

RU

Прочтения, интерпретация и переводы Шекспира: проблема (без)действия и его причин в советских переводах

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Аннотация. Цель исследования - выявить идейное наполнение переводов слова “conscience” и его значение для понимания поэтической мифологии Серебряного века. На материале переводов М. Лозинского, Б. Пастернака и А. Радловой исследуются переводы слова «совесть» и фрагменты, где оно было опущено или добавлено. Автор приходит к заключению, что выбор варианта перевода был обусловлен не столько советской цензурой (требовавшей аметафизичности мировоззрения, противоречившей пониманию “conscience” как совести, озабоченной посмертной судьбой человека), сколько сложившимся в Серебряном веке мифом о поэте как сверхчеловеке и культурном герое, чему соответствует «рационализация» сомнений Гамлета. Научная новизна исследования состоит в предположении, что именно под влиянием этого поэтического мифа советские (и постсоветские) переводчики предпочитали видеть в Гамлете сверхчеловека, облеченного миссией вселенского масштаба, на пути которой не должны вставать нравственные соображения. В результате переводчики продолжали развивать сложившийся еще в Серебряном веке миф о поэте как божественном существе, хотя подобные представления парадоксальным образом легко сочетались с антиметафизическим советским мировоззрением.

EN

Reading, Interpreting, and Translating Shakespeare: The Problem of (In)Action and of Its Causes in Soviet Translations

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Abstract. The aim of the article is to explicate the ideational contents of translations of the word “conscience” and their significance for understanding the poetic mythology of the Silver Age. Using translations of “Hamlet” by Mikhail Lozinsky, Boris Pasternak, and Anna Radlova, the article traces translations of the word “conscience” and instances where the word was omitted or added in the Russian translations. The conclusion is that specific translational choices were conditioned not so much by Soviet censorship (which demanded an ametaphysical mindset that would be contrary to treating “conscience” as moral knowledge concerned with a human being’s posthumous fate), as by a Silver Age myth of the poet as a super-human being and a cultural hero. This myth aligns with “rationalizing” Hamlet’s indecision. The paper’s novelty lies in its conclusion that it was that poetic myth that led Soviet and post-Soviet translators to prefer to interpret Hamlet as a super-human being charged with a mission of a cosmic scale, which should not have been hindered by the moral considerations of the characters. Our findings are that translators of Shakespeare continued the Silver Age myth of the poet as a divine being, even as the interpretations paradoxically appeared to be in line with the Soviet worldview that looked unfavorably at all things metaphysical.

Introduction

This article focuses on translations of the word “conscience” in William Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* into Russian. This word and its interpretation is a conceptual center of Shakespeare’s play and, consequently, its rendition into Russian has key significance for understanding the tragedy. The study’s relevance goes beyond purely linguistic, philological, and translational matters, as the interpretation and translation of this word helps elucidate the concept of a human being in the works of Shakespeare and in the mindsets of his translators and helps shed a new light on the philosophical and religious anthropology of the Modernity and on its various forms and manifestations.

This aim necessitates the following tasks: studying the actual translations of the word “conscience” in the translations of Mikhail Lozinsky, Boris Pasternak, and Anna Radlova; considering the instances where the word was omitted

or, alternatively, added in Russian translations; comparing the dominant means of translating this word with translations done in the 19th and the late 20th – early 21st century; drawing conclusions concerning the philosophical anthropology contained in the translations studied and suggesting their roots in the poetic mythology of the Silver Age.

Research methods: the study uses the comparative analysis method to explicate the significance of using the words «совесть» as opposed to words referring to mental activities for rendering the English “conscience” in Russian translations of *Hamlet*.

Theoretical background: this study draws upon works of translation scholars (Николаев, 2022; Пешков, 2003; Пастернак, 2004) and Shakespeare scholars (Bloom, 1998; Mallin, 2007), upon studies of Soviet censorship (Колесова, 2015; Жирков, 2001; Чирскова, 2008).

Merriam-Webster Dictionary of English is used in the study (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/conscience>).

The study’s practical significance has several aspects. It may be used in translation studies, in philosophical and religious anthropology studies, and in comparative literary studies.

