

MUSSORGSKY'S *BORIS GODUNOV* IN ITALIAN: ANALYZING THE INFLUENCE OF MICHEL DELINES' FRENCH VERSION

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Abstract: This article presents a brief history of Italian rhythmical translations of Modest Mussorgsky's libretto for his opera *Boris Godunov*, each apparently drawing on Michel Delines' French version from 1908. The author explores the possibility of studying the opera's reception in Italy in connection with the reception of its translations and conducts a brief comparative analysis of four Italian versions of the opera (two from 1908, one from 1909, and one from 1978) alongside both the original and the French version, using one fragment (Boris' coronation) as an example. The paper also aims to draw attention to the lack of serious comparative studies on opera translations and the translators themselves, emphasizing their role as mediators between different cultures.

Keywords: opera translation; libretto; opera theater; Russian opera; Boris Godunov

1. Introduction

It is well known that in Italy, during the early 20th century, Russian literary works were often translated not directly from the original language but from French, and to a lesser extent, from other languages. This phenomenon has received considerable attention from scholars, who, however, focused primarily on the most famous texts or authors. It is noteworthy that translations of Russian opera librettos have been overlooked. This appears to be a remarkable omission, considering that the growing popularity of Russian culture in the West at the beginning of the 20th century can be attributed largely to the European public's interest in Russian music, particularly in Russian Opera Theater. As librettology has gained a more prominent position in academic discourse in recent decades (Marschall 2004, Bonomi, Buroni, Sala 2019, Dimitrin, Stetsenko 2020), the study of opera libretto translations has the potential to raise new questions and offer interesting insights. For instance, one could explore the identification of opera translators, the processes involved in opera translations, and analyze the influence of these translations on the reception of the opera itself, or even the original works they were based on. An illustrative example related to the theme of

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this article would be tracing the connection between the growing popularity of Pushkin and Russian literature in general in Italy during the 1920s, attributed to the success of Mussorgsky's opera. Similarly, one could investigate the influence of opera translations on translations of Pushkin's drama *Boris Godunov*, among other related inquiries.

In my article, I aim to delve into Italian translations of arguably the most famous Russian opera in the West, Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, initially translated from French. I intend to use this opera as a case study to analyze the extent to which the French version could influence subsequent Italian translations.

2. Selecting the Type of Translation to Analyze

Firstly, let's revisit the various types of operatic translation. According to Sarah Weaver, today we recognize four types of operatic translation: 1. Libretto translation (word-by-word or "straight" libretto translation); 2. Singing or singable translation; 3. Subtitles or surtitles; 4. Intersensorial translation (Weaver 2010).

Depending on the context or historical period, each type of translation may have had greater or lesser relevance. Given the period of our interest - the first half of the 20th century — what is particularly important to us is singable translation. This type of translation is not only intended to be read but also to be sung on stage. It's worth noting that this is the most time-consuming and challenging type of translation, as it requires the translator to preserve the prosodic and rhythmic patterns of the original set to music (*ibidem*)¹. Finally, the most crucial aspect of singable translation lies in its role in shaping cultural memory. Even with repeated exposure to an opera in an unfamiliar language, the listener is unlikely to memorize the text. This implies that the verbal element of opera theater (which comprises words, music, and visual images) cannot fully engage in the theatrical experience. In this case, music, a powerful means of disseminating the text, cannot effectively convey what is not stored in memory, thus losing its original potential.² As for the words, they lose their right to be heard altogether. Conversely, by actively listening and, notably, re-listening to an opera text seamlessly fused with music, thereby grasping the meaning of the words, opera transforms into not only a cultural but also a social event. This is especially noteworthy when considering that opera, being a product of collective authorship (composer,

¹ The most important task is not only to follow the scheme of the given music, but also its semantic meanings. This is in line with Jean-René Ladmiral's translation theory, according to which a music translation should not reproduce what the text 'says,' but what it 'wants to say' (Ladmiral 2009: 46). This approach is also in line with the librettologist Albert Gier, who calls one of the most important properties of the libretto genre the 'primacy of the perceived' (Gier 2004: 78), in the light of which the semantic and lexical character of the word loses much of its significance, since the word does not directly contact the addressee, but is a means of explaining what is heard in the music and what happens on stage.

