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FROM EYEWITNESS NARRATIVES TO RETELLINGS AND LITERARY ADAPTATIONS: THE RUSSIAN TIME OF TROUBLES IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Abstract

The article focuses on the adaptation strategies used by Lope de Vega in his play *El Gran Duque de Moscovia y emperador perseguido* (1617). This tragedy, built on material acquired from travelogues, represents the first depiction of the Russian Time of Troubles in fiction. In it, one can follow Lope de Vega's shift from preserving the factual details collected from different travel sources to creating his own Baroque story placed within a purely Catholic world, as opposed to reality. In doing this, Lope de Vega creates a fictional space filled with mystery and miracles, where Heavens can intervene and punish the guilty party, whereby restoring the original *status quo*. Key situations turn from illustrations of an alien world into much more general depictions, namely, that of a tyrant versus a legal monarch, and the will of a ruler versus the law. The shift into tyranny provides the story with a new narrative centre and, by following Lope de Vega's emphasis on the "Muscovian story," discloses its universal spirit.¹

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Introduction

In his article “Muscovy Looks West,” Marc Raeff states the following:

Up to about the middle of the seventeenth century, with some rare and insignificant exceptions, “medieval” Russia, or Muscovy, had existed in relative isolation from Central and Western Europe; even with its immediate neighbours, Poland and Sweden, there had hardly been much cultural and economic exchange. (Raeff 16)

This idea of Russia’s (self-)isolation from Europe represents a kind of “common sense” for a large number of scholars both in the West and in Russia. There were valid reasons, mostly political, for the development and popularization of the view that prior to Peter the Great, Russia had been a thing-in-itself; it had stewed in its own juice and tried to evade foreign influences from both the East and West. Following this interpretation, the eighteenth century Russian historians advocated Peter the Great’s reforms and backed the political genius of the Emperor, who modernized his country and virtually “dragged” it into Europe. This view was popular among the European scholars who settled in Russia and constituted a significant part of the then Academia. At the turn of the nineteenth century, the notion formed a fundamental myth on the genesis of Modern Russia notable in, for instance, the following lines from Alexander Pushkin’s poem “The Bronze Horseman: A Petersburg Tale” (originally, “Mednyy Vsadnik: Peterburgskaya Povest”):

A wave-swept shore, remote, forlorn:
Here stood *he*, rapt in thought and drawn
To distant prospects. . . .

.....

And he thought:
“From here the Swede is ill-protected:

A city on this site, to thwart
 His purposes, shall be erected.
 For here we may, by Nature blessed,
 Cut through a window to the West

.....

A hundred years have passed. We see,
 Where swamp and forest stood but lately:
 The city, northern prodigy,
 Has risen, sumptuous and stately. . . . (1–3, 12–17, 22–25)

In the light of works by historians, writers, poets, composers, and other artists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the image of Peter the Great as the creator of Modern Russia became the standard characteristic of the very idea of the “New Russia.” That is why, for example, Orlando Figes’ relatively recent work on the modern Russian culture – *Natasha’s Dance: A Cultural History of Russia* (2002) – begins with the founding of St. Petersburg in 1703 (xxvii–xxx). From the cultural point of view, it is true that the new, that is the European, Russia is a result of Peter the Great’s reforms.

Meanwhile, if one were to inspect *Critical Bibliographical Review of the Memoirs by travelers into Russia prior to 1700* (*Kritiko-literaturnoe obozrenie puteshestvennikov po Rossii do 1700 goda i ikh sochineniy*) by Friedrich Adelung (which is not as popular in the present time), more than two hundred travel accounts can be found there. Adelung’s compendium was collected in the middle of the nineteenth century and it contains no reference to texts discovered after that time. Moreover, Adelung was interested strictly in travel literature; his compendium does not include descriptions of Russia made by envoys, merchants, or captains in the form of official documents. Despite the omissions, the book unambiguously shows that, at the turn of the seventeenth century, there was a burst of interest in Russia in Europe. In Russian historiography, this epoch is called the Time of Troubles.