Results and Discussion

“Conscience”, translations of “Hamlet”, and the Silver Age myth of the poet

Every trend in philosophy, cultural anthropology, literature, and history can be viewed from a variety of perspectives. Every phenomenon can be seen either as the product of its immediate context, or as the result of a far longer course of development. The immediate context, in turn, can be described with a whole spectrum of categories ranging from philosophical to political. The article argues that while outwardly appearing in their specific ideational slant to be a product of Soviet censorship, these translations manifest not only Soviet censorship practices, but primarily the translators’ own philosophical and poetic worldviews carried over from the poetic mythology of the Silver Age (for an overview of Soviet censorship, see, for instance (Жирков, 2001)). This study will explore the uses, translations, and additions of the word “conscience” in William Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* (all Shakespearean quotes are from *The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works* (revised edition. L., 2007)) as translated by Mikhail Lozinsky (Шекспир У. Собрание сочинений: в 8-ми т. / под ред. А. Смирнова, А. Аникста. М.: Искусство, 1960. Т. 6. Т. 7), Boris Pasternak (Шекспир У. Весь Шекспир: в 2-х т. М.: Олма-пресс, 2000. Т. 2), and Anna Radlova (Шекспир У. Гамлет, принц датский. Л. – М.: Искусство, 1937), as well as pre-revolutionary translations (Антология переводов «Гамлета»: в 2-х т. М.: Совпадение, 2006. Т. 1. Т. 2; Шекспир В. Полное собрание сочинений В. Шекспира въ прозѣ и стихахъ: в 12-ти т. / перевелъ П. А. Каншинъ. СПб., 1893. Т. 1. URL: http://az.lib.ru/s/shekspir_w/text_1190oldorfo.shtml; Шекспир В. Драматическія сочинения Шекспира / переводъ съ англійскаго Н. Кетчера. М., 1873. URL: http://az.lib.ru/s/shekspir_w/text_1873_hamlet_oldorfo.shtml).

In the mid-20th century Soviet Union, classical works from other eras and cultures were often a convenient outlet for Aesopian references to the present because they seemed not to be governed by generally accepted norms of political and linguistic propriety. The translation of the German folk book on Dr. Faustus included swearwords that would normally be unthinkable in print in a Soviet edition (Легенда о докторе Фаусте / сост. В. Жирмунский. М.: Наука, 1978. С. 72). Translations of *The Prose Edda* rendered faithfully those obscene episodes that were bowdlerized in some English translations. When Joanne Harris published *The Gospel of Loki* in 2014, *The Guardian’s* reviewer rather scathingly wrote: “Humour is gormless (Loki’s star comic turn is tying his testicles to a goat’s beard)” (Jones G. The Gospel of Loki by Joanne M. Harris – review // *The Guardian*. 12.02.2014. URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/feb/12/gospel-loki-joanne-m-harris-review>). This episode was not invented by Harris (a commenter pointed it out as well) – on the contrary, it was taken straight out of *The Prose Edda*. Yet, there are translations that explain Jones’s failure to identify the source. For instance, a 1966 translation reads: “Loki... by his tricks succeeded” in making Skadi laugh (The Prose Edda / tr. by J. Young. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966. P. 99). The Soviet version of the Edda renders the text faithfully, the details of male anatomy, she-goat, and all (Младшая Эдда / изд. подгот. О. А. Смирницкая, М. И. Стеблин-Каменский. Л.: Наука, 1970. С. 57). When, however, Harry Harrison’s *The Technicolor Time Machine* was translated into Russian, the translator left out some racier bits (Harrison H. The Technicolor Time Machine. N. Y.: Doubleday & Company, 1970. P. 259); cf. (Гаррисон Г. Фантастическая сара // Гаррисон Г. Тренировочный полет. М.: Мир, 1970. С. 105-106). A radio play based on *Alice in Wonderland* (1976) sneaked in some unexpected political references, both in Vladimir Vysotsky’s songs and in what purported to be a “translation” of the lecture on William the Conqueror, here replaced with Peter I. (The translation of the radio play is credited to Nina Demurova, but its text veers far from Demurova’s version where the mouse gives a lecture on William the Conqueror, not Peter. This example also shows the changes censorship underwent in different periods. In the 1930s, children’s literature received the authorities’ close attention (Колесова, 2015, с. 48-49). In the 1970s, the attention clearly shifted elsewhere.) All three Russian instances come from the same decade, the 1970s, which demonstrates, firstly, that censorship criteria evolved from the early years of the USSR, and, secondly, that cultural propriety was likely judged on the basis of the intended audiences, which gave classical texts far more leeway than pop culture works.

Hamlet presents an interesting case: if Harold Bloom (1998, p. xx) is right in that Shakespeare invented us, then no other tragedy is more significant for that invention than *Hamlet* or offers more grounds for debates.