² Let us recall, for example, the words of Lorenzo Bianconi: "Si tratta di riconoscere come in teatro – e tanto più nel teatro d'opera che scolpisce le parole nella memoria attraverso il canto – il momento della ricezione attraverso repliche successive abbia sulla storia e sulla definizione del testo un peso enorme" (Bianconi 1995: 148).

librettist, and scenographer), is also a product of collective consumption within a crowded theater hall.

That is why at the beginning of the 20th century, presenting operas from different geographical areas in their original language on European theater stages was nearly impossible, except for very few cases. It was customary, if not a rule, to perform opera texts in the language of the audience. Hence, the initial interaction between the audience and the opera theater of another culture — in our case, between the Italian audience and Russian opera theater - occurred through translation. The popularity of a particular opera increased with the assistance of translation. The case of the Italian language is particularly intriguing because it served as a mediator language, not confined to Italy alone. For instance, in the United States, some non-Italian operas were still performed in Italian, including Bizet's *Carmen* or Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*³.

The quality of translation during this period is indeed an extremely important topic for researchers. This is because the translation quality often determined the final presentation of an opera performance abroad⁴. For foreign audiences, this performance marked its first appearance, leaving a crucial and lasting impression that influenced the reception of both the opera itself and the reputation of the composer. A notable example is the experience shared by the renowned bass Fyodor Chaliapin, who recalled how, during preparations for the premiere of *Boris Godunov* at La Scala, the decision to omit a crucial scene in the libretto was made due to an extremely unsuccessful translation, impacting the opera's dramaturgy significantly (Chaliapin 2016: 418).

3. *Boris Godunov* in France: The Role of Translator Michel Deliges

While the importance of translation in the opera theater during this period is evident, there is limited information available about the translators themselves, as they often receive minimal attention. A number of exceptions to this rule include Michel Delignes, born in Odessa in 1851 as Mikhail Osipovich Ashkinazi. Ashkinazi left the Russian Empire in 1877, fearing arrest for his involvement in revolutionary agitation among workers. Initially, Ashkinazi lived in Italy and Switzerland. In 1887, he settled in France, where he devoted himself to familiarizing French society with Russian culture. Following Turgenev's advice, he began translating works by Tolstoy, Goncharov, Garshin, and other authors. Later, adopting the pseudonym Michel Delignes, Ashkinazi befriended Tchaikovsky and dedicated himself to popularizing Russian music in France. Their friendship grew, and Delignes played a significant role in the introduction of Tchaikovsky's operas to the French stage.

He also played a crucial role in introducing the French public to Mussorgsky's

³ This was often solely attributed to organizational aspects, such as the frequent touring of Italian companies or the widespread knowledge of the Italian language among opera singers, enabling them to learn the text quickly.

⁴ "Tradurre i libretti nella lingua del paese di esecuzione ha per lungo tempo rappresentato la condizione indispensabile affinché un'opera potesse avere successo e diffusione in un contesto culturale e istituzionale diverso da quello in cui questa aveva avuto origine" (Giannini 2015: 256).

Boris Godunov. After Diaghilev's *Cinq Concerts historiques* in Paris in 1906, interest in Russian music among the French public increased and Diaghilev seized this opportunity to organize his *Saisons Russes*. The names of outstanding Russian composers were well known to the French in those years, but perhaps none of them caused such a resonance as Mussorgsky's name. Long before the premiere of *Boris* in Paris, the authenticity of the opera was actively debated. Critics and composers connected with Russian music or simply interested in it were divided into two camps: some defended the version of Rimsky-Korsakov, published in 1896 (even acknowledging that it couldn't be called the authentic author's version), while others staunchly insisted on the Mussorgsky's version of 1874 (the very first version, the so-called 'Ur-Boris' of 1869, which was not approved by the censors,⁵ wasn't yet known to the French music community at the time).

The Greek-born musicologist Michel Calvocoressi, who, in 1908, was completing a biography of Mussorgsky (the publication of which once again emphasized the unprecedented interest in the composer in French society), was particularly zealous in insisting that the original version (from 1874) of the opera be staged in Paris. Calvocoressi recalled that the French were no less active than the Russians in disputes over the authenticity of the opera (Calvocoressi 1934: 151).