1. The Time of Troubles in Russian History

The turbulent period began in 1598, following the death of Fedor Ryurikovich, the only child of Ivan the Terrible, who managed to outlive his father. Having lived in a constant fear of a coup d’état or a nobles’ uprising, Ivan the

Terrible ruled Muscovy in the Machiavellian style: he would assassinate anyone who was in line of succession. After having unintentionally murdered his own son – Ivan Ivanovich – his other son, Fedor, became the sole potential successor to the throne. The pious Fedor, albeit allegedly mentally ill, died leaving no heir.

In 1598, for the first time since the twelfth century, Muscovy faced a deep dynastic crisis. In the following decade, around a dozen persons would claim the title of Tzar of Muscovy. A number of them – Boris Godunov, False Dmitry I, Władysław IV Waza – had warrants for their claims and obtained a certain level of power on the Russian ground. Others – False Dmitry II, False Dmitry III – were content with their power, but next to nobody recognized their legitimacy. The last group of claimants – Vasili Shuisky, Marina Mnizhek, Semi-boyarshchin – had legitimacy, but achieved very little or no power. The initial dynastic crisis developed into a civil war in which the neighbouring countries became involved. After Protestant Sweden and ethnically Slavonic, yet Catholic, Rzeczpospolita had become belligerents in the Troubles, the conflict turned into a religious war with elements of a war for independence (Shubin 34–37, 187–95, 212–14).

The period ended in 1613, when the members of Zemsky Sobor elected Mikhail Romanov, then aged 16, as the new Tzar. Under the Patriarch's pressure, Mikhail Romanov acknowledged the nobles' privileges, which had been previously crushed by Ivan the Terrible. For instance, the right to "[c]ontinue with the old legislation of the country and neither try nor condemn anybody in courts of law by their right of a sovereign monarch, abstain from introducing new laws, imposing new taxes or making any decisions concerning either civil or military undertakings without prior counsel from Sobor" (Luchinsky 590). The turbulent epoch settled into the public mind, especially while it took place in the super-centralized and ultra-monarchist state.

The Time of Troubles was a part of both the European and Russian history. In 1613, the Zemsky Sobor discussed and voted for Vladislav IV Vasa, a Pole; Carl Philip, a Swede; and James I, an Englishman, as potential candidates for the Russian throne. Europeans were no less intrigued in what had inspired and triggered the events and collisions of the time and how they came about at all. A community of foreigners had already been present even in Moscow, in the so-called "Kukuy Quarter," or the German quarter (*Nemeckaya Sloboda*). Thus, a range of texts emerged, focused on the Time of Troubles and written by for-

eigners, such as Martinus Baer, Conrad Bussow, Aleksander Gosiewski, Isaac Massa, Maryna Mniszech, and Stanisław Żółkiewski.² Narratives on the Time of Troubles had been known in literatures of the neighbouring countries, such as Poland, Austria, and Sweden. They even reached Italy and Spain – the European countries farthest away from Russia. Two such texts are especially significant for this paper. The first one is *The Russian Empire and Grand Duchy of Muscovy* (*Estat de l'Empire de Russie et Grand Duché de Moscovie*, 1607) by Jacques Margeret (1565–1619), a French expat who was deeply involved in the events. Having conscripted into Boris Godunov's army, Margeret stayed in Muscovy after Godunov's death and served almost all rulers and pretenders: False Dmitry I, Vasili IV of Russia, False Dmitry II, and Władysław IV Waza. The second text is *Muscovia* (1586) by Antonio Possevino (1533–1611), a Papal legate at the Court of Ivan the Terrible (1530–84). Written slightly before the Time of Troubles, Possevino's work uncovers Muscovy's descent into chaos.