Boris Pasternak’s translation of *Hamlet* was a product of the time of repressions and purges (Пастернак, 2004, с. 252-253). Later, he complained of having to rework his translation many times; these demands apparently had little to do with censorship and more with purely editorial demands («в издательстве пришли к заключению, что я был прав, раньше лучше было, и они восстановят прежний текст» (Пастернак, 2004, с. 256)), yet Pasternak

generalized these demands into a feature of his time: «Явление обязательной редакции при труде любой степени зрелости – одно из зол нашего времени. Это черта нашего общественного застоя, лишенного свободной и разномыслящей критики, быстро и ярко развивающихся судеб и, за невозможностью истинных новинок, занятого чисткой, перекраиванием и перелицовыванием вещей, случайно сделанных в более счастливое время» (Пастернак, 2004, с. 256).

Pasternak himself apparently enjoyed the process and results of translating *Hamlet* (Пастернак, 2004, с. 252), yet society perceived the role of a translator as below that of a poet. These perceptions were reflected in the reports the CIA received from its sources in the USSR as the Agency was assessing the prospects of publishing *Doctor Zhivago* in Russian. A source reported that Pasternak's translation, unlike his poems and *Dr. Zhivago*, "were known and thought to be of high quality, but this work was not thought to be of a creative nature" (Doctor Zhivago at CIA FOAI Electronic reading room. DOC 005795612. URL: <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/collection/doctor-zhivago>). Another report stated that Pasternak "ceased publishing after 1932 but earned a good living by translating foreign literature" (Doctor Zhivago at CIA FOAI Electronic reading room. DOC 005795646. URL: <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/collection/doctor-zhivago>).

Translation was the only creative outlet open to Pasternak, and he used it in full. His approach to translation was perfectly captured in a story about his conversation with Anna Akhmatova concerning a new *Faust*.

«Ахматова предложила Пастернаку написать современного «Фауста», «Фауста» XX века, Фауста из той Германии, которая попала под власть Гитлера. Фауста, который в отличие от гётевского героя знает теорию относительности и пользуется современной техникой. Пастернак ответил: «Хорошо, Анна Андреевна, я непременно переведу «Фауста». «Вы меня не так поняли!» – и Ахматова снова принялась пояснять, каким стал бы Фауст в середине XX века. «Я вас прекрасно понял, Анна Андреевна! – возразил Пастернак. – Непременно переведу!»» (Берестов В. Д. Новый Фауст // Неделя. 1989. № 25 (1525). URL: <http://ahmatova.niv.ru/ahmatova/vospominaniya/berestov-novyj-faust.htm>).

V. Berestov (Берестов, 1989) explains this dialog by suggesting that «по мнению Пастернака, «Фауст» Гёте охватывал и все современные проблемы, необходимости в каком-то новом «Фаусте» нет». Scholars, however, have noted that Pasternak routinely took many liberties with the texts he translated (Николаев, 2022), and it is our claim here that these liberties reflected programmatic poetic philosophy of the Silver Age, and that translation took on the nature of creative work.

To understand the philosophy behind translating *Hamlet*, we need first to consider interpretations of the play. Aristotle's classical theory of poetics states that the central character of a tragedy must have a certain tragic flaw that sets in motion the entire chain of unfortunate events resulting in the tragic denouement (Poetics, xiii). Since J. W. von Goethe (Гете И. В. Театральное призвание Вильгельма Мейстера. Л.: Наука, 1976. С. 210), Samuel Coleridge (Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher. Notes and Lectures. 2008. URL: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/25585/25585-h/25585-h.html>), and August Schlegel (Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature. 2004. URL: <https://gutenberg.org/cache/epub/7148/pg7148.html>), Hamlet's flaw was seen to lie in overthinking, in an indecisiveness that led to inaction. Whether Hamlet is particularly indecisive is debatable: for instance, he unhesitatingly kills Polonius, mistaking him for Claudius, and equally unhesitatingly sentences Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to death. Yet even supposing that Hamlet is indecisive, readers must ask "why". The answer is given in "To be or not to be..." in the lines:

"Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pitch and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry
And lose the name of action" (Hamlet, 3.1, 83-88).

The word "conscience" here is crucial, and it can be interpreted either as the knowledge of right and wrong, good and evil («совесть» in Russian), or as the purely rational ability of a human being:

1a: the sense or consciousness of the moral goodness or blameworthiness of one's own conduct, intentions, or character together with a feeling of obligation to do right or be good // She had a guilty conscience;

b: a faculty, power, or principle enjoining good acts // guided by conscience;

c: the part of the superego in psychoanalysis that transmits commands and admonitions to the ego;

2: conformity to what one considers to be correct, right, or morally good: CONSCIENTIOUSNESS;

3: sensitive regard for fairness or justice: SCRUPLE // a wealthy man with no conscience;

4 archaic: CONSCIOUSNESS" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary of English).

