RICE UNIVERSITY

An Analysis of Richard Flatter's German Translation of Romeo and Juliet

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF Master of Arts

Thesis Director's Signature:  

Houston, Texas  

May, 1968
Abstract

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Since its publication in the early nineteenth century, the Schlegel-Tieck translation of Shakespeare has gradually attained the status of a literary masterpiece. Even today, it continues to dominate both on the stage and among the reading public as the "definitive" German Shakespeare translation.

Despite its artistic merits, however, scholars and critics have become increasingly aware that the Schlegel-Tieck version contains serious deficiencies in literal and stylistic fidelity to the original. Numerous efforts to "correct" and "emend" the translation, however, proved largely unsuccessful, resulting, in most cases, in a mere bowdlerization of Schlegel's work. In light of the findings of contemporary research on Shakespeare and his art, and the weaknesses of the original and emended editions of the Schlegel-Tieck version, the case for a completely new translation has become ever stronger.

Of the numerous recent attempts to meet this challenge, Richard Flatter's work is one of the most outstanding. A noted Shakespeare scholar in his own right, Flatter has produced a translation which features dynamic, modern speech, and close attention to theatrical detail. In Flatter's view,
Shakespeare was first of all a man of the theater, an able producer and director who used his great poetic talent to complement his theatrical aims. Flatter bases his entire translation on the First Folio edition of 1623, which he considers the genuine original text, and in the metrical irregularities of which he detects Shakespeare's subtle stage directions for his actors.

In his attempts to come as close as possible to his Folio original, Flatter is careful to preserve metrical gaps, broken-off lines and other irregularities found in this edition. He also places much emphasis on the duplication of Shakespeare's "Lautmalerei", or word sounds, which he feels contain subtle suggestions of mood.

Because of the inherent differences between the English and German languages, Flatter, like every translator, is frequently forced to sacrifice certain features of the original in order to retain others. In such instances, he almost invariably sacrifices content in order to preserve the metrical form of the original.

Taken as a whole, however, these minor deviations are of little consequence when compared with Flatter's overall fidelity to the original. His work should be regarded as an important milestone in the current effort to bring Shakespeare in Germany up to date.
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I. The Need for a New Shakespeare Translation

In the course of the last two centuries, the popularity of Shakespeare in Germany has grown tremendously. The numerous performances of Shakespeare's plays in German theaters today and the affectionate reference to Shakespeare by many Germans as "unser Shakespeare" indicate clearly the extent to which the famed English playwright and poet has become an integral part of German literary tradition. This increase of interest in Shakespeare and his art can be attributed primarily, though by no means exclusively, to the masterful German Shakespeare translation begun by A. W. Schlegel (1797-1810) and completed over a number of years by Dorothea Tieck and Wolf H. von Baudissin (the "Ausgabe letzter Hand" appeared 1839-40). Although initially unsuccessful because of the general preference for Wieland's prose translation (1762-66), the so-called "Schlegel-Tieck" version has gradually come to be regarded along with the works of Goethe and Schiller as one of the great treasures of German literature, as a masterpiece of translation second in Germany only to Luther's translation of the Bible—in short, as the German Shakespeare.\(^1\) Despite the fact that numerous other German

translations of Shakespeare have appeared since 1840, the Schlegel-Tieck version has retained even to the present day its position as the overwhelming favorite among German readers and theater-goers. In the words of the contemporary Shakespeare translator and producer, Hans Rothe: "Wenn in Deutschland von Shakespeare gesprochen wird, von seiner Art und seiner Welt, kurz von dem, was als 'Shakespearisch' gilt, so wird lediglich und ausschließlich die Art und Welt Shakespeares gemeint, wie sie durch die Übersetzung von Schlegel, Dorothea Tieck und Baudissin vermittelt wird. Bei jeder Auseinandersetzung, bei jedem Gespräch über Shakespeare muss man in Deutschland dies klar vor Augen halten."  

Despite its undeniable literary merits, however, critics have long been aware that the Schlegel-Tieck translation—particularly the plays translated by Dorothea Tieck and Baudissin—contains a vast number of errors and stylistic deficiencies. In the latter half of the nineteenth century and in the early decades of the twentieth, the German book market was flooded by numerous "corrected" and "revised" versions of Schlegel-Tieck, published among others by such scholars as Hermann Ulrici, Franz von Bodenstedt, Hermann Conrad, Max Koch, and Friedrich Gundolf with the intention 

2 See, for example, the annual "Bühnenbericht" of the Deutsche Shakespeare Gesellschaft in the Shakespeare-Jahrbuch (Weimar, Heidelberg).

of emending the many weaknesses of the original version. They condensed the text and reduced the number of lines in instances where the number of the English original had been exceeded. Where Schlegel had substituted the Alexandrine verse form for Shakespeare's blank verse, they shortened the verse to conform with the original. In instances where Schlegel had omitted a line or passage, his "correctors" were careful to insert their own version of the missing section—all against Schlegel's express will. To be sure, these emendations in themselves might have been skillful and in accordance with the findings of contemporary Shakespeare research; but their overall effect was to destroy much of the underlying artistic unity and beauty of Schlegel's version. A prime example of this can be seen in the

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4 For more detailed studies of these versions, see the following articles: Siegfried Korninger, "Shakespeare und seine deutschen Übersetzer," Shakespeare-Jahrbuch, XCI (1956), 19-44; Käthe Stricker, "Deutsche Shakespeare-Übersetzungen im letzten Jahrhundert," Shakespeare-Jahrbuch, XCI (1956), 45-89.

Shakespeare translation by Friedrich Gundolf, which consisted of new versions of *Romeo and Juliet* and all the plays translated by Dorothea Tieck and Baudissin, and emended versions of the rest of Schlegel's texts. In the words of Schlegel scholar Margaret Atkinson: "It would be difficult to imagine a more incongruous and artistically unsatisfactory juxtaposition of styles: Schlegel's smooth, limpid lines with their Goethean ring set side by side with Gundolf's weighty, compressed diction which was strongly influenced by George."  

Keeping in mind the general artistic disharmony of these "emended" versions, it is not surprising that they should fail to supersede the original Schlegel-Tieck translation. Indeed, many scholars of the time were well aware of the possibility of such failure. As early as 1867, Ferdinand Freiligrath, for example, flatly refused to make new versions of any of Schlegel's translations, on the grounds that to do so would be almost like trying to rewrite Goethe and Schiller. Furthermore, in a resolution by the Deutsche Shakespeare Gesellschaft in 1901, it was stated that the society felt itself incapable of producing "eine poetische

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8 Ibid., p. 54.
Überbietung" of the Schlegel-Tieck translation. The Schlegel-Tieck version had indeed attained the status of a literary classic, a reputation it enjoys to this day.

Despite the overwhelming popularity of Schlegel-Tieck, however, the indisputable fact remains that the image of Shakespeare afforded the German public by this "classic" translation is far removed from that which the English-speaking student of Shakespeare derives from the original. Schlegel, for all of his good intentions, was unable to solve the problems of translation once and for all. And, as Shakespeare research reveals new information about the man, his age and his works, the case for a completely new translation becomes increasingly stronger.

A recent major attempt to meet this challenge can be seen in the new Shakespeare translation by Richard Flatter.  


Unlike his predecessors, who, for the most part, were content with merely "revising" or "correcting" the Schlegel-Tieck version, Flatter offers Shakespeare to the modern German public in a completely new translation of his own. In the following study of his version of *Romeo and Juliet*, I shall discuss and illustrate the approach to Shakespeare taken by this modern translator and the ways in which he differs significantly from Schlegel. It is my purpose to describe and evaluate the manner in which Flatter has sought to overcome the numerous, seemingly insurmountable obstacles in translation upon which so many of his profession—including Schlegel—have foundered.

