

**Reimagining the ‘fifth wall’: The role of the translator in
British and American staged productions of the works of
Mikhail Bulgakov**

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Abstract

This thesis introduces a novel theoretical framework for examining the agency of translators and adaptors involved in staging foreign-language works for Anglophone audiences. Essential to this framework is the argument that ‘agency’ is a performative construction, presenting the multiple roles played by theatre translators as constructs arising from continuous, performative actions. Building upon Sandra Bermann’s “theater of translation”, this thesis reimagines the ‘fifth wall’ of theatre as a fluid, collaborative space. This allows for a re-evaluation of translators’ roles, using the recognised performance space of theatre. To understand each role across the page-to-stage process, and the often-blurred boundaries between them, this thesis proposes ‘performative steps’ of *pitching*, *writing*, and *rehearsal*, which bring clarity to the complex topic of translator agency.

This study employs in-depth case studies of British and American translators and adaptors involved in staging Mikhail Bulgakov’s *Dni Turbinykh*, *Mol’er/Kabala svjatosh*, *Master i Margarita*, and *Sobach’e serdtse* for Anglophone audiences, to demonstrate the benefits of this framework. As a playwright, Bulgakov’s work is marginalised on Anglophone stages compared to the dominant figure of Chekhov, just as the theatre translator remains in the shadow of the celebrity playwright-adaptor. These case studies, categorised as original plays and plays adapted from prose, highlight similarities and differences in Bulgakov translator/adaptor behaviour between 1934 and 2024.

The analysis reveals that the Bulgakov translators and adaptors examined continuously reconstructed their roles, multi-roling to adapt to situational needs. Therefore, this thesis argues that it is no longer accurate to refer to the singular ‘role’ played by theatre translators/adaptors, but rather the performance of *multiple* roles within the theatre of translation. This necessitates a reimagination of traditional perceptions of translator agency as tied to one specific role. Instead, we must understand the diverse roles that translators perform in bringing plays and prose to new theatre audiences.

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Abbreviations

Term	Abbreviation
Cambridge Youth Theatre	CYT
Chichester Festival Theatre	CFT
Columbia Rare Book and Manuscript Library	CRBML
Joint Service School for Linguists	JSSL
Library of Congress System	LCS
Moscow Art Theatre	MAT
National Theatre	NT
New Asian Writing	NAW
New York Public Library for the Performing Arts	NYPLPA
New York Times	NYT
Ob’edinennoe gosudarstvennoe politicheskoe upravlenie (Joint State Political Directorate)	OGPU
Oxford English Dictionary	OED
Potential Participant	PP
Really Useful Group	RUG
Royal Shakespeare Company	RSC
Source Language	SL
Source Text	ST
Target Language	TL
Target Text	TT
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	USSR
United States	US
University College London	UCL
Yale Daily News	YDN
Yale Repertory Theatre	YRT

Introduction

In 1998, the National Theatre (NT) staged a production of *Flight*, based on the 1927 play *Beg* by Soviet author-playwright Mikhail Afanas'evich Bulgakov¹ (1891-1940) at the Olivier Theatre in London, garnering critical acclaim from reviewers at publications such as *The Independent* (Taylor, 1998) and *The Observer* (Clapp, 1998). These reviews, as well as the promotional postcards, posters, and the production programme recognised the director Howard Davies and celebrity playwright-adaptor Ron Hutchinson in the production. However, the name of the translator is conspicuous in its absence. The erasure of translatorial labour is a common phenomenon in theatrical productions, with their work often remaining invisible in critical reviews (Rappaport, 2007, p.75). To date, the identity of this translator remains unknown, and they remain invisible to theatre audiences, catalogue users, and practitioners alike.