Margeret directs the readers' attention to certain features of Muscovy that triggered the Time of Troubles, such as the supercentralization and the exceptional position of Russian tzars in the political system of Muscovy. Namely, the Muscovites had neither rights nor privileges, and the direct tzar's will was the sole foundation of everything: "The absolute power of the prince in his state makes him feared and dreaded by his subjects. . . ." (3). Thus, the mighty state – "That empire and country is larger, more powerful, more populous, and more abundant than is imagined" (3) – was thrown into chaos as soon as the Rurik dynasty ceased to exist due to a couple of misfortunes. On the one hand, the elder prince, Ivan Ivanovich, died an accidental and strange death: "There is a rumor that he [Ivan Vasilyevich] killed his eldest son by his own hand, which is not true. Although he did hit him with the end of a staff tipped with a steel point . . . his son was somewhat wounded by the blow and did not die of it. He died, rather, sometime later on a pilgrimage" (15–16). On the other hand, the younger prince, Fedor Ivanovich, failed to beget a child: "From that time, they say, he [Boris Godunov] began to aspire to the throne, seeing that Fedor had no child save a daughter who died at age three" (16). In the absence of a legitimate heir, Boris Godunov, the father-in-law of the last tzar and a man without any legal claims for the throne, obtained power and became a ruler (16). He was quite professional and successful in his rule, but due to the lack of legitimacy, he had to keep his subjects in fear; therefore, he was implicated in a number of

² See, for example, Adelung (1864); Bussow (1994); Massa (1982).

assassinations and other crimes. As Margeret states: “It seems that the mother [of the last prince, Dmitrii Ivanovich] and some other lords saw the end toward which Boris headed and knew the danger the child Dmitrii could fall into because several lords sent into exile by Boris already had been poisoned on the journey” (17).

It is worth noting that Margeret describes the cruel and bloody events in a detached and fact-based tone without any appraisal or emotion – “Finally Fedor died in January 1598. (Some say that Boris was the author of his death. [sic])” (18). Despite the travelogue’s subtitle (“With that which has happened there most memorable and tragic during the reign of four emperors, that is to say, from the year 1590 up to September 1606”), the writer, who was a servant of the tsarist guard, provides little information of the palace coups, conspiracies, and pogroms. He is focused on Muscovy as such – its geography and nature, customs and religion, folk crafts, and history. The subtitle rather arrests readers’ attention than truly characterizes the work. As far as Possevino is concerned, his writings on Moscovia, which were translated into Spanish by Juan Mosquera in 1606, are believed to be Lope de Vega’s main source (Ziomek 207).

2. Historical Narratives in Lope de Vega’s “Russian Play”

Amidst Lope de Vega’s prolific oeuvre, there is a play titled *The Great Prince of Muscovy*³ (*El Gran Duque de Moscovia y emperador perseguido*), which focuses on the events of the Time of Troubles. The play was written in 1606, at the height of the turbulent epoch in Russia, when it seemed likely that the country would convert to Catholicism, whether directly or in form of the Union. These tendencies explain, although only to an extent, both Lope de Vega’s interest in the far away country and the plot of his play, which – as opposed to history – ends with the coronation of Demetrio, the beloved tzar of Muscovy and a Catholic. The work marks the beginning of the cycle of history-based plays in Lope de Vega’s oeuvre, even though the play was and still is quite obscure; it has quite a modest stage history and not too many textual editions (it seems likely that the play was translated solely into Russian about a decade ago). Despite the fact that the text inaugurated the tradition of literary depiction of the Time of Troubles, Lope de Vega’s “Russian Play” remains virtually unknown even in the Russian literary

³ The play has not yet been translated into English. Consequently, all quotations from the play will be given in translation to English by the author of this article.

tradition, which is focused on Cervantes and the adaptations of his works. Published in 1972, Ervin Brody's *The Demetrius Legend and Its Literary Treatment in the Age of the Baroque* still seems to be the sole monograph on the topic. It is remarkable that the mutual interest between Russia and Spain existed both in the past (the representatives of diplomatic missions visited Spain and Muscovy) as well as in the later periods (Bagno (2009) and Stepanyan (2013)). Despite the distance, Russia and Spain had something in common: an ambition for the "Christian monarchy" status, wherein the State would be interwoven with the Church, and an imperial craving for new territories. Therefore, the shortage of interest for Lope de Vega's drama is in fact quite strange.