With regard to my selection of *Romeo and Juliet* as the play to be discussed, let me say that this was by no means an arbitrary choice on my part. For Schlegel's version of this great tragedy, being his first independent attempt to translate Shakespeare, is generally recognized as the least satisfactory of all his translations. Gundolf, for example, says in the notes to his own version of the play: "*Romeo und Julia* ist die erste, noch nicht ganz stilsihere Shakespeare-Übertragung Schlegels und bedurfte einer gründlichen Bearbeitung. Besonders die Reimstellen sind ganz neu gedich-
tet worden, da sie dem heutigen Ohr nicht mehr genügen.\footnote{11} Richard Flatter likewise recognizes the deficiencies of Schlegel's version. "Tatsächlich kann nicht geleugnet werden," writes Flatter, "dass Schlegel bei diesem Stück noch eine gewisse Unsicherheit zeigt—und es ist vielleicht darauf zurückzuführen, dass dieses tragische Lustspiel so selten gespielt wird."\footnote{12} Schlegel's version has, for example, some seventy lines more than the original. Moreover, throughout the entire scene between Lorenzo and Romeo (II.iii), Schlegel has substituted for Shakespeare's lively blank verse the heavy Alexandrine verse of the French classicists. Ludwig Tieck, to be sure, tried to emend these and other errors in Schlegel's text, but due to the strong objections of Schlegel, he was forced to retract his corrections.\footnote{13} Schlegel himself made no significant alterations in his \textit{Romeo} text before the "Ausgabe letzter Hand" was published, with the result that the version which has become the traditional German favorite is still essentially the same inaccurate and inadequate version first published by Schlegel in 1797.

In light of the many shortcomings of Schlegel's translation of \textit{Romeo and Juliet}, and the failure of the numerous

\footnote{11} Gundolf, ed. cit., I, 506.
\footnote{12} \textit{Shakespeare neu Übersetzt}, II, 454.
\footnote{13} See footnote 5, p. 3.
new and emended versions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to gain general popularity, the new translation by Richard Flatter is particularly welcome. His version of this famous tragedy reveals many significant improvements over Schlegel, as will be presently shown in detail. It is, I feel, an important milestone in the efforts of this contemporary translator and scholar to bring Shakespeare in Germany up to date.
II. Richard Flatter's Translation

Being himself a former student of the famed producer, Max Reinhardt, it is not surprising that Richard Flatter should regard Shakespeare above all as a man of the theater--as a playwright, actor and producer. The essence of Shakespeare's greatness, according to Flatter, lies in the unique manner in which he has used his poetry--an artistic masterpiece in itself--as a means by which to enhance the theatrical presentation of each of his plays. In such things as a sudden pause, a broken-off line and marked deviation from standard versification, etc., Flatter detects the artist's careful molding of his poetic material to complement his theatrical aims. Flatter maintains that this important "theatrical" quality in Shakespeare's poetry has been grossly neglected by most English editors and almost totally lost in all previous German translations. It was the desire to recapture this "schauspielerische" element that motivated Flatter to begin work on his own translation. In discussing what he considers to be the most significant attribute of his work, Flatter writes: "Hier nun, in einen

Satz zusammengefasst, sei die Frage beantwortet, was es denn ist, das die neue Übersetzung als Grundlage ihrer Existenzberechtigung in Anspruch nehmen möchte: es ist das Schauspielerische ihrer Diktion, mit der sie die Diktion des grossen Schauspieler-Dichters zu kopieren bemüht ist."^{15}

Now since Shakespeare himself never authorized an edition of his plays, there has always been a great difference of opinion as to which of the early Quartos and Folios actually comes closest to Shakespeare's original manuscript. Flatter feels that the true Shakespeare, that is, the theatrical Shakespeare, is revealed most clearly in the first Folio edition of 1623, and it is this edition upon which he bases his entire translation. Even as early as 1948, four years before the first volume of his translation was published, Flatter wrote:

The further I proceed with the work of translation the more I become conscious of the extent to which the "True Original Copies" [i.e., the First Folio] are superior to the subsequent editions. It is true that the First Folio contains a great number of misprints, but as far as punctuation, line division and other signs of... the producer's activities go, I found myself frequently misguided by what modern editors have done. On many occasions, endeavoring to find out what Shakespeare really meant and said and how he said it, I had to turn to the Folio—and in most cases I was richly rewarded."^{16}

Flatter's preference for the First Folio, as indicated above, is based on the vast number of "irregularities" found

^{15} Shakespeare neu Übersetzt, I, 25.
in this edition, but missing from the Quartos and later English editions. It is precisely in these irregularities—in such things as metrical discontinuity, incomplete lines and rhythmical gaps that Flatter claims to have discovered the most significant traces of Shakespeare's theatrical genius. He regards these frequent violations of the traditional principle of continuous, unbroken versification and rhythmical regularity as proof that Shakespeare was concerned first of all not with poetic formalism, but rather theatrical effect. Shakespeare, he says, "hat seine Wortkunst nie um ihrer selbst willen gebraucht, nie einer absoluten Schönheit wegen, sondern immer zur Erreichung praktischer Zwecke. Shakespeares Wortkunst ist zugleich Wortregie."\(^{17}\) Again, in the introduction to his translation, Flatter writes: "Diese 'Anomalien' sind der gewichtigste Beweis dafür, dass jene Dramen nicht von einem literarisch ambitionierten Aristokraten geschrieben wurden, sondern von einem Mann des praktischen Theaters, von einem grossen Schauspieler und Regisseur."\(^{18}\)

It should be pointed out that these remarks are by no means an attempt on Flatter's part to discredit Shakespeare as a poet. "Of course he was a poet," insists Flatter in Shakespeare's Producing Hand, "he could not help being one, as little as a giant ever ceases to be a giant, even when

\(^{17}\) Triumph der Gnade, p. 39.

\(^{18}\) Shakespeare neu Übersetzt, I, 14.
crouching on the floor." Flatter simply believes that Shakespeare gave his natural poetic talent a theatrical rather than a purely esthetic direction. "Whenever poetry happens to occur in his plays," says Flatter, "it is put in as yet another means to attain what to him was the higher aim, his only aim: to write good plays, i.e., plays with good parts for actors." It is for this reason that Shakespeare's poetic form frequently deviates so radically from the "rules".

Because these significant stylistic irregularities are largely missing from the Quarto editions, Flatter believes that the latter were intended exclusively for a reading public. In discussing the major differences between the Quartos and the First Folio, Flatter points out that in Shakespeare's time it was common practice for book dealers to pirate the text of a successful stage play and sell it to the reading public. In such cases the text was almost always edited and emended to suit the needs of the reader. In Flatter's words:

Um die Lektüre zu erleichtern wurde nicht nur die ungewöhnliche und dem Leser unverständliche dramatische Interpunktion vereinfacht; es wurden auch Spielanweisungen eingefügt, um die Bühnenvorgänge vors Auge zu rufen, und es wurden vor allem viele Unregelmäßigkeiten der Versifikation beseitigt, ..., deren theatralischen Bedeutung der Leser nicht verstehen und über die er beim Lesen leicht stolpern konnte. Aber gerade diese Unregelmäßig-

19 Shakespeare's Producing Hand, p. 168.
20 Ibid., p. 169.
English editors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, however, generally regarded the irregularities of the Folio as careless mistakes on the part of an incompetent compositor, and attributed more authenticity to the Quartos because of their greater conformity to the "rules" of grammatical punctuation, versification, etc. In their own versions they followed the Quartos almost exclusively, and even then they tried to eliminate any remaining irregularities by inserting extra syllables where needed, expanding incomplete lines to the full metrical count, etc. In their zeal to glorify Shakespeare the poet, the theatrical Shakespeare was all but completely lost.