These two different interpretations of "conscience" suggest two different interpretations of *Hamlet* as a tragedy and Hamlet as a character. "Conscience" as «совесть» suggests that Hamlet is concerned with the moral implications of his actions. "Conscience" as "consciousness" suggests that Hamlet is procrastinating for no reason other than being unable to make a decision and follow through on it.

The comparison between Soviet (20th century) and Russian (19th, 20th, and 21st century) translations is revealing in this regard.

Mikhail Vronchenko (1828): совесть (Антология переводов..., т. 1, с. 31).

Nikolay Polevoy (1837): сознание робкой думы [sic!] (Антология переводов..., т. 1, с. 87).

Andrey (Alexei) Kroneberg (1844): совесть (Антология переводов..., т. 1, с. 139).

Nikolay Ketcher (1873): совесть (Шекспир, 1873).

Mikhail Zaguliaev (1877): сомнение (Антология переводов..., т. 1, с. 203).

Nikolay Maklakov (1880): совесть (Антология переводов..., т. 1, с. 273).

Alexander Sokolovsky (1883): боязнь (Антология переводов..., т. 2, с. 36).

Puotr Gnedich (1892): мысль (Антология переводов..., т. 2, с. 288). (This translation is alternatively dated 1917 (Антология переводов..., т. 2). 1892 appears to be an abridged version meant for the stage. The translation of Hamlet's monologue is already there.)

Pavel Kanshin (1893): совесть (Шекспир, 1893).

Dmitry Averkiev (1895): сознание (Антология переводов..., т. 2, с. 106).

K. R. (1899): совесть (Антология переводов..., т. 2, с. 167).

Nikolay Rossov (1907): совесть (Антология переводов..., т. 2, с. 229).

Mikhail Lozinsky (1933): раздумье (Шекспир, 1960, т. 6, с. 71).

Anna Radlova (1937): сознание (Шекспир, 1937, с. 101).

Boris Pasternak (1940): мысль (Шекспир, 2000, с. 286).

The Russian Shakespeare scholar and translator Igor Peshkov (Пешков, 2003) hails the switch to «мысль» in Gnedich's translation and bemoans Kanshin's return to «совесть». (Post-Soviet Russia saw a sharp uptick in translations of *Hamlet*: over twenty, not all of them easily available. In total, we have looked at ten post-Soviet translations. Of them, only two feature «совесть» for “conscience”.) In Peshkov's view, “conscience” is “consciousness”, and Hamlet's hand is stayed solely by the fear of death. If “conscience” is “consciousness”, then, presumably, death is viewed as nothing but a complete annihilation of the self, and the considerations of the posthumous fate of the soul do not enter into it. Even though the preceding text appears to refer to the afterlife, dreams only “may” come, not necessarily “will” come. This “may” can be read in several ways: 1) as doubting the existence of the afterlife by saying that dreams only “may” come (or “may” not); or 2) as referring to possible punishments in the afterlife. Reading “conscience” as “moral knowledge” seems to lean more toward the second interpretation. If we treat conscience as a thought based on moral choice, we make Hamlet's enterprise a dubious one. If we do not view his choice as based on moral grounds, we automatically prioritize action – any action – over *in*action, and the judgment that may be passed on that action in moral categories is no longer relevant for us.

All three Soviet poets who translated *Hamlet*, Mikhail Lozinsky (ML), Anna Radlova (AR), and Boris Pasternak (BP), chose to view Hamlet's quandary as unfounded procrastination, using various options for “consciousness”.

Another question worth asking is how other instances of “conscience” fare in their translations and whether the word «совесть» was added anywhere and if so, which English words correspond to it.

The emerging picture is curious. In every translation, Claudius is presumed to have a conscience. Hamlet plans to make a test of his conscience with his play:

“Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King” (Hamlet, 2.2, 607). /

ML: «Чтоб заарканить совесть короля» (Шекспир, 1960, т. 6, с. 67).

BP: «Я совесть короля на них поддену» (Шекспир, 2000, с. 285).

AR: «Чтоб изловить мне совесть короля» (Шекспир, 1937, с. 94).

Claudius himself speaks about his conscience. Pasternak is the only translator to drop this reference from the king's words.

“How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!” (Hamlet, 3.1, 50). /

ML: «Как больно мне по совести хлестнул он!» (Шекспир, 1960, т. 6, с. 70).