The playwright keeps the names of the most significant figures of the Time of Troubles. The spellings are slightly modified, but the characters are recognizable: Dmitry turns into Demetrio, Fedor into Teodoro, and Ivan becomes Juan. Ivan the Terrible is called Basilio, which comes from his patronymic, Vasilievich, used by the real-life tzar in his correspondence with European monarchs instead of his first name. Interestingly, while de Vega keeps the names of the male protagonists, he creates fictional names for his female characters.

Moreover, Lope de Vega's plot retains the most important clashes of the Time of Troubles, some of which were, and still are, widely known. Firstly, Teodoro obtains power, even though he is quite incapable of governing due to his mental condition:

CRISTINA

Teodoro's ail and malice
 Not in his rampage manifested
 But in his words,
 Which lacked sensibility
 At times the clarity of thought
 Came back to him
 But soon he once again indulged in speeches
 Which did not match his status. (Vega 49, my trans.)

Secondly, Boris [Godunov] seizes the power by using his kinship with the Tzar's wife (she was Boris' sister):

CRISTINA

Now, on behalf of my husband

I want to appoint you the ruler of Muscovy. (Vega 69, my trans.)

Thirdly, Demetrio was a clever and quite noble man who tended to turn his enemies into friends:

RUFINO

Sir, let me stab him!

DEMETRIO

No, Rufino. I want the world to know:
there is a difference between a tyrant
and a true monarch.

Take your life, disgusted Eliano.

I pardoned you. Go!

(Eliano runs away.) (Vega 183, my trans.)

In addition, the play contains certain non-trivial details that were quite disputable, such as Basilio becoming overcome with fury and slaughtering his son Juan with a staff. Their conflict begins due to Basilio's suspicions of Juan's wife indulging in immoral behaviour:

BASILIO

Fighting the evil, I hit her

For her lies and lustfulness

Now I will hit you with my staff

For your audacity and stubbornness.

(Strikes him in the head with his staff) (Vega 62, my trans.)

Lastly, Teodoro is not just a mentally ill person; he is too pious to be a tzar, and dreams of being a monk:

TEODORO

O, Father, let my wife and me

Take holy orders

To pray for all Christians

Behind the monastery walls. (Vega 39, my trans.)

In general, Lope de Vega adheres to Margeret's travelogue. Yet, in the last two examples, he shifts to another source since Margeret openly denies the infanticide allegedly committed by Ivan the Terrible; thus, both motifs came from Possevino's work. Lope de Vega probably considered the text of the Papal legate in Muscovy and the member of the Jesuit Order to bear much more authority than that of the French captain. Hence, in the instances when the two sources contradict each other, de Vega prefers the information provided by Possevino. In writing his drama, Lope de Vega maintains a large number of factual details. Nevertheless, did he actually gather them from different travel sources or has he simply incorporated the already existing narratives into his play?

3. From National Fabula to a Universal Story

What we see in Lope de Vega's play, and what is absent in his sources, are the emotions and feelings of the characters involved in the events of the Time of Troubles.

OROFRISA

She dashed like the Erinys
 Into the tent and grabbed the cup of poison.
 And having seated herself onto the half-pace
 With children standing by her side
 Juan to her left
 And Isabela, daughter, to her right.
 She ordered them to take it first,
 That deadly poison,
 And when they fell to earth
 In agony and pain of coming death
 She with her trembling hands
 Did take that cup and drank from it
 And drank so much that
 she instantly fell dead. (Vega 195–96, my trans.)

The playwright changes the tone present in the source texts while providing these details. Namely, what were once seen as malicious facts in the travel literature now turn into collisions and actions, as seen in the case of arson in Moscow:

When news of Dmitrii's death reached Moscow, it gave rise to differing opinions, the people murmuring and talking about it in various ways. Boris, being informed of all, had the principal shops, merchants' houses, and other places set afire during the night, to keep the people busy until the rumors had died down a little and minds were settled. (Margeret 17)

These collisions and actions also serve to show the very intimate "self" of the characters. Lope de Vega makes them come to life, and thus transforms them from historical persons into literary figures of his own play. The adherence to history as such is no longer an indisputable dominant. The playwright shapes his Demetrio as a positive character. Meanwhile, in the eyes of everybody, this character has a significant flaw; he comes into power with foreign, namely Polish, support and maintains his strong ties with the foreign Court. According to Lope de Vega's portrayal, he is the Tzar of Muscovy who gave an oath to the Polish king:

DEMETRIO

If you do support me
I swear to you by the highest Heaven
I will forever thankful be to you
I will forever be your subject. (Vega 160, my trans.)