It was upon one of these "untheatrical" texts that Schlegel based his translation. Flatter points out that the editors of this edition were "durchaus Literaten, die in Shakespeare nicht den Schauspieler sahen, sondern zunächst, ja fast ausschliesslich den Dichter; sie waren der Meinung, je korrekter die Texte, desto besser. Sie korrigierten noch selbst hinzu—ohne zu wissen, dass sie mit all den übernommenen und eigenen Verschlimmbesserungen gerade


das verwischten, was Shakespeares stilistische Eigenart ausmacht—das Schauspielerische seiner Diktion."^23

Because of the theatrical inadequacy of his model, it was inevitable that Schlegel's translation should likewise be unsatisfactory in this respect. Hans Rothe points out that as long as Schlegel's version has been on the market, it has almost never been used in the theater without first having been altered or reworked to some extent. 24

Flatter, too, sees this loss of the "theatrical" Shakespeare as one of the chief weaknesses of Schlegel's translation. He maintains that Schlegel "zwar sehr deutlich die dichterischen Qualitäten der Diktion Shakespeares sah, weniger deutlich die schauspielerischen Qualitäten. Es ist diese schauspielerische Komponente der Ausdruckskraft Shakespeares, der Schlegel nicht völlig gerecht wird." 25

But while Flatter is highly critical of Schlegel, he is at the same time a great admirer of Schlegel and his approach to translation. He wants his own translation to be considered by no means "anti-Schlegel", but indeed as the attainment of the goal which Schlegel himself set out to reach, namely, to come as close to Shakespeare as possible through a faithful German reproduction of the original text.

24 Der Kampf um Shakespeare, p. 34.
25 "Das Schauspielerische in der Diktion Shakespeare," p. 16.
Flatter says of his own version:

Es ist . . . ihr Ehrgeiz, auf dem von Schlegel betretenen Weg weiterzugehen. Sie möchte, wenn irgend möglich, so nah an Shakespeare herankommen wie—wenn man derlei Vermutungen anstellen darf—Schlegel selbst gekommen wäre, hätte er die Hilfsmittel gehabt, die wir heute besitzen, und hätte er sich von dem Postulat abgewendet, zu dem die englischen Herausgeber ihn verleitet und in dem die deutschen Klassiker ihn bestärkten, nämlich von dem Postulat der Regelrechtigkeit der jambischen Zeile und der ungebrochen fortlaufenden Versifikation.26

Like Schlegel, Flatter regards translation as being not so much a creative endeavor as a craft requiring both great skill and great selflessness on the part of the translator. "Meiner Meinung nach," writes Flatter in Triumph der Gnade, "ist es das Handwerkliche, worauf es beim Shakespeare-Übersetzen vor allem ankommt; für das Dichterische hat Shakespeare schon selbst gesorgt. Ich bringe das deshalb vor, weil ich manchmal in Besprechungen meiner Übersetzungstexte dem Worte 'Nachdichtung' begegne."27 Flatter doesn't like the term. For him, the translator is simply a highly skilled copyist. "Je mehr einer Dichter ist," continues Flatter, "desto weniger eignet er sich zum Shakespeare-Übersetzer, und zwar darum, weil er allzu leicht der Versuchung nachgibt, seine Kunst an die Stelle der Kunst Shakespeares zu stellen. Es muss umgekehrt sein: er muss sich bemühen, all sein Können in den Dienst Shakespeares zu stellen. Dies setzt einen Akt der Selbstverleugnung voraus,

26 Shakespeare neu Übersetzt, I, 23 f.
27 Triumph der Gnade, p. 46.
und von einem wirklichen Dichter ist eine solche Selbstdlosigkeit, die auf die Unterdrückung seines eigenen Dichtertums hinausläuft, nicht gut zu verlangen."\textsuperscript{28} For Flatter, therefore, the greatest possible objectivity on the part of the translator toward his work is essential for a faithful reproduction of the original. Except for a few deviations, which will be discussed later, Flatter has made every effort to adhere as closely as possible to this principle.

Every translator who chooses this "literal", or, to use William Arrowsmith's term, "academic" approach to translation soon realizes and becomes appalled by the enormity and complexity of the problems involved in this type of translation.\textsuperscript{29} It does not take long to see that a perfect translation is impossible to attain. Because of the inherent structural differences in the languages involved, the process of translation inevitably demands certain sacrifices, sometimes costly ones. Schlegel himself was well aware of the futility of trying to equal the original when working with completely different tools. Accordingly, he formulated the following guideline: "Es ist für das poetische Übersetzen eine nützliche Vorschrift, sich bei jeder Stelle gleich anfangs klar zu machen, was durchaus nicht aufgeopfert werden darf, hierauf zu bestehen, und

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., p. 50.

Working under this same maxim, Flatter is likewise forced to make sacrifices in his translation, and it is particularly in this area that the primary differences between Flatter and Schlegel can most clearly be seen. Schlegel frequently sacrificed form in order to capture to a fuller extent the entire content of each line. Flatter, on the other hand, often sacrifices content, and poetry, too, at times, in order to make each passage as effective theatrically as possible.

A major problem with which both men had to contend lay in the fact that they were translating not only from one language to another, but also from an earlier age to a much later age. Had either Schlegel or Flatter attempted to render Shakespeare into sixteenth century German, the translation would have been ridiculous and totally unusable. Both Schlegel and Flatter, therefore, sought to remold Shakespeare into the language of their time. But the language of Schlegel's translation, while possessing a high degree of poetic beauty, often fails to give full expression to the powerful and often bawdy remarks which abound in the original Shakespeare. This "toning-down" of Shakespeare's language by Schlegel is one of Flatter's primary criticisms of Schlegel's work. According to Flatter,

30 Sämtliche Werke, XII, 259.
Schlegel was caught up in a conflict between his own desire for a faithful translation and the tastes of his time. Although Schlegel's knowledge of Elisabethan English was remarkable, indeed, astonishing for his time, he all too often acquiesced to the linguistic restraint called for by the standards of his day. "Auch ... scheute Schlegel davor zurück," writes Flatter, "Kraftausdrücke zu gebrauchen; wo nur immer möglich, bevorzugte er Wörter wie 'Schelm, Metze, Memme, Büberei, Schelmstück', und so fort. Solche verwässerte Ausdrücke dämpfen beträchtlich das Feuer Shakespearischer Gefühlsausbrüche. Das entsprach den Kunstprinzipien des 18. Jahrhunderts; aber es entspricht nicht mehr den unsern." Flatter feels that Schlegel and other translators have failed to fully exploit the richness of the German language in their translations, and, as a result, have done an injustice to both Shakespeare and the language. "All dieser Reichtum der deutschen Sprache," says Flatter, "steht dem zur Verfügung, der Shakespeare übersetzt. Das Deutsche ist nicht ärmer an Ausdruckskraft als das Englische; es ist reicher. Wenn Shakespeare den Schatz seiner Sprache zu so kunstvollen Effekten verwendet, warum sollte das im Deutschen nicht ebenso möglich sein? Es ist zu versuchen, dem einmal erkannten Ziel mit ernstem Bemühen zu-

31 "Das Schauspielerische in der Diktion Shakespeares," p. 28.
zustreben, das sind wir dem Genie Shakespeares ebenso schuldig wie dem Genie der deutschen Sprache."  