Calvocoressi's attempts to publish the original score of the opera were unsuccessful⁶. Nevertheless, the score, revised by Rimsky-Korsakov, was published in France by Bessel before the Paris premiere. Delines, in collaboration with Louis Laloy, created the first French version of the opera (Mussorgsky 1908a). Due to various organizational reasons, the Parisian premiere of the opera took place in Russian; the performance in French translation by Delines did not occur until 1913. Interestingly, this translation was also known in Russia. For example, Lunacharsky praised Delines' translation, stating in the newspaper "Den": "Перевод Делиня можно признать виртуозным."⁷ In the same note, he emphasized the importance of performing the opera exactly in translation, as despite the French public's love for the opera, "Непонятность текста столь важного у такого звукового иллюстратора, каким является Мусоргский, в значительной степени препятствовала полноте оценки" (Lunacharsky 1913: 7)⁸.

⁵ Among the reasons for the refusal to stage the first version of the opera were the simultaneous consideration by the Imperial Theatres of materials for the production of Pushkin's *Boris* (the performance of Mussorgsky's *Boris* before Pushkin's could be seen as incorrect in relation to the poet's memory) (Lashchenko 2011: 73), the absence of a 'female element' (*ivi*: 87), the predominance of choruses, and the noticeable lack of separate scenes for soloists (*ivi*: 91).

⁶ As it turned out, none of the French editors were willing to consider publishing such a version. Regarding Calvocoressi's efforts to persuade Diaghilev to stage the opera in Mussorgsky's original version at least for the premiere, they also proved unsuccessful. Diaghilev prioritized the production aspect, favoring the company's familiarity with Rimsky-Korsakov's version, over the philological aspect (Ottomano 2020: 203-204)

⁷ "Deligne's translation can be recognized as virtuosic" (author's translation).

⁸ "The obscurity of a text as important as Mussorgsky's, a composer known for his profound illustrative abilities, greatly hindered the completeness of the evaluation" (author's translation).

4. Translations of the Opera in Italy

After the Paris premiere in 1908, at Toscanini's insistence, La Scala began preparations for the first performance of the opera in Italy. Notably, a translation of *Boris* into Italian was also published even before its stage debut, both in the score published by Sonzogno and as a separately published libretto. Michel Delines and Enrico Palermi are credited as the opera's first translators (Mussorgsky 1908b.). We know that Delines spoke Italian, even much less well than French, but we know almost nothing about his co-author Enrico Palermi. In general, co-authorship in the translation of opera librettos was a common practice, as one of the translators usually knew the original language, and the other—a native speaker of the source text and often a music critic or musicologist—adapted the text to the vocal and musical pattern. The most intriguing fact is that another translation was published almost, in the same year, apparently it was created after Delines' translation, as evidenced by the inscription 'nuova versione' on the cover. This is the 1908 translation by Gustavo Macchi and Enrico Magni (Mussorgsky 1908c). Remarkably, a year later, in 1909, a translation by a certain Livio Loro appeared (Mussorgsky 1909). This suggests that in the years preceding the premiere of *Boris* in Italy, as well as in the year of the premiere itself, several translators tried to create their own versions of the libretto, probably unsatisfied with the previous ones. It's worth noting that in 1978, another and ultimately the last "singable" translation of *Boris Godunov* was released (soon this type of translation was replaced by surtitles). This translation was the work of Jerzy Semkow and Piero Faggioni ad edited as a 'nuovissima traduzione italiana' (Musorgskij 1978).

5. Comparisons of Italian Versions with the French: A Case Study of One Fragment

The comparison of all these versions and the study of their perception by spectators and critics, for example can be facilitated by examining reviews or spectators' memoirs. Unfortunately, a detailed study of this topic is not possible within the scope of this article. Nevertheless, we can attempt to analyze one fragment of the opera to understand to what extent the Italian translators were influenced by Michel Delines' French version.

Firstly, it is crucial to recall that Italian, and not only Italian, intellectual society during the period under consideration was significantly more musically oriented than it is today. People engaged with operas through various mediums such as records, radio broadcasts, and live performances, willingly or unwillingly retaining in their memory the most memorable fragments. These fragments often comprise melodic pieces of opera, a noteworthy aspect for Mussorgsky's works, which deviate from the conventional structure of alternating 'closed' lyrical pieces. Instead, they embody a continuous, pseudo-cacophonous musical flow. The so-called 'closed' pieces, such as arias and arioso sections, stand out particularly vividly against this musical backdrop.

