

Title: Translation as Appropriation in Russian Operatic Repertoire (early 19th Century)

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Abstract:

Before the evolution of an original production, the appropriation of European literary models in Russia passed through translation, which became a mean of transformation of foreign repertoires into national ones. Early translations were characterized by the author's freedom to introduce new elements or changes. In the 18th century, the practice of remakes with *sklonenie na russkie nray* aimed at a profound comprehension of the work by the audience, translators being conscious of the different cultural ground, in which their texts were supposed to be received. This process affected also operatic texts. In the 18th and up to the early 19th century, the practice of *peredelka* was applied to librettos in the genre of comedy, and comic operas of the main European linguistic areas were used as pretexts to create autonomous *opery komicheskiye*, in which the contacts with the originals were progressively lost. The practice of remake was not peculiar to the Russian context, as it had been the same for the Germanization of Mozart's Italian operas through the action of Friedrich Rochlitz, fostering the evolution of a national theatrical repertoire. This process was facilitated by the characteristic 'openness' of the operatic texts, as well as the conditioning of their association with music.

My paper tackles the translation into Russian of operatic texts in its historical perspective: beside the well known case of Nikolay Krasnopol'sky's *Rusalki* set to music by Catterino Cavos and Stepan Davydov, other examples demonstrate how the operation of translation influenced the production of new librettos, and consequently the development of an early Russian musical theatre some decades before the most celebrated masterpieces of the Russian national school.