Consequently, Flatter makes every attempt in his translation to bring out the full impact of Shakespeare's words. In comparing his work to Schlegel's the improvement becomes evident immediately. In Flatter's translation there is a new freshness and boldness in the language; the characters speak with more vitality and power. In the fourth scene of the first act of *Romeo and Juliet*, for example, Mercutio and Benvolio are trying to shake Romeo out of his romantic melancholy and encourage him to participate in the dance at Capulet's villa. Romeo wants only to stand and hold a torch while the others dance. Mercutio replies impatiently:

```
Tut, duns the Mouse, the Constables owne word,  
If thou art dun, weele draw thee from the mire.  
Or save your reverence love, wherein thou stickst  
Up to the eares, come we burne day-light ho.
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The expression "duns the mouse" was used by Shakespeare to mean "be still", in the sense of "Oh, come on now!" In Schlegel's version, this exclamation is omitted altogether:

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Jawohl, zu matt, dich aus dem Schlamm--nein,  
Der Liebe wollt' ich sagen--dich zu ziehen,  
Worin du leider steckst bis an die Ohren.  
Macht fort! Wir leuchten ja dem Tage hier.
```

In Flatter's version, the exclamation is included, and

32 Ibid., p. 31.
Mercutio's impatience with Romeo's listless behavior

is more convincingly expressed:

Potz Maus! 'raus aus dem Loch! Wachmeistersprichwort!
Bist du so mausig, 'raus aus dem Dreck,
Aus dieser--mit Respekt zu melden--Liebe!
Bis an die Ohren steckst du drin! Kommt vorwärts,
Wir brennen Tageslicht!

Again, in the fifth scene of Act I, when Juliet's cousin, Tybalt, learns of Romeo's presence at the dance, he wants to challenge him immediately. Old Capulet, however, wants to prevent violence at all costs, and thus forcefully asserts his authority over Tybalt:

He [Romeo] shall be endur'd.
What goodman boy, I say he shall, go too,
Am I the Maister here or you? go too,
Youle not endure him, God shall mend my soule,
Youle make a Mutinie among the Guests:
You will set a cock a hoope, youle be the man.

Schlegel translates:

Er soll gelitten werden,
Er soll!—Herr Junge, hört er das? Nur zu!
So? will ihn nicht leiden?—Helf' mir Gott!—
Will Hader unter meinen Gästen stiften?
Den Hahn im Korbe spielen? Seht mir doch!

While Schlegel fully captures the content of the passage, the language is relatively mild and fails to convey, to modern readers, at least, the full emotion in Capulet's voice. In Flatter's version, however, the language is more forceful and indicative of the extent of Capulet's ire:

Er soll geduldet sein!
Gelbschnabel du--ich sag er soll!--schau an!
Bin ich der Herr hier oder du? Schau an!
Er sagt: "Ich duld ihn nicht!" Gott steh mir bei,
Wirst mir die Gäste nich in Aufruhr bringen!
Bist gern der Hahn am Mist! bist mir der Rechte!
The fact, too, that Platter uses exclamation points in the last two lines, whereas Schlegel uses question marks, gives more emphasis to Capulet's contempt and scorn of Tybalt, and brings the intonation closer to that indicated by Shakespeare's original punctuation.

Another good example of Platter's relatively stronger language is found in the third scene of the last act, in which Romeo, maddened by his grief over Juliet's death, plans to commit suicide. Standing before her tomb, he cries in anguish:

Thou detestable mawe, thou wombe of death,
Gorg'd with the dearest morsel of the earth:
Thus I force thy rotten Jawes to open,
And in despight, Ie cram thee with more food.

In Schlegel's version, the content of the passage is rendered fairly well:

Oh du verhasster Schlund! du Bauch des Todes!
Der du der Erde Köstlichstes verschlangst,
So brech' ich deine morschen Kiefer auf
Und will, zum Trotz, noch mehr dich überfüllen.

But while the idea of what is happening is conveyed satisfactorily, the emotion, the forcefulness of the original is clearly lacking. In the English original, the second line is a descriptive adjective phrase; in Schlegel's version, it is a relative clause, which, because of the preceding exclamation point, seems somehow less directly attached to the first line. In addition, the structure of the second line, particularly the words "der Erde Köstlichstes" gives more the impression of Schiller than of
Shakespeare, when compared to the original. The same
could be said of the last line as well. Both are more
"poetic", but consequently less immediate. Finally, the
word "überfüllen" in the last line does not convey at all
the forcefulness of "cram". Flatter's version of the same
passage is much better:

Du grauenvoller Schlund! du Bauch des Todes,
Gemästet mit dem Köstlichsten der Welt,
So brech ich die die morschen Kiefer auf
Und stopf gewaltsam neuen Frass hinein!

The second line here is much more like the original, and
the last line is particularly effective, even though the
words "and in despight" were omitted in order to retain
the meter of the original.

Flatter's language, as indicated in the examples
above, is modern, idiomatic, and yet seeks to avoid slang
or other expressions which might easily become dated. There
can be no doubt but that the use of this more colorful and
forceful language subtly enhances the theatrical effective¬
ness of Flatter's translation. This same goal is achieved
by Flatter through the use of other devices, such as fre¬
quent exclamation points and dashes which convey immedi¬
ately to the reader or actor the intonation and emphasis
the line is to receive. It must be mentioned, however, that
while Flatter's liberal use of such punctuation is quite
effective, it is based for the most part on his personal in¬
terpretation of the punctuation in the First Folio, which
he considers "theatrical" rather than grammatical. In the
first scene of the third act, for example, Mercutio, seeking to end a quarrel between Romeo and Tybalt, is accidently wounded by his friend, Romeo. Realizing that the wound is mortal, Mercutio curses the feuding families:

Helpe me into some house, Benvolio, Or I shall faint: a plague on both your houses. They have made worms meat of me, I have it, and soundly too: your Houses.

Schlegel translates:

O hils mir in ein Haus, Benvolio. Sonst sink' ich hin!—Zum Teufel eure Häuser! Sie haben Würmerspeis' aus mir gemacht. Ich hab's tüchtig weg; verdammte Sippschaft!

In Flatter's version, the passage reads:

Komm, hilf mir in ein Haus, Benvolio, Sonst fall ich um!—Die Pest auf eure Häuser! Sie machen Würmerfrass aus mir—ich hab's! Und gründlich auch noch——eure Häuser!

Flatter's version is better from the standpoint of both translation and punctuation. In the last line of the passage, for example, Mercutio mutters "your Houses" in an unsuccessful attempt to repeat the curse he had made in the second line. There is a lengthy pause before these last two words, and he is obviously unable to complete the sentence before fainting. Schlegel substitutes a completely different expression in the last line, probably because he felt that the line would otherwise be unclear. As a result, however, Schlegel loses a device used by Shakespeare to show clearly Mercutio's rapidly failing condition. Flatter, on the other hand, retains the repeated line, separated by two dashes from the rest of the line to show the long pause.
Other stylistic devices employed by Flatter, which are very effective theatrically, and yet entail a minimum of loss in content, are the frequent omission of personal pronouns, the deletion of verb endings, usually in the first person singular, and contraction. In English, the personal pronoun is rarely omitted under any circumstances; the closest equivalent is the use of contraction, such as "I'll", "you've", etc. The German language, on the other hand, lends itself beautifully to this device, and Flatter exploits it fully to attain his goal of theatrical vitality. In the fourth scene of Act II, for example, Juliet's nurse, while seeking Romeo, is ridiculed by Mercutio and Benvolio. Highly insulted, she, in her peasant's manner, begins to rant about her own virtues, and finally turns her fury against Peter for failing to take up for her:

And a speake anything against me, Ile take him downe, & a were lustier than he is, and twentie such Jacks: and if I cannot, Ile find those that shall: scurvie knave, I am none of his flurt-gils, I am none of his scaines mates, and thou must stand by too and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure.