BP: «Он этим, как ремнем, меня огрел» (Шекспир, 2000, с. 286).

AR: «Какой удар по совести моей!» (Шекспир, 1937, с. 100).

Neither Lozinsky nor Pasternak allows Laertes conscience paired with grace; Pasternak characteristically removes all metaphysical elements from his translation, replacing conscience with fear and grace with fidelity. Radlova attempted to preserve everything, although conscience in her translation stands in an unclear relation to the rest of the text.

“To hell, allegiance! Vows to the blackest devil!

Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!

I dare damnation” (Hamlet, 4.5, 131-133). /

ML: «В геенну верность! Клятвы к черным бесам! // Боязнь и благочестье в бездну бездн! // Мне гибель не страшна» (Шекспир, 1960, т. 6, с. 116).

BP: «Я рву все связи и топчу присягу // И долг дворянский шлю ко всем чертям. // Возмездьем не пугайте» (Шекспир, 2000, с. 304).

AR: «Обеты в ад! И клятвы все к чертям! // И в преисподнюю страх божий! Совесть! // Пусть пропадет душа!» (Шекспир, 1937, с. 170).

In the next quote, Pasternak and Lozinsky omit “conscience” from Claudius' request for acquittal from Laertes, while Radlova preserves it with a slight shift in meaning. In this context, «по совести» means “in justice”.

“Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,

And you must put me in your heart for friend” (Hamlet, 4.7, 1-2). /

ML: «Теперь, мое скрепля оправданье, // Ты должен в сердце взять меня как друга...» (Шекспир, 1960, т. 6, с. 121).

BP: «Теперь ваш долг принять меня в друзья // И в сердце подписать мне оправданье» (Шекспир, 2000, с. 306).

AR: «Теперь по совести должны, Лаэрт, // Меня вы оправдать и стать мне другом» (Шекспир, 1937, с. 177).

Hamlet is allowed to have a conscience when it is emphatically not guilty in his opinion:

“They are not near my conscience” (Hamlet, 5.2, 58). /

ML: «Они мне совесть не гнетут» (Шекспир, 1960, т. 6, с. 142).

BP: «Меня не мучит совесть» (Шекспир, 2000, с. 314).

AR: «Меня за них не укоряет совесть» (Шекспир, 1937, с. 210).

Laertes is allowed a guilty conscience when he is about to fight Hamlet with a poisoned foil:

“And yet it is almost against my conscience” (Hamlet, 5.2, 302). /

ML: «Почти что против совести, однако» (Шекспир, 1960, т. 6, с. 152).

BP: «Как совести все это ни противно» (Шекспир, 2000, с. 318).

AR: «Хоть это против совести моей...» (Шекспир, 1937, с. 224).

Pasternak and Lozinsky depict killing Claudius not as a moral choice, but as a reasonable action:

“Is’t not perfect conscience

To quit him with this arm?” (Hamlet, 5.2, 67-68). /

ML: «...не правое ли дело // Воздать ему вот этою рукой?» (Шекспир, 1960, т. 6, с. 142).

BP: «Так разве это не прямой мой долг // С ним рассчитаться этою рукою...» (Шекспир, 2000, с. 314).

AR: «Ведь, правда, дело совести – вот этой // Рукою отомстить?» (Шекспир, 1937, с. 210).

All three translators also add «совесть» where conscience was not mentioned in the original. Lozinsky and Radlova do it once each. Radlova adds it when Hamlet speaks of what the Queen did calling it:

«Такое дело, что честь и совесть нежную марают» (Шекспир, 1937, с. 137). /

“Such an act

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty” (Hamlet, 3.4, 40-41).

Lozinsky adds “conscience” when Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are evasive about having been sent for. Hamlet claims to see a sort of a confession in their faces:

«И ваша совесть недостаточно искусна, чтобы это скрасить» (Шекспир, 1960, т. 6, с. 57). /

“...your modesties have not craft enough to colour” (Hamlet, 2.2, 282).

Pasternak adds the word “conscience” six times (not including derivatives). He uses it once for “modesties”, once for “honest”, once for “justly”, once as an interjection, and twice in connection with “soul”. “Free soul” is translated as “clean conscience”, underscoring the connection between the concept and the metaphysical plane of existence and making the choice of “thought” for “conscience” in “To be or not to be...” all the more significant.

«Ничего, принц, кроме того, что в мире завелась совесть» (Шекспир, 2000, с. 279). /

“None, my lord, but that the world’s grown honest” (Hamlet, 2.2, 237-238).