The first notable fragment of this type is Boris's 'arioso' during the coronation scene, a moment of particular significance as it marks the protagonist's initial

appearance before the audience (And also before his people, who, after the death of Ivan the Terrible and his heir, finally awaited a new ruler). The arioso is distinctly divided into three parts. The first segment, where Boris is immersed in contemplation, carries a weighty emotional tone. In the second part, the music takes on a clearer expression as Boris transitions from somber reflections to a prayerful appeal to God. Lastly, the third part is characterized by a joyful proclamation to the people and an invitation to partake in a feast. Here is the original version of the arioso together with its French translation:

Борис
Скорбит душа.
Какой-то страх невольный
зловещим предчувствием сковал мне
сердце.

О праведник, о мой отец державный!
Воззри с небес на слёзы верных слуг
и ниспошли ты мне священное
на власть благословенье:
да буду благ и праведен, как ты;
да в славе правлю свой народ...

Теперь поклонимся
почиющим властителям Руси.
А там сзывать народ на пир,
всех, от бояр до нищего слепца,
всем вольный вход,
все — гости дорогие!
Original version
(Musorgskij 1873: 17)

Boris
Mon cœur est triste.
Un sentiment de crainte
quand tous sont joyeux a pénétré mon
âme.

Ô saint aïeul, ô mon royal ancêtre!
Du haut du ciel regarde, vois mes
pleurs!
Accorde-moi ta sainte bénédiction,
bénis mon règne!
Et donne-moi la grâce d'être bon,
heureux et juste comme toi!

D'abord rendons hommage
aux empereurs défunts de la Russie!
Après le peuple aura sa fête,
tous, du boyard au pauvre mendiant,
tous entreront;
tous trouveront un père !

Delines/Laloy's translation.
(Mussorgsky 1908a: 13)

Let us first consider the French version in its comparison with the Russian original. The first part of the arioso is translated in French in this way⁹:

Скорбит душа. Какой-то страх невольный зловещим предчувствием сковал мне сердце

Original version
(Musorgskij 1873)

Mon cœur est triste. Un sentiment de crainte quand tous sont joyeux a pénétré mon âme
Delines/Laloy's French translation, 1908
(Mussorgsky 1908a)

⁹ In the tables, the words to which attention should be paid are underlined because they are particularly different in the translation from the original, or because they influence future versions.

Let's focus now on the first words of the arioso, in general, the first words pronounced by Tsar Boris in the opera. They are important also because they become the title of arioso. In the original we hear the words: "The soul mourns," continuing as: "Some involuntary fear has gripped my heart with an ominous foreboding." Boris speaks of his soul as well as his heart, but the soul is placed first in the aria. In the French translation Delines reverses this order. A notable discrepancy lies in the emphasis on Boris's loneliness, particularly highlighted in the French version with the words "quand tous sont joyeux."

The isolation of the character continues in the second part, instead of the Russian "Воззри с небес на слёзы верных слуг" Delines puts the "Du haut du ciel regarde, vois mes pleurs!"

О праведник, о мой отец державный! Воззри с небес на слёзы верных слуг.
Original version
(Musorgskij 1873)

Ô saint aïeul, ô mon royal ancêtre! Du haut du ciel regarde, vois mes pleurs!
Delines/Laloy's French translation, 1908
(Mussorgsky 1908a)

An interesting feature in the translation is the substitution of the 'folk' formula «Все гости дорогие!» with an almost gospel allusion in the third part: "tous entreront; tous trouveront un père!"¹⁰:

всем вольный вход, все — гости дорогие!
Original version
(Musorgskij 1873)

tous entreront; tous trouveront un père!
Delines/Laloy's French translation, 1908
(Mussorgsky 1908a)

On the whole, when comparing the original with the French translation, it becomes evident that these seemingly insignificant nuances introduce slightly different shades to the progression of Boris's thoughts. In the original, Boris begins by expressing the anguish of his soul, seemingly with the intent to extend it to his people ("look down from heaven on the tears of the faithful servants"). He then implores God for strength "to rule his people in glory." As if recalling the people, he suddenly becomes grounded and extends an invitation to them for a feast. In the French version, Boris articulates the suffering of the heart (unlike the 'soul,' the heart is a purely physiological, less abstract, and less comprehensive organ for perceiving the world). This reinforces Boris's detachment from the world and the crowd, a sentiment explicitly declared in the words: "quand tous sont joyeux" and further: "Du haut du ciel regarde, vois mes

¹⁰ See Matthieu 7:21 "Ce n'est pas quiconque me dit: Seigneur, Seigneur, qui entrera dans le royaume des cieux ; mais celui qui fait la volonté de mon Père qui est dans les cieux. ("Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven").

pleurs!” In the third section, Boris also recalls the people but assumes the role of a ‘father’ whom all will find in him. This, as previously noted, indirectly evokes the Gospel story.

