield’s *Political Shakespeare* (1985) and similarly John Drakakis’s *Alternative Shakespeares* (1985). And importantly, though quite independently from those just mentioned, Jan Kott’s new Shakespearean study in 1987.

In a situation crowded like this, one must deal of necessity only with principal figures, with generals so to speak, to use Schlegel’s comparison with military history, with those, in short, who performed actions of distinction. “We do not”, as Eastman puts it, “perhaps cannot, give the names of all who fought in the critical battles, denying or asserting Shakespeare’s authorship, condemning or celebrating his art, quarreling over the definition of his characters and vision”.<sup>4</sup> Usually, we must and do concentrate on those who are responsible for a radical turn or a break-through in the study of what is perhaps the greatest literary canon of Western literature. To study such men, Eastman claims, is exhilarating, because their boldness of vision, courage, richness of experience and depth of sensitivity, make the hours spent in their presence doubly golden – once for the light they reflect from Shakespeare: once for the light they yield from themselves. Eastman’s reference is to the figures such as Ben Jonson and Samuel Johnson, Dryden and Morgann, Goethe and Schlegel, Coleridge and Hazlitt, Pater, Bradley and Wilson Knight. One is strongly tempted to add Jan Kott to the list, and amend Eastman’s doubly golden into triply golden hours.

There are writers, and Jan Kott easily proves to be one of these, who besides opening up new and unexpected perspectives and uncovering relevantly new ways of looking at seemingly familiar phenomena by some special ‘litmus’ quality of their texts in contact with rival discursive practices, particularly certain canonized orders of discourse (such as Shakespearean in our present instance), perform yet another and a very important

2. Arthur M. Eastman, *A Short History of Shakespearean Criticism* (New York: Norton, 1974), p. xix.

3. Robert Weimann, “Shakespeare (De)Canonized: Conflicting Uses of ‘Authority’ and ‘Representation’”, *New Literary History*, 20, No. 1, 1988, p. 66.

4. Eastman, *A Short History of Shakespearean Criticism*, p. xix.

task. In comparison as well as in the interaction with the dominating, institutionalized paradigm of Shakespeare criticism, Kott's texts thus seem to possess a capacity for transforming themselves into genuine deconstructive instruments which succeed in sensitizing us to the hidden, subtle and complex ideological strategies behind the ostensibly universal and self-evident truths and assumptions of the authority-governed practices of Shakespearean criticism, particularly of its implicatedness in the formation and uses of the Shakespearean canon. It is the intention of the present paper to argue and elaborate this view somewhat, by indicating those interaction points of Kott's Shakespearean study with the traditional, legitimized Shakespearean criticism in which the latter is revealed as a hegemonistic ideological practice defending its powerful vested interests by staking out, among other things, a representatively ideological claim to dominate and control overall epistemological and hermeneutical operations in the area of its study.

In 1985 John Drakakis complains<sup>5</sup> – and in this he is far from isolated – that despite various and serious challenges from diverse quarters “the existing dominant paradigm” (Raymond Williams' term) of Shakespearean study, the traditional, heavily fortified interpretive model, speaking of Shakespeare in protomythical terms of the genius representing the universality of human nature and experience, still stands, fanatically insisting on some abiding univocal function of the ‘tombless heritage’ while at the same time refusing to examine its own epistemological assumptions. Preoccupied with textual integrity and the transcendent significance of Shakespeare, insisting on some single transcendental signified, be it the idea of nature, harmony, some universally valid notion of experience, which was before, above and beyond beliefs, this “last bastion of the existing dominant paradigm” still remains largely untouched by new theoretical and methodological concerns, a still point with a seemingly infinite capacity to either absorb, domesticate or else isolate even the most hostile of challenges.

The myth grounded on what Robert Weimann calls “the comfortably inarticulate assumption of a spontaneous given connection between some intrinsic quality of a text and its canonical status and value”,<sup>6</sup> persists, resisting the exposure of its assumptions by a deflection of attention onto Shakespeare's texts as the repositories of eternal wisdom. This essentialist humanist perspective implicitly claiming that historical elements of Shakespeare's texts could be pared away to reveal an essential irreducible “oceanic mind” subject to no historical pressures or imperatives whatsoever and the consequent methodological assumption that the task of interpretation is to re-present the original, the true meaning, to make present again what was after all some continuously valid aspect of human nature and experience, exhibit even to a tentative deconstructionist's eye or when submitted to Foucaultian “critical” analysis,<sup>7</sup> many formative features of an ideology.