«Ваш приезд добровольен? А? Пожалуйста, по совести» (Шекспир, 2000, с. 280). /

“Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me” (Hamlet, 2.2, 276-278).

«Я считаю его существом высшей породы и таким редким, что, по совести, с ним сравнимо только его собственное отражение» (Шекспир, 2000, с. 315). /

“But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article, and his infusion of such dearth and rareness as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror...” (Hamlet, 5.2, 117-120).

«Больной душе и совести усталой // Во всем беды мерещится начало» (Шекспир, 2000, с. 302). /

“To my sick soul, as sin’s true nature is,

Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss” (Hamlet, 4.5, 17-18).

«Вашего величества и нас, с нашей чистой совестью, это не касается» (Шекспир, 2000, с. 291). /

“Your Majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not” (Hamlet, 3.2, 243-4).

«Не посягай на мать. Судья ей Бог // И совести глубокие уколы» (Шекспир, 2000, с. 272). /

“Leave her to heaven,

And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge

To prick and sting her” (Hamlet, 1.5, 86-88).

The reshaping of the philosophical field surrounding Hamlet is particularly noticeable in Pasternak’s translation as he generously sprinkles his translation with “consciences” thereby revealing his own conceptual bias. The word “conscience” for him is clearly connected with the knowledge of right and wrong and with the metaphysical plane, with God as the source of this knowledge, as evidenced by the words of Gertrude and the Ghost when he demands that Hamlet leave his mother alone. Anna Radlova is closest to Shakespeare in the use of the word “conscience”, and Mikhail Lozinsky is “second-faithful”, to coin the phrase, yet all three poets/translators choose not to render “conscience” in “To be or not to be...” as «совесть».

At first glance, it is tempting to surmise that in the atheistic Soviet world, *Hamlet* as a tragedy is stripped of its metaphysical framework because the metaphysical element was unacceptable to the official ideology. However, the metaphysical framework is not so much removed as it is skewed to exclude Hamlet himself but emphasized and amplified for other characters, particularly for Claudius and Gertrude, which is particularly obvious in Pasternak’s translation. This shift in emphases seems not to be a direct product of Soviet censorship (actual or expected) (cf. Pasternak’s own memoirs of changes to *Hamlet* being based on aesthetic rather than political motives), but rather produced by a cultural development predating the Soviet world. Removing the metaphysical quandary from Hamlet’s dilemma puts him in a position above everyone else; this is precisely where most characters from Shakespearean tragedies, including Hamlet, would like to see themselves, yet Shakespeare himself was probably not too keen to see them in that position, or else they would not be the central characters of tragedies.

Such a stance assumed by Hamlet partially correlates with a myth (understood here as “an independent form of consciousness that constituted an... essential stage of evolution toward religion” (Dupré, 2016, ch. 11)) revealed

by a study of the Silver Age poetry: the myth of the poet as a cultural hero or even a god, a being beyond regular human phenomena. That myth came from various sources, including Byronic Romanticism and Dostoevsky, whose characters always sought a special place in the world. Such a myth can be found in Valeriy Bryusov's works. Similarly, Mandelshtam envisioned himself as responsible for the current state of the world and for bringing it back to proper order through self-sacrifice. Similar myths could be discerned in the works of Mayakovsky and Gumilev. Tsvetaeva created a myth of divine/poetic marriage holding (or failing to hold if it does not happen) the world together (Ковалевская, 2018). (It would be interesting to note as an aside that the myth appears to be gendered. While men depicted themselves as divine saviors and/or sacrifices, prophets and/or new or re-imagined gods, women presented themselves as halves of a divine whole (Tsvetaeva) or as a divine being standing in a complicated relation to another divinity. Anna Radlova repeatedly turns to the cults of *Khlysty* (flagellants) and *Skoptsy* (castrates), whose leaders called themselves christs and "mothers of god". The main character in Radlova's play *Bogoroditsyn korabl'* (*The Ship of the Mother of God*, with "ship" referring to a flagellant community) depicts Empress Elizabeth of Russia as such a mother of god who sometimes appears to be an independent deity in her own right. It remains to be seen whether this genderedness is related to Radlova's accuracy as a translator.) There was, however, a significant difference in that the Byronic/Dostoevskian characters' pursuit of self-deification was deadly to people around them, whereas Silver Age poets preferred a myth of divine self-sacrifice (although there were exceptions: from viewing the poet as more-than-human, there was only one step to claiming that humanity is beneath the poet).