Now let’s examine what happens to these same phrases in subsequent Italian translations of *Boris*. In all Italian versions from the early 20th century, the emphasis on the words about the heart is retained, which confirms that the translators were almost certainly referring to earlier versions:

- Ho triste il cor!.. La tema incessante dell’arcano nefasto mi rode l’alma!
 Delines/Palermi’s French translation, 1908
 (Mussorgsky 1908b)
- Ho stretto il cor! Siccome in ferrea morsa... E il sangue m’arresta ne le vene un gelo.
 Macchi/Magni’s Italian translation 1908
 (Mussorgsky 1908c)
- Ho triste il cor ed agitata l’alma... Turbato io son da neri presentimenti!
 Loro’s Italian translation, 1909
 (Mussorgsky 1909)

Regarding Boris’s accentuated loneliness, in Michel Delines’ Italian version, this motif is abandoned, aligning more closely with the original (“Tu vedi dal Ciel le lagrime nostre,” no more “vois mes pleurs”). However, in subsequent Italian versions, translators sometimes revert to having Boris express his feelings in the singular, indicating a preference for the original French version:

- O Padre mio! O, mio avo regale! Lassù dal Ciel tu vedi il pianto nostro.
 Delines/Palermi’s French translation, 1908
 (Mussorgsky 1908b)
- M’ascolta tu, o grande padre mio! Ti volgi a me dal tuo celeste ostel...
 Macchi/Magni’s Italian translation 1908
 (Mussorgsky 1908c)
- O morto santo, augusto avo mio, De’ servi tuoi il pianto vedi!
 Loro’s Italian translation, 1909
 (Mussorgsky 1909)

Finally, in the third part, the translators, like Delines himself in his Italian version, try to give Boris’s last words more specificity:

- Tutti entreran, sì, lo Zar invita tutti!
 Delines/Palermi’s French translation, 1908
 (Mussorgsky 1908b)
- Niun dee mancar! Vo’ ospitare tutti!
 Macchi/Magni’s Italian translation 1908
 (Mussorgsky 1908c)
- Entrino tutti... Lo czar invita il popol suo!
 Loro’s Italian translation, 1909
 (Mussorgsky 1909)

So, we can observe that the subsequent Italian versions exhibit a mixed approach, with some retaining and others abandoning the interpellation found in the French version. Certain elements, such as the phrase “Ho triste il cor!” (My heart is sad!), become constants in all Italian versions, aligning with the vocal aspect of the text. Some translators attempt to introduce new variants for specific phrases and words, all while maintaining certain elements borrowed from the French translation. It’s essential to note here that due to limited information about opera libretto translators, we cannot definitively assess their knowledge of the Russian language. It is plausible that, during translation, they relied on Delines’ authority and his French version more than their own understanding of Russian. It’s also possible that they had no knowledge of Russian at all.¹¹

The translation by Semkow and Faggioni, the latest rhythmic rendition of *Boris Godunov* from 1978, is particularly interesting in that it largely aligns with the first French version by Delines (as we shall see in the example of the same phrase). This is despite one of the translators seemingly possessing Russian language skills (Jerzy Semkow, a Polish conductor who had collaborated with Yevgeny Marvinsky at the Leningrad Philharmonic), the considerable time gap between the first French and the last Italian translation, and the fact that by 1978 the opera had already been translated into many European languages, including substitutes and literary versions of the translation.