5. John Drakakis, “Introduction”, in *Alternative Shakespeares*, ed. J. Drakakis (London and New York: Routledge, 1985), pp. 1–26. For similar views on traditional Shakespearean scholarship see also other articles in the same collection, particularly James H. Kavanagh's “Shakespeare in ideology”, pp. 144–166 and Jonathan Dollimore's and Alan Sinfield's “History and ideology: the instance of *Henry V*”, pp. 206–228.

6. Weimann, “Shakespeare (De)Canonized”, p. 65.

7. In Foucault, the ‘critical’ analysis examines the complex procedures by which the production of discourse in a society is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed “to ward off its powers and

The eradication of historical pressures, allied with the uncritical acceptance of a non-political, universal “humanity” is in itself, as Roland Barthes indicates, a function of ideology.<sup>8</sup> This thrust of traditional Shakespearean scholarship together with its basically monological approach reveals distinctive traces of its essential nature. It, namely, arises as an ideological configuration which by an imperceptible and subtle extension of its influence has established itself as a canon. By appealing to the mythical authority of its discursive subject and by positing some a-historical transcendental universal in the nature of Shakespeare’s plays, this study has overimposed itself upon rival discursive practices, appropriating the principal place in the universe of Shakespearean discourse and using subtle, complex and flexible strategies to protect its interests.

In a situation which does not enable us to cross ideological boundaries, ideology primarily arises, as Hyden White remarks, “in those interpretive practices which are ostensibly most remote from overtly political concerns, practices which are carried out under the aegis of a purely disinterested search for the truth”.<sup>9</sup> These practices produce ideological effects *per definitionem*, reproducing the existing power relations in society by making them invisible and self-evident. “And yet... what is at stake in this will to truth, in this will to utter the ‘true’ discourse”, asks Foucault in his cartography of discourse, “if not desire and power?” “Thus”, he continues, “all that appears to our eyes is a truth conceived as a richness, a fecundity, a gentle and insidiously universal force, and in contrast we are unaware of the will to truth, that prodigious machinery designed to exclude”.<sup>10</sup> All those who, from time to time in our history, have tried to dodge this will to truth and to put it into question against truth, Foucault concludes, have experienced some forms of the strategies of *selection*, *exclusion* and *domination*, designed to ensure the reproduction of and the retainment of the institutionalized, dominant discourse.

In revealing the naturalizing, the conservative and even the chauvinistic conceptions of Shakespeare in this century, as Robert Weimann observes, the newest theory and criticism (his reference is mostly to the new historicist efforts) has made it possible to suspect that the canonized Shakespearean text is a text appropriated by certain powerful interests in society. Even more importantly, the status of canonization is held to conceal, by its prestige and institutional sanctions, the vested interests behind the process of appropriation.<sup>11</sup> The newest Shakespearean criticism has in this last decade been making repeated and strenuous efforts to make us aware of such ideological uses of transcendence implicit in traditional Shakespearean study. At the same time it has been developing a new way of interpreting Shakespeare’s textual strategies, returning them to the contradictions of their historical moment and drawing our attention to the extent to which the interpreter and his or her historical moment are present in all appropriations of earlier literary works.

dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality”, p. 52. As the main procedures in this institutional control of discourse Foucault identifies selection, exclusion, rejection, ‘rarefaction’ and domination. M. Foucault, *The Order of Discourse*, trans. Ian McLeod, in *Untying the Text*, ed. R. Young (London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 48–79.

8. Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lanvers (London: Jonathan Cape, 1972), p. 128.

9. Hayden White, “The Politics of Historical Interpretation: Discipline and Desublimation”, *Critical Inquiry* 9, 1982, p. 113.

10. M. Foucault, *The Order of Discourse*, p. 56.

11. R. Weimann, “Shakespeare (De)Canonized”, p. 71.

By challenging the notion of 'originating experience' (Foucault), of meaning and signification as pre-given, by drawing our attention acutely to the fact that there is no escaping from historicity, these recent attempts at re-appropriating Shakespeare have also brought into question the degree to which the former insistence on some aspects of the Shakespeare canon is justified. At the same time they have started questioning the overall justification for the centrality of epistemological orientation in earlier Shakespeare studies, redirecting those studies consequently in the onto-teleological direction.