Schlegel's version reads:

Ja, und wenn er auf mich was zu sagen hat, so will ich ihn bei den Ohren kriegen, und wäre er auch noch vierschrottiger, als er ist, und zwanzig solcher Hasenfüsse obendrein; und kann ich's nicht, so können's andre. So'n Lausekerl! Ich bin keine von seinen Kreaturen, ich bin keine von seinen Karmuten. (Zu Peter) Und du musst auch dabei stehen und leiden, dass jeder Schuft sich nach Belieben über mich hermacht.
Flatter translates:

Wenn der vielleicht kommt und sagt was auf mich, ich krieg ihn schon unter, kann sich aufblasen wie er will, und zwanzig so Lauser! Und wenn ich's nicht kann, ich find welche, die's tun! Schäbiger Lump!—bin keine von seinen Weibsbildern!—gehör nicht zu seinen Spiessbürgern! Und du musst dabei-stehn und zuschaun, wie jeder Lump, dem's beliebt, sich über mich hermacht?

In Flatter's version, the nurse's language is earthier, more colloquial than in Schlegel's. By omitting the pronouns in the fifth line, Flatter accentuates the woman's anger, and her haste to defend her injured ego. The omissions also tend to make the language more "natural", as do the deletion of the verb endings on "kriegen" and "finden" and the contraction of the verbs "dabeistehen" and "zuschauen".

Although Flatter uses these devices most often in the prose sections of the play, he does not hesitate to use them in poetry as well, in order to make the characters seem more realistic or to bring about a desired theatrical effect. When Romeo, for example, is encouraged by his friends to join in the fun at Capulet's villa, he replies:

Give me a torch, I am not for this ambling. (I.iv)

Schlegel translates:

Ich mag nicht springen; gebt mir eine Fackel!

Flatter writes:

--bin nicht fürs Hopsen; gebt mir eine Fackel!

Flatter is more successful here in capturing the darkness of Romeo's mood. As indicated by the English original,
Romeo is somewhat disdainful of the light-hearted revelry and dancing, to which he refers as "ambling". His mood is sullen and melancholy. Flatter, by omitting the pronoun and supplying the term "Hopsen" for "ambling", depicts this mood more graphically than does Schlegel by making Romeo's reply more curt and disinterested.

Again, in the fight scene between Romeo and Paris, the page, who has been hiding in the bushes, watches the fight and says:

O Lord they fight, I will go call the Watch. (V.iii)

In Schlegel's version, the line is translated:

Sie fechten! Gott, ich will die Wache rufen.

Flatter writes:

O Gott, sie kämpfen!--will die Wache holen!

The page watches the fight in horror; then there is a pause while he frantically tries to decide what to do. Once having made up his mind, he announces his decision with great urgency, leaving the scene at the same time. By omitting the personal pronoun, Flatter is able to convey this urgency more directly, while at the same time sacrificing none of the content of the line.

Such concern for theatrical effect becomes even more apparent in Flatter's treatment of Shakespeare's sentence structure, meter and even individual words within a line. Flatter is very much aware that how Shakespeare said something was just as important as what he said. In each line,
then, Flatter sees subtle stage directions for the actors, and, in each word, subtle suggestions of mood designed to complement those evoked by the literal content of the line. Shakespeare, he feels, was very careful in selecting each word, in forming every line to suit a theatrical purpose. "Er tut das überall dort," says Flatter, "wo ihn sein schau-
spielerischer Instinkt dazu veranlasst, ein Wort oder einen
Satz besonders hervorzuheben, eine Erregung deutlich zu ma-
chen, einen Gefühlsausdruck zu verstärken, oder aber um Raum
für eine Geste, einen kurzen Gang oder für eine stumme Ak-
tion zu schaffen."  

Consequently, Flatter tries to match as closely as possible the exact meter of Shakespeare's poetry. As Jul¬
iiet, for example, awaits the arrival of Romeo in III.ii, her opening line reflects her impatience:

\[ \text{Gallop apace, you fiery footed steeds.} \]

The line begins with a trochee, which Flatter retains in his translation:

\[ \text{Schneller hinab, ihr feuerhüfigen Rosse.} \]

This is closer to the original than Schlegel's version:

\[ \text{Hinab, du flammenhüfiges Gespann.} \]

Again, in I.i, Benvolio tries to get Romeo to confide in him about his love for Rosaline:

\[ \text{Shakespeare neu Übersetzt, I, 13 f.} \]
B: Tell me in sadness, who is it that you love?
R: What shall I grone and tell thee?

Schlegel translates the verse into regular iambic pentameter:

B: Entdeckt mir ohne Mutwill, wen ihr liebt.
R: Bin ich nicht ohne Mut und ohne Willen?

Flatter, on the other hand, matches Shakespeare's meter almost exactly:

B: Sag mir im Ernst: wer ist es, den du liebst?
R: Muss ich dabei was flennen?

It is interesting to note that the second line is incomplete in the original. Schlegel expanded it to five full beats. Flatter, however, feels that the incomplete line was intended by Shakespeare to create a pause in the dialogue, during which Benvolio could perhaps plan his response or move about on stage.

Still another example of Flatter's concern for metrical fidelity can be seen in III.1. After Romeo has slain Tybalt in a duel, Benvolio rushes in and urges Romeo to flee for his life:

Romeo, away be gone:
The Citizens are up, and Tybalt slaine,
Stand not amaz'd, the Prince will Doome thee death
If thou art taken: hence, be gone, away.

The first line of the original is left incomplete, perhaps to give Benvolio a chance to run to Romeo after shouting his
initial warning from afar. In Schlegel's version, the line is lengthened to the full metrical count:

Flieh Romeo! die Bürger sind in Wehr
Und Tybalt tot. Steh' so versteinert nicht!
Flieh, flieh! der Prinz verdammt zum Tode dich,
Wenn sie dich greifen. Fort! hinweg mit dir!

In Flatter's version, however, the incomplete first line is retained, and the meter and content of the passage come closer to the original:

Romeo! Hinweg! rasch fort!
Das Bürgervolk ist auf, Tybalt erschlagen!
Steh nicht verstört! Der Prinz verurteilt dich
Zum Tod, wenn man dich fasst! Weg, fort--mach rasch!

In addition to rhythm and verse structure, Flatter places great emphasis on what he calls the "Lautmalerei" in Shakespeare's language. Shakespeare, he feels, carefully selected and arranged each word in order to suggest by its very sound the mood he was trying to create. In the fifth scene of Act III, for example, Romeo is preparing to leave Juliet after a nocturnal visit to her garden. He hears a bird and says:

It was the Larke, the Herauld of the Morne.

Schlegel translates:

Die Lerche war's, die Tagverküniderin.

Flatter writes:

Die Lerche war's, die Küniderin des Tags.

Romeo, according to Flatter, is not simply announcing here that the lark is signaling the coming of the dawn; he is
lamenting it. In the rhythm of the verse and in the long vowel at the end can be seen Romeo's momentary feeling, his despair at having to leave. Of Schlegel's translation of this line Flatter says: "'Tagverkinderin' ist eine sachlich korrekte Ubersetzung; aber da es kaum moglich ist, das 'in' in 'Kinderin' lang auszusprechen oder überhaupt zu betonen, so wird der Vers seiner Gefiihlsaufgabe entzogen. Bei 'Kinderin des (Dags', dagegen, ermoglicht der lange Vokal des letzten Wortes den gleichen Klageausruf wie im Englischen."

Another good example of Flatter's concern for "Lautmalerei" can be seen in the following line, spoken by Juliet, after Romeo has sworn his love for her:

O sweare not by the Ho one, th'inconstant Moone. (II.ii)

In Schlegel's version, the line reads:

O schwere nicht beim Mond, dem wandelbaren!

Flatter translates:

Schwör nicht beim Mond, dem unbeständigen Mond!