In January 2025, a search for 'translator' on the NT Archive online catalogue returned 158 results. While most results are listed as 'translator', there are 10 different types of translator listed in total, including: literal translator, literary translator, director/translator, co-translator, literal translator/classical adviser, adaptor/translator, translator of book, author/literal translator, and deviser/translator. This highlights the complexity of the label of 'translator' and the subtle nuances of these different roles, especially those which can be considered, in theatrical terms, to be examples of 'multi-roling'. The implication of multi-roling in theatre is that an individual embodies two or more roles throughout a performance, each functioning in different ways. This work also reveals fluid boundaries between the multiple roles that translators embody in theatre, which can make it challenging to distinguish between them. Similarly, there is a fluid boundary between the roles of translator and adaptor; both are engaged in an act of transformation, which involves adapting an 'original' text for a perceived audience, and represent an intersection between translation, adaptation, and dramaturgy. Thus, the research questions in this thesis, outlined in Section ii, apply to both translators and adaptors.

¹ Eastern Slavic naming conventions include a second name composed from the name of the father. Bulgakov's patronymic, 'Afanas'evich', is from his father's name, Afanasij.

Regarding the inherent duality in theatre translation, there are two simultaneous performances being enacted: the theatrical performance of a play across an evening/afternoon, and the performance of translation, which occurs across months or even years. Each performance has its own perceived audience; for a theatrical performance it is the theatrical audience, and for a translator it is the target text (TT) commissioner. The dual performance of theatre translation requires more theorisation than literary translation (for which it is often mistaken) as it visibly positions translation in the performative space of theatre. This raises the ontological question: what does it mean to be a theatre translator? Epistemologically, this invites us to consider how we should understand the concept of translator agency in theatre. These philosophical questions underpin the core aims and objectives of this research on Bulgakov translators/adaptors in theatre, which are outlined in Section i.

Bulgakov is a marginalised figure, relative to Chekhov's dominance as a canonical playwright on Anglophone stages, which has resulted in an "English Chekhov tradition" (Young, 2009, p.328). Scholars such as Stuart Young (2013) and Cynthia Marsh (2020) have addressed the Chekhovian monopoly that has manifested itself in British theatre repertoires. This dominant Chekhov trend has also been observed in US (United States) theatre culture (see Quick and Urmov, 2011; Freedman, 2012), and scholars now actively seek to study productions of works by "all those other writers" (Marsh, 2020, p.1). While Marsh claims that Chekhov is "probably not as dominant as we imagine" (2020, p.1), her bibliography of productions of works by Russophone writers is clearly dominated by productions of Chekhov; there are comparatively few entries relating to "those other writers", including Bulgakov.

However, it is crucial that Translation Studies scholarship examines the work of marginalised voices, such as Bulgakov; if all scholarship relates to translations/adaptations of dominant voices such as Chekhov, then this impedes our ability to consider other perspectives. Since Bulgakov is not a canonical playwright and, as such, has not been assimilated into Anglophone theatre culture, this arguably frees Bulgakov translators/adaptors from the typical expectations associated with Chekhov. In theory, this affords Bulgakov translators/adaptors greater creativity in their treatment of his work.

This raises the question of the extent to which Bulgakov translators/adaptors are recognised for their roles in bringing his work to Anglophone stages, the implications for both their own agency and that of Bulgakov. This is timely, given the recent social media campaigns that seek to ensure that literary translators are adequately credited and remunerated, such as #NameTheTranslator (Burgess, 2017, p.10) and #TranslatorsOnTheCover (Society of Authors, 2024). To date there has been no such movement to support theatre translators; Prema Mehta's #SeenBackstage campaign (Body, 2023) supports backstage technicians by drawing attention to their 'invisible roles', ironically contributing to theatre translator invisibility through their lack of inclusion in the campaign (cf. Venuti, 1995). Therefore, theatre translators are doubly under-represented, in both translation and theatre circles.