It was, however, Jan Kott with his uniquely "elegant and startling" readings of Shakespeare's plays and his "most welcome sense of the living theater amidst the neoplatonism and allusion" (Stephen Orgel, in the review of *The Bottom Translation*) who had led the way representing at the same time the first strong individual challenge to the domination discourse. Why Kott is turning into a 'blind spot' in the new historicist studies of Shakespeare, instead of being acknowledged as one of its avant-couriers, is another matter, which is in itself not unworthy of a more sustained interest.<sup>12</sup> The conspicuous absence of reference – in new historicist writings<sup>13</sup> – to Kott could perhaps be discussed in terms of Harold Bloom's "anxiety of influence" (whose revisionist ratios of distancing from "the strong writer" also include various forms of elusion<sup>14</sup>) or it could be brought into connection with more consciously pragmatic interests of the new Shakespearean criticism.

Be that as it may, it was Jan Kott who did by implication, what new historicists are attempting to do explicitly, programmatically and at length. Not only has Jan Kott's *Shakespeare Our Contemporary* (1964) made the first radical rupture in institutionalized Shakespearean discourse, but it has also been implemental in exposing the monopolistic position which this scholarship has come to occupy in the Shakespearean order of discourse. And as can be discerned from its academic reception, Jan Kott's more recent *The Bottom Translation* (1987) continues to perform much the same function, despite Kott's modified theoretical and hermeneutical perspective encountered there.<sup>15</sup> It is, namely, in the reactions to Kott that it most clearly comes to light to what extent

12. I return to this issue in more detail in Part II of this essay: "The *Tempest*: Conflicting Multiplicity of the Cultural Perspective".

13. Mentioning of Jan Kott in the writings of these new Shakespearean scholars hardly ever amounts to more than an occasional, stray reference such as, for example, Marilyn French's in her extensive *Shakespeare's Division of Experience* (London: Sphere Books, 1983), p. 360: "But Jan Kott, who if he does not always see the trees at least sees the woods, blurts out the basic definition of the play". References to Kott are conspicuously lacking even from those studies (of *The Tempest*, for instance) which discuss the play very much along the same lines as those proposed by Kott in his "The *Tempest*, or Repetition". Cf. for example, Paul Brown's, "'This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine': *The Tempest* and the discourse of colonialism", in *Political Shakespeare*, ed. J. Dollimore and A. Sinfield (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1985), pp. 48-72; Francis Barker and Peter Hulme's, "Nymphs and reapers heavily vanish: the discursive con-texts of *The Tempest*", in *Alternative Shakespeares*, ed. J. Drakakis (London and New York: Routledge, 1985), pp. 191-206; Lorie Jerrell Leininger's, "The Miranda Trap: Sexism and Racism in Shakespeare's *Tempest*", in *The Woman's Part*, ed. C. R. S. Lenz, Gayle Greene and C. T. Neely (Urbana, Chicago, London: University of Illinois Press, 1980), pp. 285-295.

14. Cf. Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence* (London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1975).

15. More detailed references to Kott's theoretical and hermeneutical perspective are made in Part II of this essay.

traditional Shakespearean study is characterized by the systems and procedures linked to the exercise of power, as they are defined by Foucault. The impulse of legitimation discourse to control, organize and distribute knowledge is according to Foucault best visible in its attempts at delimiting the field of objects to be studied, defining a legitimate perspective for the agents of knowledge and fixing the norms for the elaboration of concepts and theories as well as in the connected procedures of selection, exclusion and rejection.<sup>16</sup>

Jan Kott's 1964 book has undoubtedly divided Shakespeareans strongly, permanently and, as it seems, by the reactions to his recent Shakespearean study, irrevocably. To this day Kott remains a controversial figure, both praised and dispraised with equal vehemence and partiality.<sup>17</sup>

His influence on theatre producers and directors remains as strong as ever. On this front nothing much seems to have changed since Peter Brook, devising his most memorable productions of Shakespeare's plays (*King Lear*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) in the 1960'es, issued his well-known panegyric of Kott: "Shakespeare is a contemporary of Kott, Kott is a contemporary of Shakespeare – he talks about him simply, first hand and his book has the freshness of the writing by an eyewitness at the Globe or the immediacy of a page of criticism of a current film. To the world of scholarship this is a valuable contribution – to the world of the theatre an invaluable one."<sup>18</sup> Upon which, in his preface to Jan Kott's *The Theatre of Essence* (1984), Martin Esslin comments in the following way: "It does not often happen that a critic is acknowledged, by a great creative personality, to have exercised a major influence on one of his finest works. Jan Kott is such a critic. Peter Brook has spoken of the deep impression Kott's essay "King Lear or Endgame" made on him and of the way it shaped his conception of the play when he directed it for the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1962."<sup>19</sup> And Esslin continues in a similar laudatory vein: "Such essayists (...) stimulate the dialectical process between the leading ideas of their time; they provoke contradiction as well as agreement, and often are the truly creative thinkers whose con-