Being someone else's subject is not an appropriate position for an emperor, and since de Vega idealizes Demetrio and portrays him as a true tzar of Muscovy in his play, Sigismund III lifts all obligations imposed on the tzar after the coronation. Thus, next to the real set of situations, the playwright creates a new one – his own interpretation of what took place in Muscovy. He revises the main figures and grants factuality to certain rumours in order to accentuate the playwright's message: woe to you, o country, who has lost and then abandoned its own monarch. Such a country is ravaged by innumerable arsons, murders, assassinations, chaos, and even the country's ruler turned out to be a malicious tyrant.

All these instances of bloodshed, cowardice, treachery, and crime result from orientalism and the Western perception of the East as a place of cruelty. Yet, Edward Said looked at Russia rather as a part of the "collective West":

Unlike the Americans, the French and the British – less so the Germans, Russians, Spanish, Portuguese, Italians, and Swiss – have had a long tradition of what I shall be calling *Orientalism*, a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience. The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest **and** oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest **and** most recurring images of the Other. (18, emphasis in the source text)

As for people who lived in the nineteenth century, that is, in the golden age of the Russian Empire, there were not too many opponents to Edward Said's vision of Russia as the colonial power. The then Ministry of Interior even edited and published a journal titled "Readings in Colonization" ("Voprosy kolonizatsii"). Thus, the interpretation of the Russian Empire and the USSR as colonial states (Billington) does have some strong warrants.

Meanwhile, the idea of Russia as being part of the "collective West" has never been indisputable. The vision of Nikolay Danilevsky, one of the founders of the Russian political conservatism, testifies to the stance that Russia is not European: "Does Russia belong to Europe? Sadly or luckily, gladly or unfortunately, it does not. Russia has never been fed by any of those roots that fed Europe. . . . Russia is neither involved in the European good nor in evil" (Danilevsky 59, my trans.).

Despite the bicentennial attempts of Russian officials to become a European empire and to imitate the foreign policy of the most influential European states, the oriental strata in the interpretation of relations between Russia and Europe has the right of existence and was suggested by N.S. Trubetskoy, the founder of Eurasianism, in his *Genghis Khan's Heritage. View on Russian history not from the West, but from the East* (*Nasledie Chingizkhana. Vzgl'yad na russkuyu istoriyu ne s Zapada, a s Vostoka*).

Although the discussion between those who are of a "pro-Western" orientation and those taking the "Orientalist" stance is significant for scholars studying post-Peter-the-Great Russia, the narratives of the Time of Troubles were written in a different epoch and entirely different conditions. At that time, Russia, as a state that competed against the strongest countries of the world, established its own colonies in North America, or on shores of the Pacific, and played its own game in Central Asia, did not exist. At the turn of the seventeenth century, Polish

kings were recognized as tzars of Muscovy, wherein Catholics were rulers of the “Orthodox state,” and Muscovy was a courtyard for Cossacks and both the Polish-Lithuanian and Swedish army. Immediately after the Time of Troubles, Muscovy lost access to the sea and some provinces, and had great difficulty in persuading Sweden to return Novgorod, the first Russian capital. In Lope de Vega’s time, Muscovy hardly resembled an empire. Nikolay Karamzin, the “father” of Russian historiography, described the epoch as a miraculous salvation from the Polish colonization. Thus, when Lope de Vega portrays his Basilio as the murderer of his son and daughter-in-law, or depicts Boris Godunov as the arsonist of his own capital, or points to Orofrisa as the poisoner of her own son and the sole heir of the state, the playwright could have coloured Muscovy with the colours of the Orient. However, what we see is that Lope de Vega’s play is far from oriental.

First and foremost, we are given an insight into a purely Catholic world, where Muscovite rulers appeal to the Pope and the Emperor:

BASILIO

Sancta Simplicitas! Tace!
He is the person
Who holds the keys
Which Christ gave to Peter (Vega 35, my trans.)