This in-depth study of Bulgakov translator agency considers the experience of a marginalised group who translate a relatively marginalised writer, addressing a doubly under-recognised category of translators. To reframe my original question, it is necessary to consider not just what it means to be theatre translator, but what it means to be a *Bulgakov* theatre translator, considering issues of identity, visibility, power, and agency. This thesis explores the variety of roles played by individual translators/adaptors in Anglophone British and American staged productions of Bulgakov's work. Specifically, it examines the similarities and differences between the behaviours displayed by these individuals in productions staged between 1934 and 2024. This enables a discussion of the potential reasons for identified trends, and their implications for the agency of each of the translators and adaptors under investigation.

i. Research aims and objectives

This project aimed to: 1) understand the role of the translator/adaptor across in bringing Bulgakov's work from Russian page to Anglophone British and American stages, and 2) clarify translator agency in theatre, by reimagining the 'fifth wall'. Adapting Kristoff Timmerman's 'fifth wall' theory (a dynamic space co-created by performers and audiences in virtual music performances), this thesis examines translator/adaptor agency in staging Russophone works

on British and American stages. This work presents the 'fifth wall' as a collaborative space for translators, adaptors, and other agents in theatre.

Regarding the first research aim, the objectives were firstly, to conduct research to identify translators and adaptors for case studies. Secondly, to conduct a micro-history of translators to understand their social circumstances, governing behaviour. Thirdly, to survey and interview theatre practitioners (including directors, actors, and adaptors) and translators, to understand their perception of theatre translators' roles and involvement in the creative process.

The second research aim – providing clarity to the complex subject of translator agency in theatre – first required clearer definitions of the ill-defined terms 'actor' and 'agent', to clearly articulate translator/adaptor agency in theatre. To contextualise this, a theoretical and methodological framework that allowed for a more comprehensive investigation of translator agency in theatre was required. Specifically, a framework allowing comparison across different temporal and spatial contexts, facilitating a holistic overview of the agency of Bulgakov translators and adaptors in theatre. These specific aims and objectives then resulted in the formulation of three core research questions, which guided this project, allowing a consideration of Bulgakov translators/adaptors at the micro-level, yielding wider conclusions about translator agency more broadly.

ii. Research questions

This research addresses the following research questions:

1. To what extent does collaboration occur between the translator/adaptor and other agents, what is the nature of this collaboration and how is it affected by external factors?
2. How does the translator/adaptor construct their own identity as a translator/adaptor and how does this relate to trends in identity construction?

3. How does the terminology we use to describe translators/adaptors affect their actions and identity?

The findings of this research, based on these three questions, draw scholarly attention to the collaborative interactions that occur directly and indirectly between agents in theatre translation, thereby rethinking the role of the translator in theatre. This work demonstrates that, contrary to traditional views of their role, translators can be empowered to (inter)act in a manner that allows them to performatively (re)construct their identity, reflecting wider trends in identity construction. Finally, it assigns labels that more accurately reflect the translator's/adaptor's labour across the entire creative process, from page stage, determining how the labels assigned to these figures affect how they (re)construct their identities. This is achieved through a novel theoretical framework drawing on performativity theory.

iii. Theoretical framework and methodology

The thesis introduces a novel theoretical framework based on 10 individual case studies, employing performativity theory, inspired by the 'performative turn' in Translation Studies (cf. Wolf, 2017). This research draws upon Judith Butler's work to define performativity, enabling a discussion of how individuals repeatedly construct their identities as Bulgakov translators/adaptors, and how this relates to general identity trends. To investigate how translators/adaptors (re)construct their roles and identities in the context of the overall performance, the innovative concept of performative steps was created. This facilitated a consideration of the many roles an individual plays across different stages of the process of moving from Russian page to Anglophone stage, drawing attention to previously hidden practices. This is contextualised by building on Sandra Bermann's "theater [sic] of translation" (cf. 2014) to provide a concrete point of reference for situating roles according to their degree of public visibility. This is further developed by reimagining existing conceptions of the 'fifth wall' as a collaborative space with fluid boundaries, which continuously shapes and is shaped by the actions of translators/adaptors (Deboeck, 2022; Timmerman,

2024). Considering translator/adaptor behaviour as a performance allows for a more comprehensive analysis of how they (re)construct their own identities and how this varies across time and space.

iv. Agency in Translation Studies

Since the 1990s, Translation Studies scholarship has increasingly focused on the figure of the translator, “both as a presence in the text and an acting subject within a set of social practices” (Jansen and Wegener 2013, p.1). This shift towards agent-oriented research is characterised by Andrew Chesterman’s proposed subfield of ‘Translator Studies’ (my emphasis, 2009), as part of the ‘humanizing’ approach to Translation Studies (Pym, 2009).