16. Foucault, *The Order of Discourse*, p. 56 et al.

17. Two years ago the International Association of Theatre Critics staged a public seminar, meant as "a kind of birthday party, to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication of *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*, the most influential work of Shakespearean criticism of our time," and entitled *Is Shakespeare Still Our Contemporary?* The book containing the proceedings of the seminar (London and New York: Routledge, 1989) was unfortunately not available to me while I was first writing this paper, but it seems to offer yet further, and decisive, evidence of the still existant uncompromising division between theatre criticism and textual Shakespeare criticism on the issue of the assessment of Jan Kott's contribution to Shakespeare study. John Elsom's ironically intoned introduction to the first session of the seminar, with its implicit but unmistakable reference to the intractability of Kott's opponents and detractors, seems very suggestive: "Our first discussion took place in the Young Vic's main theatre. The intention was to give Professor Kott a chance to recant before facing the wrath of the Shakespearean purists, either the traditionalists or those who, like Brecht, believed that Shakespeare could only be appreciated within a modern historical perspective". (p. 10)

18. Peter Brook, in the "Preface" to Jan Kott's *Shakespeare Our Contemporary* (London: Methuen, 1965), p. x.

19. Martin Esslin, in the "Preface" to Jan Kott's *The Theatre of Essence* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1984), p. 1.

tributions set in motion new lines of speculation and research by the specialists of various disciplines.”<sup>20</sup>

With many theatre people – producers, theatre critics, stage directors and others, a reference to Jan Kott has almost acquired the character of an incantatory gesture as just a most recent example from Yugoslavia can also help to demonstrate. The very recent production of Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida*, beginning last month at the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb has, according to the explicit admission of the producer and the stage director, abundantly drawn on Jan Kott’s 1964 essay about the play, an essay entitled: “Troilus and Cressida – Amazing and Modern”.<sup>21</sup>

Shakespearean academic criticism (in distinction to theatre criticism frequently also referred to as textual) has, on the other hand, reacted to Kott quite differently. The rather hostile reaction of the institutionalized Shakespeare scholarship has included both strategies of open rejection as well as of tacit but complete elusion. The rhetorical cast of the admonitions and strictures of Shakespearean scholars in reference to Kott’s readings of Shakespeare’s plays is in this sense more than revealing. As is best visible from the tropological dimension of its representative comments, this criticism has behaved, and continues to behave, as an unmistakably ideological discursive practice out to defend its interests and sensitive to an extreme degree to any discursive gesture smacking of a decanonizing impulse. The claims implicit in the admonitions levelled against Kott’s readings of Shakespeare are the claims to the possession of the right, the “true”, the only valid epistemological and hermeneutical perspective as well as the claims to possess a right to dominate and control overall epistemological and hermeneutical operations in this special area of discursive space. All exclusively ideological claims by definition! A few characteristic examples, concentrating as a rule on Kott’s overfacile contemporizing of Shakespeare and his irresponsible politicizing of Shakespeare’s texts, will hopefully suffice to argue the point.

Rhetorical instruments of irony: pun, ambiguity, double entendre, *argumenta a persona*, all very effective devices of invective and denigration, loom large in these strictures. Thus in his *Shakespeare and the Revolution of the Times* Harry Levin writes: “Mr. Kott has been writing in justified revulsion from a political situation which he has seen doubly overridden by the Nazis and the Soviets. Consequently, he discerns no meaning whatsoever in history. Like some of the most disaffected among us, he can descry no alternative to violence in life and he attempts to draw Shakespeare into his anarchistic camp. But if I were permitted the Shakespearean license of a pun, I would add that ‘camp’ is *not juste*.”<sup>22</sup> Levin’s intentionally forceful pun on ‘camp’, with its various connotations of the party-political, doctrinaire, fanciful, perhaps even concentration camp (?), is far from genial or well-disposed. Levin’s other references to Kott, scattered through his book, also include comments such as these: “Calmness and

20. Ibid, p. 2.

21. Cf. the programme for the Croatian National Theatre production of the play, which includes extensive quotations from Kott’s essay as well as the interview given by the director Ivica Kunčević and the dramaturge Lada Kaštelan, *Vjesnik*, Feb. 14 1990, p. 10.