Flatter's translation comes closer to the literal content of the original, and he is more successful than Schlegel in capturing the emotional element as well. In giving his own interpretation of this passage, Flatter says:

Julia misstraut dem Mond, ist ängstlich, er könnte zum Meineid verleiten; sie spricht von ihm so, als wäre sie böse auf ihn—im Ton eines halb kindischen Trotzes. Auch hier—in meiner Ubersetzung ebenso wie

34 "Das Schauspielerische in der Diktion Shakespeares," p. 16 f.
35 Ibid., p. 17.
An important part of "Lautmalerei" is the effective use of masculine and feminine rhyme. In this area, too, Flatter finds Schlegel's translation wanting. Shakespeare himself generally used masculine rhyme in all of his plays. Flatter regards Schlegel's general use of feminine rhyme as yet another example of his "toning-down" of Shakespeare's speech. When Tybalt, for example, finds Romeo at Capulet's villa (I.v), he says:

Now by the stocke and Honour of my kin,
To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

Tybalt is furious because of Romeo's presence at the dance. He spits out the words "kin" and "sin" with a hateful grimace. Schlegel, by using feminine rhyme, takes some of the punch out of the lines:

Fürwahr, bei meines Stammes Ruhm und Adel!
Wer tot ihn schlug', verdiente keinen Tadel.

Tybalt's words somehow do not seem as malicious as in the original. Furthermore, because of Schlegel's deviation from the original, the lines are further weakened in that Tybalt makes no direct reference to himself in the threat. Flatter translates:

Bei meinem Stamm und Stolz, er kennt mich schlecht:
Erschlag ich ihn, ist's nur mein gutes Recht!

36 Ibid., p. 18.
Flatter uses masculine rhyme, and the power of the original is retained. However, in this case, as in a few other instances in the play, Flatter is forced to digress somewhat from the literal content of the original to accomplish his aim.

In working closely with the language of Shakespeare, every translator is inevitably confronted by what must certainly be the most challenging obstacle of all—the pun. Shakespeare himself was a master of this device and used it liberally in all of his plays. For the translator, the pun is particularly difficult, for it occurs only very seldom in the corresponding words of two languages. One of the outstanding features of Schlegel's translation is his treatment of the puns. In most cases, he was forced to substitute different expressions in order to make the puns, but the meaning was remarkably like that of the original. Flatter, too, has been very successful in rendering Shakespeare's puns into German. For the most part, however, he shows no significant improvement over Schlegel; indeed, he seems to follow Schlegel carefully in this area, changing only a few words in each instance. For example:

Sampson: I strike quickly, being mov'd.
Gregorio: But thou art not quickly mov'd to strike.
Sampson: A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

37 Cf. Atkinson, August Wilhelm Schlegel as a Translator of Shakespeare, p. 23.
Gregorio: To move is to stir: and to be valiant is to stand: therefore, if thou art mov'd, thou runst away.

Sampson: A dogge of that house shall move me to stand. (I.i)

The puns here are on the words:

1. **move**: a) to incite, urge; b) to stir, change position.

2. **stand**: a) to take a position, refuse to give way; b) to remain stationary.

Schlegel translates:

Simson: Ich schlage geschwind zu, wenn ich aufgebracht bin.
Gregorio: Aber du wirst nicht geschwind aufgebracht.
Simson: Ein Hund aus Montagues Haus bringt mich schon auf.
Gregorio: Einen aufbringen heisst: ihn von der Stelle schaffen. Um tapfer zu sein, muss man standhalten. Wenn du dich also aufbringen lässt, so läufst du davon.
Simson: Ein Hund aus dem Hause bringt mich zum Standhalten.

Schlegel's translation is quite good; the only questionable point is whether or not "aufbringen" can really mean "von der Stelle schaffen". Flatter's version reads:

Simson: Ich hau leicht los, wenn ich aufgeregt bin!
Gregorio: Aber du bist nicht leicht aufgeregt zum Loshauen.
Simson: Ein Hund aus dem Hause der Montague regt mich schon auf!
Gregorio: Aufgeregt sein heisst bewegt sein; und tapfer sein heisst standhalten: deshalb, wenn du aufgeregt bist, remst du davon.
Simson: Ein Hund aus diesem Haus regt mich sogar auf, standzuhalten!

Flatter's translation is somewhat more literal, and the second speech by Gregorio is better than in Schlegel's version, but the overall difference between the two is not too great.
In some cases, Flatter fails to equal Schlegel's translation; for example:

Benvolio: Come, he hath hid himself among the trees. 
To be consorted with the Humerous night: 
Blind is his love, and best befits the darke.  

Mercutio: If Love be blind, Love cannot hit the Marke.  

(II.i)

The puns here are on the words:

1. humerous: a) moist, humid; b) capricious.  
2. blind: a) unreasonable, irrational; b) sightless.  

Schlegel translates:

Benvolio: Komm! Er barg sich unter jenen Bäumen 
Und pflegt' des Umgangs mit der feuchten Nacht. 
Die Lieb' ist blind, das Dunkel ist ihr recht.  

Mercutio: Ist Liebe blind, so zielt sie freilich schlecht.  

The pun on "humerous" is lost, but the quibble on "blind" is rendered very well. In Flatter's version, the passage reads:

Benvolio: Komm; er verbirgt sich unter jenen Bäumen 
Und pflegt des Umgangs mit der feuchten Nacht: 
Wer blind verliebt ist, liebt ein dunkles Leben.  

Mercutio: Verliebt und blind? Da trifft man leicht daneben.  

Again, Flatter has based his own translation on Schlegel's. The second line of both versions, for example, is exactly the same; the pun on "humerous" is likewise lost. Flatter's treatment of "blind", though adequate, is not as literal as Schlegel's version.
One striking exception to Flatter's general tendency to use Schlegel as a guide in translating Shakespeare's puns is to be seen in a rather lengthy series of quibbles found later in I.i:

Sampson: 'Tis all one, I will shew my selfe a tyrant: when I have fought with the men, I will be civil with the Maids, and cut off their heads.

Gregorio: The Heads of the Maidens?

Sampson: I, the heads of the Maids, or their Maidenheads, Take it in what sense thou wilt.

Gregorio: They must take it in sense, that feel it.

Sampson: Me shall they feel while I am able to stand: And 'tis knowne I am a pretty piece of flesh.

Gregorio: 'Tis well thou art not Pish: if thou had'st, thou had'st been poore John.

The puns here are on the following:

1. heads of the Maids/ Maidenheads.
2. it: a) the preceding phrase; b) penis.
3. sense: a) meaning; b) sensory, i.e., sexual, organ.
4. stand: a) stand up, i.e., keep going; b) remain sexually aroused.
5. flesh/ fish.
6. poore John: a) proper name; b) term applied to a poor quality of cod fish.

Schlegel translates:

Simson: Einerlei! Ich will barbarisch zu Werke gehen. Hab ich's mit den Bedienten erst ausgefochten, so will ich mir die Mädchen unterwerfen. Sie sollen die Spitze meines Degens fühlen, bis er stumpf wird.

There is no evidence to indicate that Schlegel's source lacked any of the passage quoted from the English version above. Perhaps his failure to render a complete transla-
tion was due to his fear of offending his audience with a series of obscene puns. This is a good example of how Schlegel often weakens the full impact of the original. Not all of the puns are lost, however; there is a quibble on "unterwerfen" (a. subjugate; b. assault), "Degen" (a. sword; b. penis) and "stumpf" (a. dull; b. unaroused). In Flatter's version, the passage is translated:

Simson: Alles eins! Ich will mich als Wüterich zeigen: hab ich mit den Männern gefochten, so nehme ich mir die Mädchen vor und will sie grausam umbringen!
Gregorio: Mädchen umbringen—?
Simson: Ja, um ihr Mädhentum will ich sie bringen! Nimm's auf, wie du willst!
Gregorio: Die Mädchen müssen's aufnehmen, wie du willst!
Simson: Die sollen mich aufnehmen solang ich noch imstand bin, standzuhalten; und man weiss, ich bin ein gutes Stück Fleisch!
Gregorio: Nur gut, dass du kein Fisch geworden bist; sonst wärst du ein Stockfisch!