Daniel Simeoni (1995) offered a more in-depth conceptualisation of individual translator agency through his ‘The pivotal status of the translator’s habitus’ (1998). Based on Pierre Bourdieu’s social theory of ‘habitus’ (1984), this work considers human behaviour, traits, and skills as socially ingrained reactions to the world around them. As Klaus Kaindl states, “[s]ince Simeoni (1998), habitus has been one of the most frequently used, discussed and criticized concepts in translator-centred research” (original emphasis, 2021, p.20) (e.g., Gouanvic, 2005; Vorderobermeier, 2014). Criticisms of *habitus* include its deterministic take on agency (e.g., Croce, 2015, p.328). However, it is useful for considering the internal and external influences affecting agents and their actions in specific contexts.

Perhaps the most meaningful development of agency in recent years has been a sharpened focus on “the social contexts conditioning translation production”, specifically that they are “conducted by a wider range of agents in addition to the translator” (Kung, 2009, p.124). Steve Berneking identifies multiple social agents in literary translation, including the “author, text, client, translator, funding source, agent of production, publisher, agent of marketing, agent of distribution, and audience” (2016, p.266). This indicates that there are many agents vying for power and status in one narrow, specialised market. Gisèle Sapiro avers that the factors determining the dissemination of translated works “are embedded in power relations between social groups”

(2015, p.325). In this sociological vein, it must be noted that “translation is not a disembodied activity but a social practice which depends on intermediaries and, to a large degree, on the book trade” (Sapiro, 2008, p.158). Neither is translation a disembodied activity, nor is the translator who performs the translation act disembodied. Thus, to examine the performance of translation, it is necessary to pay closer attention to the figure of the translator, who performs this act and their agency in that process.

Hanne Jansen and Anna Wegener describe their work as a response to the lack of “sufficient close academic attention” paid to “the other parties involved in the preparation, publication and reception of a translation” (2013). This includes “editors, publishers and reviewers” (p.2). By contrast, translator agency “has been the center of much research in recent years” (2013, p.2). I will exploit this gap by examining the impact of these ‘other parties’ on the role of the translator in theatre, and vice versa. As Jansen and Wegener state, there are “multiple ways in which the translator’s agency is intertwined and entangled with that of other active parties to the translation during the publication process” (2013, p.2). This has given rise to ‘multiple translatorship’ (based on Jack Stillinger’s ‘multiple authorship’, cf. 1991). Multiple translatorship suggests that the translation product is “also a result of actions and decisions not only by the translator, but also by *other* agents [and actors, in my research]” (original emphasis, 2013, p.2). Therefore, my research considers how agents interact in the social arena of theatre, which is largely governed by norms and structures, in the translation process. Theatre is, thus, a useful prism through which to view the complex issue of translator agency.

Literary Translator Studies (Kaindl et al., 2021) provides a useful overview of the history of Translation Studies, specifically the move from the discussion of ‘norms’ in translator agency to issues of translatorial power and identity. According to Kaindl, one of the key issues addressed by this work is “why translators should become the subject of research instead of the translations” (2021, p.2). Since the introduction also provides a detailed historiography of translator-centred theoretical approaches to Translation Studies, it seems unnecessary to investigate this matter further. As Jansen and Wegener previously highlighted, translator agency “has been the center of

much interest in recent years” (2013, p.2). Therefore, it could be argued that any further investigations would simply reiterate existing points.