22. Harry Levin, *Shakespeare and the Revolution of the Times* (Oxford, London, New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 32.

rationality are not among the attributes of Mr. Kott's approach".<sup>23</sup> "Mr. Kott and Mr. Brook – like ourselves will pass along in the procession and Shakespeare will remain to be reinterpreted by future generations",<sup>24</sup> together with the following kind of summary of Kott's interpretive endeavor: "Jan Kott has ignored the intellectual context and has superimposed a modish absurdism in presenting his *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*".<sup>25</sup>

Writing about Kott's 1964 study in *The New York Review* (Sept. 24, 1964) Frank Kermode uses very similar rhetorical devices to pass his similarly harsh and unsympathetic judgement on Kott: "What is most interesting in... Kott's book is often not particularly original.... (and) what is most original (is) for the most part useless and sometimes harmful". What stands out here is not only the elegant spurn which the complex antithetical construction of this judgement imparts, but also the terms such as 'useless' and 'harmful' with their unmistakable ethical, shall we also say, ideological charge. The already quoted review by Robert Adams in the same journal (*The New York Review*, Nov. 19, 1987), but about another of Kott's books (*The Bottom Translation*) is derogatory and ironical from the very title ("Much Ado About Everything"). Apart from deliberately distorting Kott's rather subtle and illuminative readings of *The Tempest* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by taking them up from a standpoint outside Kott's set of assumptions, Adams also avails himself (as Harry Levin does) of a very common rhetorical device known in classical rhetoric as *loco a persona* (in our instance *loco a natio*, or even *a confessio*) with a similar purpose. Thus Levin: "Mr. Kott, a Polish dramatic critic who has lately been promulgating his interpretations in this country..."<sup>26</sup>, and thus Adams: "What Kott meant by 'contemporary' in 1964 was essentially having had some experience of war and totalitarian rule."<sup>27</sup> The references to Kott's experience in Poland during and after World War II are obviously intended to throw further doubt on Kott's credibility as an interpreter of Shakespeare's meanings, as if nationality or personal experience or even a political persuasion *a priori* preclude some people from reading certain literary works at all adequately. Hardly consistent, this, coming from Shakespeare scholars who strongly defend the concept of the universality and transcendent referentiality of Shakespeare's texts.

But probably the most revealing rhetorical gesture is Patrick Cruttwell's, in an essay entitled rather directly: "Shakespeare is Not Our Contemporary" (*The Yale Review*, Vol 59, Autumn, 1969). Besides referring to Jan Kott as a 'Polish critic' and enumerating various individual episodes of Kott's personal, intellectual and political biography (ex-Marxist, former Resistance fighter in Poland, now disillusioned existentialist), and besides repeatedly referring to Kott's interpretive procedures as doctrines, he also speaks of Kott's interpretations as 'not true', 'manifestly false', 'totally nihilistic', 'amoral', 'ruthless', 'totally inaccurate', 'completely wrong', etc. But in revealing the true nature of the battle for appropriation of the discursive space in the area of Shakespeare studies the following sentence from Cruttwell's review is almost unmatched in its representativeness: "And I entirely agree with his (i.e. Murray's) *demolition* work on

23. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

27. Robert Adams, p. 46.



Kott".<sup>28</sup> One is almost afraid to think out all the threatening connotations the word contains.

True enough, Kott has done a lot of indirect 'demolition work' on the dominant paradigm in Shakespeare studies. Perhaps this reaction of the legitimized Shakespearean discourse is a justifiable retribution. But is it also just? In view of what Jan Kott has done to help keep the best part of the English literary tradition alive in the only way relevant to the present - by turning it into a usable past - one is entitled to certain doubts.

#### PRISVAJANJE I NOVIJE UPORABE ŠEKSPIRSKOG KANONA I: JAN KOTT I TRADICIONALNA ŠEKSPIROLOGIJA

U članku se nastoji propitati odnos između tradicionalne šekspirološke kritike i nekih novijih konkurentskih diskurzivnih praksi u istom predmetnom području. Usredotočivši se na položaj Kottovih šekspiroloških tekstova u šekspirološkom diskurzivnom univerzumu, autorica upućuje na razaznatljive obrise hijerarhijske utjecajne konfiguracije u tom području, pri čemu tradicionalna šekspirologija zauzima nadređen položaj u odnosu na konkurentne prakse i služi se reprezentativno ideološkim strategijama u zaštiti svojega prvenstva kod prisvajanja i uporaba šekspirskog kanona. Autorica konstatira da se hegemonistička priroda tradicionalne šekspirološke kritike razotkriva djelimice već u retoričkoj impostaciji oštrih kritičkih primjedbi koje šekspirolozi-traditionalisti upućuju Janu Kottu. U potkrepu svojim zaključcima autorica pri kraju članka analizira nekoliko karakterističnih primjera.

28. Patrick Cruttwell, "Shakespeare is not Our Contemporary", *The Yale Review*, Vol. 59, No 1 (1969), p. 43.