When the poetic outlet for this myth was closed up, the same impetus poured into translations, reinforced the interpretation of Hamlet as a character on a mission for which he is too weak, and transformed the conflict into a metaphysical one where Hamlet is above metaphysical laws. In the 20th century, this myth produced the impression of being conditioned by outside political considerations as it coincided with what the ideology of the day.

However, 20th-century Russian translations chose to eschew the metaphysical element long before the Soviet politics made such denial something of a must. A case in point is the translations of the word "hereafter" in several translations viewed in a historical perspective.

The three witches tell the thane of Glamis:

"All hail, Macbeth! that shalt be King hereafter" (Macbeth, 1.3, 50).

Russian translations offer only two possible and perfectly correct variants:

«Да здравствует Макбет, король в грядущем» (Шекспир, 2000, с. 492); translated by Andrey Kroneberg.

«Да славится Макбет, король грядущий!» (Шекспир, 1960, т. 7, с. 12); translated by Yuri Korneev.

Yet "hereafter" also has the additional meaning of the afterlife. It becomes important if we consider that Macbeth sees himself as someone above humanity and wants to remain king even though he has no one to pass his throne to (Mallin, 2007, p. 99-100). Along with the meaning of "Long live Macbeth, the future king!" here we potentially have the meaning of "Long live Macbeth, king in life eternal".

While this loss of meaning seems compatible with the atheistic Soviet worldview, a similar choice was made earlier, in Ivan Bunin's 1905 translation of Byron's *Cain* done under a set of entirely different censorship requirements.

"LUCIFER. Hast thou ne'er bow'd

To him?

CAIN. Have I not said it? – need I say it?

Could not thy mighty knowledge teach thee that?

LUCIFER. He who bows not to him has bow'd to me.

CAIN. But I will bend to neither.

LUCIFER. Ne'er the less,

Thou art my worshipper: not worshipping

Him makes thee mine the same.

CAIN. And what is that?

LUCIFER. Thou'lt know here – and hereafter" (Byron G. G. *Cain. A Mystery*. L., 1822. P. 20).

Bunin translated "mighty knowledge" as «ты всеведущ», omitted "here" thus removing the juxtaposition of "here" and "hereafter", and rendered "hereafter" as «со временем», so that the final line now read «Ты сам поймешь – со временем» (Байрон Дж. Г. *Собрание сочинений: в 4-х т. М.: Правда, 1981. Т. 4. С. 344-345*). Bunin prefers to interpret "hereafter" in the non-metaphysical sense, even though the text clearly calls for a different translation. The dispute between God and Lucifer therefore remains earth-bound and death loses its moral dimension.

This shift in emphasis appears particularly curious when compared to other cross-cultural interpretations of the time. In 1904, Bunin and Bryusov simultaneously turned to Norse mythology. Bryusov used the characters of Loki and Baldr to engage in a poetic battle with Andrey Bely. He represented himself and Bely as embodiments of Loki and Baldr, twilight and light, respectively, claiming that twilight would ultimately emerge victorious. Eventually, however, he conceded victory to Bely (Гречишкин, Лавров, 2004, с. 28-33). His poem was published in 1906 in the collection *Στέφανος. The Wreath*. Bunin wrote a poem titled "Baldr" presenting the story of Baldr and Loki as a story of triumphant light punishing darkness; Bunin also changed the mythological narrative in a way that nearly fused it with the Christian apocalypse. This poem was also published in 1906 in the magazine appropriately titled *Mir Bozhii (God's World)*.

At the time these poems were written, censorship in the Russian Empire was still essentially guided by the "Temporary Regulations on Censorship and Print" issued in 1865 (Чирскова, 2008, с. 119-20) and based on preceding legislation that, in particular, stipulated that «во всех вообще произведениях печати не допускать нарушения

должного уважения к учению и обрядам Христианских исповеданий» (Полное собрание законов Российской империи. Собрание 2-е. СПб., 1830-1885. № 38270). «Должное уважение» could encompass many things besides open blasphemy. For instance, in 1879, Fyodor Dostoevsky was concerned with using the word «провонял» when referring to the odor of corruption emanating from the body of a revered monk. Dostoevsky exhorted his publisher to retain this word as the only one that could be used by the particular character who says it. The writer was also worried about mentioning purgative recommended to a monk allegedly tormented by devils (Достоевский Ф. М. Полное собрание сочинений: в 30-ти т. Л.: Наука, 1972-1990. Т. 30 (1). С. 126). In these conditions, roundabout ways, such as mythological motifs and translations, were the easiest way of putting forward ideas and concepts that went against both the prescribed norms and preceding cultural traditions.