However, Kaindl rightly emphasises that Translator Studies is currently limited by a lack of “consistent conceptual and theoretical frameworks” (2021, p.2). This is arguably the case with studies of translator agency, which requires reconceptualization in Translation Studies scholarship. Although relatively general and limited in scope, not least because it is limited to investigations of European literature, this volume highlights the need for further studies of translator agency within specialist translation genres. Reviewing the existing literature, there is still a clear need to establish a concrete understanding of individual translator ‘agency’. Thus, I propose the particularly complex genre of theatre translation as a specialist area of investigation for translator agency, the validity of which will now be demonstrated.

v. Agency in theatre

It is useful to consider theatre translator agency in light of the fluid, interdependent relationship between structure and agency identified by Giddens (1979/1984), since translator agency is determined by repeated actions. These habitual, often unconscious, micro-level enactments have the performative power to shape everyday life, influencing the construction of social structures, and are thus performative. These structures, created by translators, in turn impact the agency of other translators. Hélène Buzelin’s suggestion that we view agency and structure in terms of their relationship (2007) has implications for studies of theatre translator agency.

While such dichotomies previously facilitated greater debate, which was unquestionably useful, that model is arguably outdated; it does not consider the possibility that agency and structure shape each other. Bourdieu’s influential concepts of *habitus*, *field*, and *capital* are crucial for understanding how individuals internalise social norms, shaping their practice, and explaining why some actors have a greater capacity to influence their fields. However, as Sergey Tyulenev argues, some Translation Studies scholarship mistakenly applies *habitus* as a unidirectional, deterministic concept, conflating it with a

simple biography (2010, p.167). This deficiency is particularly apparent in the dynamic and collaborative context of theatre translation, where individual and collective actions can change existing norms and practices. Thus, this thesis requires a theoretical framework that more robustly accounts for the mutual shaping of translator agency, better capturing the translator's capacity for embodied and performative agency.

Manuela Perteghella provides a concrete definition of translation agency in theatre: "By 'translation agency', I mean those individuals directly involved with the theatre translation-rewriting process, that is 'rewriters' of playtexts to be eventually staged and performed" (2004, p.112). This implies that the translator is not the only 'translation agent', as those "individuals directly involved with the theatre translation-rewriting process" could include other figures, such as adaptors or directors. 'Translation agents' are not, however, limited to those roles. Perteghella emphasises that "[t]he term 'theatre translator' is increasingly becoming a collective concept", with "monolingual adaptors and playwrights, and even scholar-translators-cum-dramaturgs and directors-cum-translators" counting among those who can be labelled as theatre translators (2004, p.112). These different types of agents in theatre will be examined in more detail in Section vii. This research considers the different figures who can be regarded as a theatre translator (including adaptors), and their agency in the performative act of translation. This is especially pertinent in light of an increasing scholarly recognition of collaborative practices in theatre (Morini, 2022, p.2).

In her study of translator agency in Portuguese theatre, Christine Zurbach attributes the specific label of 'cultural agent' to the theatre translator as they are "responsible for the productions of texts, but [...] also responsible for the implantation of a concept of living theatre" (2009, p.298). This seeks to recast theatre translation as a social process, rather than a branch of literary translation, linking to Bermann's concept of everyday life (of the theatre translator) as a type of 'social performance' (2014, p.291). Zurbach's definition of the translator's role also draws upon Itamar Even-Zohar's view that "what plays a role in the culture is the persons, the agents themselves who are engaged in the business" (1997, p.361). This brings the focus back towards the translator themselves, as opposed to translation practice more generally,

affording the translator a sense of agency. Zurbach also directly identifies actors and directors as agents, in addition to theatre translators and adaptors, pointing to a 'multiplicity of agents' (2009, p.285). This suggests potential power conflicts in theatre, again highlighting the relevance of studying the interrelationship between structure and agency in theatre translation.

Sameh Hanna further reinforces the concept of the translator as 'cultural agent' (2014), presenting freelance translators in early 1920s Egypt as 'cultural agents', who were keen to expose Egyptian audiences to foreign cultures. Although this work provides a useful overview of the concept of the theatre translator as a 'cultural agent', it is not the primary focus, fading into the background of a discussion of habitus and agency. Furthermore, the ephemeral nature of theatre performance means that no two performances will ever be exactly the same. Therefore, it is more appropriate to instead 'recast' the roles of the actors and agents involved in the 'performance' accordingly, in the "theatre of translation". This concept originating from Sandra Bermann (2014), presents translation as an enacted, dynamic process, constantly creating new meanings and relationships. The possibilities and particulars of this approach are discussed in Section 1.4.2.