.....

TEODORO

What is left? Support and refuge
I will beg
The Christian Kings and Caesar (Vega 38, my trans.)

By adding these episodes, the playwright makes a dramatic shift in relation to history. From England to Poland, from Spain to Sweden, the entire Europe knew that Muscovy was neither a Catholic nor even a Protestant country. Adherence to the Greek branch of Christianity is a commonplace in the travel literature: “The Muscovites adopted their Schism from the Greeks, who were themselves schismatics. . . . The only person who can readily understand the Muscovite schism is someone who has seen the stubbornness of the Greek” (Possevino 28). In addition, Margeret believes that “[t]he country first received Christianity about seven hundred years ago, from a bishop of Constantinople.

412 The Russians follow the Greek religion. . . .” (20). In transferring the events into

the fictional, Catholic Muscovy, Lope de Vega brings the plot as close to his audience as possible. However, the playwright's adaptation does not end with this shift. In fact, the tzars of Muscovy and the members of their Courts freely cite Latin philosophers and poets, and draw parallels between current events and ancient history. For example, after Basilio strikes his son dead, he, Basilio, declares: "My beloved son, you left life like Torquad, the Roman" (Vega 65, my trans.). Conversely, travel literature of the time reveals the shortage of knowledge on European literature, arts, and sciences in Muscovy:

[The] Muscovites have no colleges or academies. They have only a handful of schools where boys are taught to read and write from the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, their native Chronicles, certain homilies . . . Anyone who appears trying to aim higher in his studies or to acquire other skills falls under suspicion and runs into difficulties . . . but a Catholic priest come among them might also experience some hesitation as to whether he should instil doubt concerning the schism into the minds of a people who are quite primitive, and even perhaps saved by their very simplicity. (Possevino 49, 56)

In Russian churches they never preach; instead, at some holy days they have certain lessons which they read from some chapters of the Bible or New Testament. But ignorance is so great among the people that there is not one out of three who knows what the Lord's Prayer or the Apostles' Creed is. Indeed, one may say that ignorance is the mother of their devotion. (Margeret 20)

Lope de Vega primarily tells a story written in the genre of Spanish tragedy (Brody 53). That is why the reader is provided not with the factual Russia, but with a Baroque discourse that requires mystery and recognizes miracles, where Heavens can intervene and punish the guilty party, whereby restoring the original status quo:

BORIS

It means that the Heavens
 Fulfilled the miracle for you
 They threw me under your feet
 It seems to me, Providence decided
 To punish me for the blood I had been spilling. (Vega 194, my trans.)

Clearly, the factual Muscovy is missing from his verses, which ignore the premise of the Troubles. There is neither inheritance crisis nor civil war, nor religious war in de Vega's play. After de Vega's adaptation, the "Play of False Dmitry" is no longer a purely Muscovian story. The text now speaks primarily to the Spanish audience. Key situations turn from illustrations of an alien world into much more general depictions, namely, that of a tyrant versus a legal monarch, and the will of a ruler versus the law:

RODULFO

How careful you must be if you are in Court.
A single monarch's word is like a heartless sword of fate.
The word is more frightening than a Basilisk's look.
The Tzar utters "Death!" – and you are dead at once. (Vega 134, my trans.)

Moreover, the issue of an "effective tyranny" emerges and plays a significant role:

BORIS

Do they not love me?
.....
Whom, tell me, did I offend?
When was I unjust?
For sixteen years now have I been holding the reins of Moscow
.....

RODULFO

It is quite possible that people
Are nothing but irrational in their hatred
And agitated they became when rumour spread
That young Demetrio is not dead

BORIS

But be it so, then why
Do you find me violent when I
behead all those who with such lies
Sow unrest and harm to me? (Vega 129–30, my trans.)