In 1916, at the height of World War I and on the eve of revolutionary year 1917, Bryusov returned to Loki once again depicting him and darkness as the ultimate victors in *A Prophecy of the Death of Æsir* (Ковалевская, 2021). In the same year, Bunin wrote a story *Noosiform Ears* repudiating Dostoevsky's conviction in *Crime and Punishment* that conscience as moral knowledge is an integral part of the human soul. It is important that Raskolnikov is also a would-be god who sees some human beings as "lice" (Достоевский Ф. М. Полное собрание сочинений: в 30-ти т. Л.: Наука, 1972-1990. Т. 6. С. 320). When Dostoevsky argues against Raskolnikov, he argues in favor of universal humanity binding all people together. Therefore, when Bunin's character Sokolovich recites a litany of humanity's unpunished crimes, he mocks and insults Dostoevsky (choosing to disregard Dostoevsky's many descriptions of blood-curdling atrocities in *The Brothers Karamazov*) and tacitly sides with the division of humanity into higher and lower kinds, even though this is never articulated openly (according to Vladimir Tunimanov (Туниманов, 1992), Sokolovich was reflective of Bunin himself in that respect).

Decades later, as other Silver Age poets in the Soviet Union turned their creative efforts mostly to translation, they continued the philosophical patterns typical of early 20th-century poetry. Translations proved to be both limiting and liberating for them. They were limiting in that, as translators, they had to follow the text selected for translation, yet they could fairly freely interpret these texts and spin a particular take while simultaneously assigning all the responsibility to the author of the original. Paradoxically, while continuing the line of thought from their early years, they did not deviate too far from Soviet ideology.

However, the Silver Age was not the originator of this particular philosophy. In Ivan Turgenev's essay *Hamlet and Don Quixote* (1860), Hamlet's ruminations are unfavorably compared to Don Quixote's mad energy. Characteristically, the outcomes of Don Quixote's actions did not matter in this scheme of things. The famous adage traditionally ascribed to Bernard of Clairvaux about the road to hell being paved with good intentions fell by the side of that very road. For Turgenev, it would not matter where we arrive as long as we had originally wanted to go to a nice place.

«Что нужны, что первая же его попытка освобождения невинности от притеснителя рушится двойной бедою на голову самой невинности... (мы разумеем ту сцену, когда Дон-Кихот избавляет мальчика от побоев его хозяина, который тотчас же после удаления избавителя вдесятеро сильнее наказывает бедняка). Что нужны, что, думая иметь дело с вредными великанами, Дон-Кихот нападает на полезные ветряные мельницы... Комическая оболочка этих образов не должна отводить наши глаза от сокрытого в них смысла. Кто, жертвуя собою, вздумал бы сперва рассчитывая и взвешивать все последствия, всю вероятность пользы своего поступка, тот едва ли способен на самопожертвование» (Тургенев И. С. Полное собрание сочинений: в 30-ти т. М.: Наука, 1978-2018. Т. 5. С. 335).

Turgenev speaks of sacrificing oneself, but all the examples he gives are of others suffering. And that is the principal problem that is carried over into a positive interpretation of Hamlet: it condones the alleged setting right of time out of joint, even though time is set right at any expense to the people living at that particular time. When *Hamlet* was used as an outlet for the myth of a poet as a superhuman being, the myth was also transformed into that of a poet who is above humanity in every aspect, changing both Hamlet and the Silver Age myth itself.

Conclusion

The article's research findings demonstrate that Soviet translations were not merely a product of their era, conforming to the rules of Soviet censorship. They were in equal measure the product of everything that came before and of the translators' own philosophical development. And in some instances, what seems like the result of the specific political climate of the mid-20th century is, in fact, a carryover from a different era, which translations allowed to continue to exist. One such preceding development was the myth of a poet as a super-human being endowed with a special mission in the universe. *Hamlet* was a text well-suited to continuing that myth, and Soviet translations overwhelmingly presented Hamlet as just such a being. In doing so, they changed the original myth and paradoxically aligned with the anti-metaphysical thrust of Soviet censorship that was alien to them. Yet, as Jean-Jacques Rousseau somewhat flippantly noted as he mused on Greek democracy, "What then? Is liberty maintained only by the help of slavery? It may be so. Extremes meet" (Rousseau J.-J. *The Social Contract & Discourses*. 2014. URL: <https://gutenberg.org/files/46333/46333-h/46333-h.htm>). Further research prospects include studying Russian translations of the word "conscience" in other Shakespearean tragedies with a view to understanding the specificity of *Hamlet's* translations and the place and role of Shakespeare's play in the Russian literary mindset and mythology.

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