Having familiarized ourselves with the latest translation, we observed that it effectively restores the main character’s train of thought described in the initial French version. It is noteworthy that instead of the classical Italian beginning of the aria, “Ho triste il cor!” (My heart is sad!), the translators present a new variant – “Oh, angoscia mia” (Musorgskij 1978: 15)¹²:

Mon cœur est triste. Un sentiment de crainte quand tous sont joyeux a pénétré mon âme
Delines/Laloy’s French translation, 1908
(Mussorgsky 1908a)

Oh angoscia mia! Oh qual terrore oscuro! Funesto presagio mi opprime il cuore!
Semkow/Faggioni Italian translation, 1978
(Musorgskij 1978)

In the second part of the arioso, Semkow and Faggioni once again emphasize the

¹¹ For example, we know for a fact that Gustavo Macchi translated Rimsky-Korsakov’s *The Snow Maiden* from Delines’ French translation.

¹² It’s interesting to recall that in the Macchi/Magni version, the adjective “triste” has been replaced by “stretto,” and the Italian word “angoscia” is derived from the Latin “angustia” (tightness, constraint), aligning with Macchi/Magni’s choice. If we turn to the original version, where the words “скорбит душа” come first, and consult, for example, Vasmer’s Etymological Dictionary of Russian Language, we find that one of the etymological explanations for the word “скорбеть” lies in the Icelandic root “skorpr,” meaning to “to shrink or contract” (Vasmer 1987: 650-651). Thus, the word “angoscia” may be more consistent with Boris’s original words of grief, rather than the more neutral “sadness” (tristezza). In this regard, the challenging question of aligning the semantics of the music with the semantics of the word can be raised, which once again seems feasible within the scope of this paper.

theme of Boris's loneliness with the phrase "Lassù dal ciel tu guarda il servo tuo," again aligning with the French version:

Ô saint aïeul, ô mon royal ancêtre! Du haut du ciel regarde, vois mes pleurs!

Delines/Laloy's French translation, 1908

(Mussorgsky 1908a)

O sommo Zar, O nostro grande padre! Lassù dal ciel tu guarda il servo tuo!

Semkow/Faggioni Italian translation, 1978

(Musorgskij 1978)

Finally, the concluding phrase, instead of the folk-infused "All guests are dear!" is once more replaced by a more direct biblical quotation: "Tutti a me venite!" (See "Venite a me, voi tutti che siete affaticati e oppressi" (Matteo 11:28)). Thus, it becomes evident that Delines' initial translation of *Boris Godunov* has exerted influence not only on his own Italian translation but also on subsequent Italian versions, spanning a period of 60 years.

...tous entrèrent; tous trouveront un père!

Delines/Laloy's French translation, 1908

(Mussorgsky 1908a)

Sì, tutti voi, Sì, tutti a me venite!

Semkow/Faggioni Italian translation, 1978

(Musorgskij 1978)

6. Conclusion

As we have seen from this brief and schematic analysis of Italian translations of the opera *Boris Godunov*, they may all have been influenced to some degree by Michel Delines' French translation. Additionally, we have observed that equirhythmic opera translations typically involved two co-authors. This raises the question: who were the Italian opera translators at the beginning of the century, to what extent did each of them contribute to the translation, and what was the rationale behind the practice of co-authorship itself?

The next crucial issue is the question of the necessity to revise existing translations of *Boris*, which evidently emerged at an early stage of the opera's introduction in Italy. Additionally, it is important to examine the methods employed in each of the Italian translations and the innovations introduced in subsequent renditions.

The most intriguing question that remains is the extent to which the Italian translation of the opera in all its variants has influenced and continues to influence the reception of the work in Italy. This question merits closer scrutiny and provides fertile ground for research. As a preliminary observation, it is noteworthy that, after reading numerous abridged versions of the opera's libretto in Italian translations, there is a noticeable emphasis on Boris's death, attributed to his deteriorating physical condition. For instance, the 2003 La Scala libretto explicitly states that Boris dies of acute heart

pain: “Boris è colto da un acuto dolore al cuore” (Musorgskij 2003:18). To some extent, this corresponds to the original libretto, where Mussorgsky remarks that Boris, upon hearing Pimen’s words, clutches at his heart. However, Russian-language sources rarely mention the Tsar’s heart condition when describing his death scene.

Can this be explained by the phenomenon of ‘cultural memory,’ considering that the Italian Boris, addressing the audience for the first time in his native language, began his speech with an account of his heartache? It is hoped that detailed research in this area is still to come, as well as studies on the history of opera libretto translations and their translators.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

Ethical Standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.