Flatter's translation of the passage is excellent throughout. Although he was forced to use slightly different expressions in some places, the meaning matches that of the original almost exactly. The pun on "stand", in the sense of sexual excitement, is not carried across very well with "standhalten", but the general idea is conveyed adequately by the preceding phrase, "Die sollen mich aufnehmen. . . . " There is an alliterative pun on "Stück Fleisch" and "Stockfisch", by which Flatter is able to capture one meaning of the original, i.e., "codfish". The pun on the proper name, "John", however, is lost.
Flatter's desire to bring his work as close to the original as possible and particularly his emphasis on the theatrical qualities of Shakespeare's plays have resulted in a German translation that is, in most respects, quite like the original and very actable. Rudolf Stamm, for example, writes in a review of Flatter's work: "He [Flatter] is the experienced man of the theatre who succeeds in providing the German speaking actors of our days with a remarkably lucid and actable version of Shakespeare. . . ." Critic Ludwig W. Kahn has also attested to the success of Flatter's translation on the stage. Yet there has been a contradictory result as well. In his attempts to exploit all theatrical values to the fullest extent, Flatter often neglects both the content and poetic quality of the text. For theatrical reasons, he is generally insistent on adhering as strictly as possible to the exact number of lines and syllables in each passage. But because he is translating from a relatively uninflected language to a highly inflected one, he must of necessity make sacrifices. The result is often a marked loss of vitality and beauty, as, for example, in the following passages:

Mercutio: I conjure thee by Rosalines bright eyes, By her High forehead and her Scarlet lip,

38 "Hamlet in Richard Flatter's Translation," English Studies, XXXVI (1955), 228-238; 299-308.

By her Fine foote, Straight leg and Quivering thigh,
And the Demeanes, that there adjacent lie,
That in thy likenesse thou appeare to us.

(II.ii)

Schlegel translates the passage:

Mercutio: Nun wohl: Bei Rosalindens hellem Auge,
Bei ihrer Purpurlipp' und hohen Stirn,
Bei ihrem zarten Fuss, dem schlanken Bein,
Den üpp'gen Hüften und der Region,
Die ihnen nahe liegt, beschwör' ich dich,
Dass du in eig'ner Bildung uns erscheinst.

Schlegel's version is very good. With the exception of the word "üpp'gen", which is considerably weaker than "quiver¬ing", he has captured the sensuality of the original, and the content is translated almost word for word. Here, as throughout his entire translation, Schlegel does not hesitate to add an extra line, if necessary, to make his version of the passage as complete and as poetic as possible. Flatter, however, adheres resolutely to the same number of lines as the original, and the resulting loss becomes evident at once:

Mercutio: Bei Rosalindes blendend hellem Aug',
Bei ihrer hohen Stirn und Scharlachlippe,
Bei ihrem Fuss und Bein, der schlanken
Hüfte
Samt allem Drumherum beschwör' ich dich,
Dass du erscheinst in eigener Gestalt!

In order to limit the passage to five lines, Flatter is forced to condense. His translation, consequently, sounds flat and coarse when compared to the original and to Schlegel. Particularly unsatisfactory is his attempt to render the entire line, "And the Demeanes, that there adjacent lie"
with "Samt allem Drumherum". He is likewise unsuccessful in matching Shakespeare's meter accurately, especially in the first and third lines.

The following passage from the friar's monologue in II.iii:

Friar: The earth that's Natures mother, is her Tomb, What is her burying grave that is her wombe: And from her wombe children of divers kind We sucking on her natural bosome find:

is translated by Schlegel:

Lorenzo: Die Mutter der Natur, die Erd', ist auch ihr Grab, Und was ihr Schoss gebar, sinkt tot in ihn hinab. Und Kinder manigfalt, so all ihr Schoss empfangen, Sehn wir, gesaugt von ihr, an ihren Brüsten hangen.

Schlegel's translation of the content is very good, but in order to retain it completely, he expanded the verse form to hexameter, which causes the passage to sound more ponderous than the original. Flatter translates:

Lorenzo: Was auch die Erde schlingt, nichts geht verloren. Was sie in sich begräbt, wird neu geboren— Und Kinder aller Art aus ihrem Schoss Säugt sie am Mutterbusen, zieht sie gross.

Flatter retains the same number of lines as the original, and again uses a five foot line. It is easy to see, however, how much has been lost. The imagery and poetic beauty of the line is weakened considerably, and in the first line it is almost entirely destroyed.
In other instances, Flatter's desire for greater theatrical effectiveness sometimes tempts him to go beyond the original, to "improve" on Shakespeare's text as well as on Schlegel's. In the following passage, for example, the original reads:

Romeo: Is love a tender thing? it is too rough,
Too rude, too boysterous, and it pricks like thorne. (I.iv)

Schlegel writes:

Romeo: Ist Liebe' ein zartes Ding? Sie ist zu rauh,
Zu wild, zu tobend; und sie sticht wie Dorn.

Schlegel's version is very close to the original in every respect; so close, in fact, that it would seem difficult to improve on it in any way. Flatter, however, translates:

Romeo: Liebe--ein zartes Ding? Nein, sie ist zu roh,
Rauh ist sie, grausam scharf, sticht wie mit Dornen!

Flatter's translation is decidedly more dramatic and more powerful than Schlegel's, and seems to go even beyond the original in this respect. Flatter incorporates here many of his favorite stylistic devices—the dash, exclamation point, omission of personal pronoun—all to great effect. And his use of the term "grausam scharf" in direct association with the verb "stechen", though indicated nowhere in the original, adds even more to the intensity of the line.

Again, after the duel between Romeo and Tybalt, in which Mercutio is mortally wounded, Romeo laments:

My very Friend hath got his mortall hurt
In my behalfe, my reputation stain'd
with Tibalts slander, Tybalt that an houre
Hath been my Cozin: O Sweet Juliet,
Thy Beauty hath made me Effeminate,
And in my temper softened Valours steele. (III.i)

Schlegel renders the passage quite satisfactorily, omitting only the words "in my behalfe" in line two. He is forced, however, to expand the passage half a line in order to retain as much of the content as he does:

Mein eigner Freund
Verwundet auf den Tod, mein Ruf beflekt
Durch Tybalts Lasterungen, Tybalts, der
Seit einer Stunde mir verschwäbert war.
O süsse Julia! deine Schönheit hat
So weibisch mich gemacht; sie hat den Stahl
Der Tapferkeit in meiner Brust erweicht.

Flatter, however, deviates again somewhat from the original in order to enhance the dramatic effect:

Mein guter Freund empfing die Todeswunde
Um meinentwill'n—mein Ansehn ist beschmutzt
Durch wen?—durch Tybalt, der seit einer Stunde
Mit mir verschwäbert ist—oh, Julia,
Durch deine Schönheit bin ich weibisch worden
Und mein Gefühl erweicht der Mannheit Stahl.

In the third line, Flatter omits "with Tibalts slaunder" and inserts the question "Durch wen?—" in order to build up dramatic force. However, by failing to repeat Tybalt's name, the passage is weakened, and the element of Romeo's own disbelief is lost. Flatter also omits "sweet" in the fourth line in order to be able to add a longer dramatic pause.