An influential recent work on theatre translator agency is *The Translator on Stage* (Brodie, 2018a). Rooted in Latour's Actor-network theory (ANT), this work views translation as a complex series of interconnected networks with multiple participants (2005). This approach arguably promotes a more comprehensive approach to assessing the role of the theatre translator. Brodie's focus on translator agency and the impact of positionality and power structures in theatre on the end product, "from commission to performance" (2018a, p.13) is particularly interesting for this research; Brodie's work provides a fuller picture of how and to what extent translators interact with theatre practitioners, shedding light on a previously underexamined practice. An entire chapter of Brodie's work is dedicated to "The Role of the Translator", covering the distinction between so-called 'literal' ("the least visible", 2018a, p.102) and celebrity translators in terms of agency, status, and visibility.

Sirkku Aaltonen argues that a "two tier system has arisen among theatre translators as a consequence of the unequal distribution of power over the text which is used on stage", simultaneously casting translators as 'masters' "who

use theatre texts as their raw material to create works of art for the stage” and ‘pariahs’, “who are subservient to the text and have to bow in front of it” (1997, p.455). As part of this two-tier system,

they [theatres] usually commission someone who knows the source language and culture to prepare the first version, which will then be handed over to a well-known British playwright who will write the stage version and whose name appears in the credits. These playwrights might only have a basic knowledge of the source language, if at all, but their name might take priority over that of the ‘original’ playwright [...] and be used to sell the play to audiences. (Aaltonen, 2023, p.37)

The fact that Aaltonen refers to the same dominant system being in place twenty-six years later implies its continuous relevance to contemporary practice. Although this concerns British theatre, it is also typical of US theatre practice (cf. Goldfinger and Horsley, 2023). Therefore, the types of agent involved and their respective roles are a relevant issue in contemporary theatre translation practice. This could be explored further by applying the performative concept of the “theatre of translation”, to account for the complex nature of the roles carried out by the translator in theatre and whether this two-tier model is universally applied, or adapted to meet production needs.

Brodie posits that the celebrity translator has usurped the literal translator in London theatres (see also Stock, 2020). Therefore, the issue is one of dominant power structures and agency. Most existing scholarship on theatre translation in Britain concerns London (for example, Brodie, 2018b; Laera, 2018; Stock, 2020) and in the US, New York-based productions are typically examined (for instance, Versényi, 2007; Taroff, 2011; Trubiano, 2023). While undoubtedly insightful, these studies do not deviate from the “persistent metropolitan bias” in scholarship (Reid, 2024, p.246). Having provided an overview of the complex issue of agency in theatre, I will now establish how the processes examined relate to British and American practices, in the context of the Anglophone staged productions of Bulgakov, as a lesser-known playwright than those examined by Brodie (such as Brecht and Chekhov). It will also introduce a ‘performative’ framework as an appropriate means to examine this complex issue, outlining the many benefits of such an approach.

vi. Contribution of theatre translation and a ‘performative’ approach to studies of agency

Brodie asserts that “[t]heatre provides an overt display of the protagonists and processes of translation but has its share of hidden participants” (2013, p.119), who Marisa S. Trubiano refers to as “invisible ‘actors’” (2023, p.152). Typically, ‘protagonists’ refers to celebrity playwright-adaptors, actors, and directors, while ‘hidden participants’ can include the translator and set designer, for example. Given the status and prestige attached to protagonists relative to those who remain hidden ‘backstage’, it is productive to consider agency as an activity taking place in the theatrical space. This approach breaks down the traditional barriers to studies of agency, by considering all participants involved, including the translator. The performative nature of theatre also lends itself to comparison with the study of translatorial performance. Thus, the metaphor of theatre is especially relevant for an exploration of the complex issue of Bulgakov translator/adaptor agency in British and American theatres.