Boris is quite a clever and profound person. He tries to protect his loyal subjects and, in general, is a successful ruler. However, Boris believes that his purpose – the transformation of Muscovy into a mighty state – grants him full absolution of every possible crime, from the deliberate arson of Moscow to the assassination of other pretenders to the throne. In the way in which Lope de Vega portrays Boris Godunov, one can see that the image correlates not to despots of the East, but to the ideal, absolute monarchs of Europe. By assassinating members of the old dynasty, Boris quite methodically follows Niccolò Machiavelli's recommendations, and by setting Moscow on fire, he imitates Neron, the Roman Emperor. In the peripeteia of the protagonist's life, the readers witness how a good and wise person becomes tolerant to evil due to his desire for absolute power. Lope de Vega's Spain was transforming into an absolute monarchy at the time. It was a state actively involved in the bloody Eighty Years' War, and the state that established the Spanish Armada with the purpose of escorting an army set on the invasion into England. It was a state that provoked the Morisks' uprisings only to cruelly smash them in order to make Spain purely Spanish. The political situation had a dramatic impact on Portugal, which was annexed by Spain following their defeat in the Battle of Three Kings (1578). As there were no witnesses to the King's death, the myth of a "sleeping king" who would return to help Portugal in its darkest hour emerged. Four impostors claimed their right for the throne, due to which Portugal was torn by its internal chaos and a war with Spain. In Lope de Vega's mind, the disappearance of the king of Portugal (1578) and the emergence of pretenders who acted under the mask of the miraculously saved king (1584, 1585, 1595, and 1598), and who led their country into war with their neighbours, may be connected to Russian events. Namely, the strange case of Dimitri Ivanovich's death (1581), the failure of the dynasty (1598), the rumours of the prince's miraculous escape, a number of impostors, the dynastic, military, and administrative chaos, and so on. Remarkably, the impostors have thrived only twice in European history, in Muscovy and in the annexed Portugal. Yet, it is much more remarkable that Lope de Vega forces his Boris Godunov to view the Pseudo-Demetrius as a parallel to what had just happened in Spain (Vega 98).

Conclusion

The way in which Lope de Vega plays around with the fabula of Muscovy and transforms it into his own plot represents the very technique that the Russian

formalists called *ostranenie*. The playwright estranges the Spanish realia and sets it in the chaotic Time of the Troubles of Muscovy. Therefore, as the readers' attention switches from history to discourse, one can observe another, non-Muscovian, aspect of the text. What is performed on the scene serves as a warning to the audience about what is happening behind the scenes, rather than being a simple disposition of an exotic story from a faraway country. Lope de Vega's story shows a shift toward tyranny: Boris, once a victim of tyranny and a person who hated cruel regimes, transforms into a blood-spilling despot who leaves behind other, innocent victims as he gains power. In this way, the "Muscovian story's" universal spirit is disclosed.

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OD SVJEDOČANSTAVA DO PREPRIČAVANJA I KNJIŽEVNIH ADAPTACIJA: RUSKO „DOBA VELIKE SMUTNJE“ U RANONOVOVJEKOVNOJ EUROPI

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Članak se bavi strategijama adaptacije kojima se koristio Lope de Vega u svojoj drami *El Gran Duque de Moscovia y emperador perseguido* (*Veliki ruski knez*, 1617.). Ova tragedija, *proizašla iz putopisne građe*, predstavlja prvi književni prikaz ruskog „doba velike smutnje“. U njoj se Lope de Vega odmiče od činjenica prikupljenih iz različitih putopisnih izvora i stvara vlastitu baroknu priču smještenu u čisto katoličko okruženje. Tim postupkom de Vega stvara izmišljeni prostor ispunjen *misterijima* i čudima u kojemu je krivac kažnjen zahvaljujući Nebeskoj intervenciji, čime se obnavlja ravnoteža i postiže izvorni *status quo*. U ključnim situacijama, opisi stranog svijeta Rusije apstrahiraju se u uopćene prikaze sukoba između tiranina i zakonitog monarha, te između samovolje vladara i zakona. Narativni pomak prema despotizmu stavlja sasvim nova pitanja u središte teksta pa se tako de Vegina „moskovska priča“ adaptira u novu, univerzalnu priču.

Ključne riječi: adaptacija, putopis, kulturni transfer, „doba velike smutnje“, Rusija, Lope de Vega