In addition to a few relatively small deviations, such as those cited above, there is one major departure from the Original that is difficult to understand in light of Flatter's quest for a faithful reproduction of the original. In
the last act, Flatter omits a full twenty lines of dialogue between the Prince, Romeo's servant, Balthasar, and Paris's page. In order to understand the significance of this omission, it is necessary to recount a portion of the preceding action. At the beginning of the second scene of the fifth act, Romeo commands Balthasar to deliver to his father a letter, in which he discloses his purchase of poison and his intention of taking his own life. Later, near the conclusion of the act, Lorenzo, the friar, gives a lengthy account of all that has happened and explains the extent of his own involvement. Following this forty line monologue is a passage in which Balthasar produces Romeo's letter in order to verify Lorenzo's story, thus freeing the friar from all suspicion of murder. For the sake of clarity, the text of this passage will be quoted here. Following Lorenzo's summation of the preceding events, the Prince replies:

We still have knowme thee for a Holy man.
Where's Romeo's man? What can he say to this?

Boy: I brought my Master newes of Juliets death,
And then in poste he came from Mantua
To this same place, to this same Monument.
This Letter he early bid me give his Father,
And threatened me with death, going in the Vault,
If I departed not, and left him there.

Prince: Give me the Letter, I will look on it.
Where is the Counties Page that rais'd the Watch?

Page: He came with flowers to strew his Ladies grave,
And he bid me stand aloofe, and so I did:
Anon comes one with light to ope the Tombe,
And by and by my Maister drew on him,
And then I ran away to call the Watch.

Prince: This Letter doth make good the Friers words,
Their course of Love, the tydings of her death:
And heere he writes, that he did buy a poyson
Of a poore Pothecarie, and therewithall
Came to this Vault to dye, and lye with Juliet.
Where be these Enemies? Capulet, Montague. . . .

Schlegel has retained the passage in its entirety, but
Flatter's version reads:

Prinz: Wir kennen dich als einen frommen Mann.--
Wo sind sie, diese Feinde? Capulet! Montague!

Flatter makes no comment in his notes to the play about the
deletion of the passage quoted above. One very plausible
reason, however, would be that Flatter regarded Lorenzo's
monologue as a theatrical, as well as an aesthetic, blunder.
It is indeed true that lengthy monologues can impede con¬
siderably the flow of dramatic action. Flatter realized,
however, that without Lorenzo's full recounting of events—
lengthy and untheatrical as it might be— the entire point
of the tragedy would have been lost on the surviving mem¬
bers of the Montague and Capulet families. As the critic
and translator Hermann Ulrici says in his comments in the
Variorum edition of the play: "Without this 'narrative'
all that follows, most especially the reconciliation of the
Capulets and Montagues over the corpses of their children,
the victims of their hate, would be lost, and thereby the
tragedy would be robbed of one of its profoundest and most
exquisite elements" (p. 293). Thus, Flatter retains the
monologue in its entirety.

The passage which follows is likewise mostly narrative
and possesses very little theatrical value. Its only pur¬
pose is to confirm the friar's story and establish his inno-
cence. Flatter, however, obviously feels that the innocence of the friar is established sufficiently enough in the Prince's line, "Wir kennen dich als einen frommen Mann." Thus, he sacrifices the offending passage completely in order to prevent the conclusion of the play from becoming even more anticlimactic theatrically.

It should be emphasized again that the deletion of the passage discussed above is the only major deviation from the original text in Flatter's translation. Lesser departures from the original occur only occasionally, and, taken as a whole, are of very little consequence with regard to the total impression made by the translation.

As a result of Flatter's close attention to theatrical details, and because of his modern, forceful diction, the characters in the play are much more dynamic than in Schlegel's version. Flatter also uses language very effectively to identify his characters by their speech, as well as by their costumes and roles. The servants, for example, use a very colloquial and idiomatic language, whereas that of the upper classes is more sophisticated. This distinction is not nearly as clear in Schlegel's version.

With regard to the definition of the characters, there are no significant differences between Flatter's text and Shakespeare's. In the areas of personality, attitude, action, etc., Flatter's figures are all remarkably like the original. The only exception of any consequence is to be seen in the friar, Lorenzo. Throughout the play, he is presented as be-
ing more reserved, more austere than in the original. In V.iii, for example, Lorenzo hurries to the cemetery to be with Juliet when she awakes from the death-like trance induced by the drug he had given her:

**Lor:** Now must I to the Monument alone,
Within this three hours will faire Juliet wake,
She will beshrew me much that Romeo
Hath had no notice of these accidents:
But I will write again to Mantua,
And keepe her at my Cell till Romeo come,
Poore living, Coarse, clos'd in a dead mans Tombe.

**Schlegel's version reads:**

**Lor:** Ich muss allein zum Gruft nun. Innerhalb
Drei Stunden wird das schöne Kind erwachen;
Verwünschen wird sie mich, weil Romeo
Vom ganzen Vorgang nichts erfahren hat.
Doch schreib' ich gleich nach Mantua,
Und berge sie so lang in meiner Zell',
Bis ihr Geliebter kommt! Die arme Seele! 
Lebend'ge Leich' in dumpfer Grabeshöhle!

Schlegel goes quite beyond the original in feeling. Lorenzo's compassion and concern for the unfortunate Juliet becomes intensified, even parental. Where the original has only "faire Juliet", Schlegel substitutes "das schöne Kind". He likewise chooses the more romantic term "Geliebter" instead of mentioning Romeo by name. Finally, the term "Die arme Seele! Lebend'ge Leich'" is somewhat more emotional than "Poore living Coarse".

In direct contrast to Schlegel's translation, the friar in Flatter's version is emotionally even more conservative than in the original:

**Lor:** So muss ich nun ins Gruftgewölbe allein!
Drei Stunden nur, und Julia erwacht;
Verwünschen wird sie mich, weil Romeo
Flatter omits those expressions which would enhance the friar's personal feeling for Juliet, for example, the words "faire" in the second line, and "poore" in the last line. As a result, Lorenzo appears as a man who seems as much interested in simply preventing his scheme from becoming further bungled as in Juliet's personal welfare. His attitude here, as throughout the play, is one of detached concern rather than personal involvement.

Lorenzo, as mentioned earlier, is the only figure to undergo any significant change in Flatter's version; the others are quite like those of Shakespeare, a fact that indicates clearly the overall success of Flatter's translation.

It would be very difficult, even impossible, to try to assess the future value of Flatter's efforts. For language is constantly undergoing change, and it could well be that within seventy-five or a hundred years, his version may be as obsolete as the translations of the nineteenth century are today. There can be no question, however, of the tremendous value of Flatter's work for the present age. Its theatrical advantages are obvious, and the increasing number of Shakespeare performances based on Flatter's translation is indicative of its growing popularity among German
producers. There are cultural advantages as well; for the general clarity of Flatter's work, its modern diction and remarkable actability have enabled producers to present many of Shakespeare's works (Romeo and Juliet, for example) which, heretofore, were relatively seldom performed in German. Furthermore, because of its overall fidelity to the original, together with its modernity, Flatter's translation makes it possible, ironically, for a modern German audience to obtain a more complete impression of the original Shakespeare than is possible for the average English-speaking viewer. Finally, Flatter's text could be of great value to Shakespeare scholars, for it illuminates, as has been shown, many aspects of Shakespeare's art that previously had been given insufficient attention.

For further information concerning the number of Shakespeare performances in Flatter's translation, see the annual "Bühnenbericht", published by the Deutsche Shakespeare-Gesellschaft in the Shakespeare-Jahrbuch.
List of Works Consulted


"Zum Streit um Shakespeare." Anon. Die Literatur, XXXVIII (1936), 324.