The past twenty years have seen the rise of the so-called ‘sociological turn’ of Translation Studies (such as Wolf, 2010; Buzelin, 2013), and there have been a growing number of publications analysing the field from a sociological perspective (see Tyulenev, 2014; Blakesley, 2018). This ‘sociological turn’ has given rise to a ‘performative turn’ of Translation Studies, and I will now outline the benefits of considering translation as a performative action in terms of determining translator agency in the social arena of theatre.

The use of theatrical references in Translation Studies has become more recurrent in the new millennium, with frequent references to translators as ‘actors’ and the completion of actions as ‘performance’. It is clear that there is a need to develop our understanding of theatre translation, as conceptualised through the ‘theatre of translation’ (Bermann, 2014, p.286; Wolf, 2017), so as to fully integrate this performative language into disciplinary discourse. As Michela Baldo argues, “performativity has a much broader spectrum that exceeds the field of theatre and performance studies” (2020, p.35) – it has featured in such diverse fields as gender studies (Butler, 1990) and sociological approaches to Translation Studies (Tyulenev, 2014). That is not to doubt its general relevance to studies of theatre translation. Rather, that

we can consider translation itself to be performative, and that the translator, as a key actor in this performance, also has a degree of agency in their work.

Baldo states that ‘performativity’ “has become increasingly visible in recent debates within the fields of theatre translation and performance studies” (2020, p.35). According to Butler, her own understanding of ‘performativity’ arose as an “account of agency” (2009, i). That is to say that “there is no gender without this reproduction of norms that risks undoing or redoing the norm in unexpected ways” (2009: i). Replacing gender with ‘translatorial identity’, indicates that agency is demonstrated through performative actions. In this sense, performative actions and translatorial actors can be regarded as simultaneously constrained and constructive. This has given rise to the ‘performative turn’ in Translation Studies (cf. Bigliazzi et al., 2013).

Kristin Langellier posits that “performativity relies upon performance to show itself” (1999, p.136). That is to say that performance is the action, the reality, through which the metaphor, the message, of performativity is realised. Performativity is the power to act (which we can equate to the intangible concept of agency), whereas performance is the completion of the action itself (which is physically carried out by the actor). However, it must be noted that not all performance is performative. Consequently, it is important to carefully apply these terms to theatre translation, as will be explored in Section 1.1.

Considering theatre translation as a performance, revealing the performative actions of the ‘agent’/Bulgakov translator in (re)constructing their own identities, draws attention to their central role in theatrical productions; I will explore theatre translation processes, by situating Bulgakov translators’ individual roles in the metaphorical ‘theatre of translation’, using the concept of agency (performativity/“theatre of translation”) to examine the concrete action (performance/translation of theatre). This will be explored further with the concept of reimagining the invisible ‘fifth wall’ between translators and actors/directors/producers/audiences (based on the existing concept of breaking the ‘fourth wall’ between actors and audiences). Rethinking this invisible barrier as a fluid entity invites all involved in the creative process of theatre to challenge their own roles and those of other agents, by encouraging collaborative practice (see Section 1.6). This concept repositions translation as a performance, with ‘agents’ (translators/adaptors) taking centre stage,

while also paying attention to who remains backstage, as an 'extra'; it is just as insightful to learn who is not recognised in the creative process of theatre, as much as from who receives official recognition.

Turning to questions of translatorial identity (which is closely associated with agency) in relation to 'performativity', Cristina Marinetti has noted a shift in research perspective, "from a view of drama and performance as representational ('signifying something') to performative ('transforming existing regimes of signification')" (2013, p.309). This supports my above interpretation of the terms 'performance' and 'performativity'. Marinetti rightly asserts that this raises fundamental questions of identity, which has been justified in Translation Studies (Simon, 1996; Gentzler, 2008). Conceptualising translator agency as 'performative', in line with Marinetti's definition, also implies transforming existing power structures. This is useful for examining agency in theatre translation, in relation to issues of power and structure.

Marinetti also highlights that performativity is a question of identity, created not by an 'internal reality', but "produced and reproduced all the time through language and other cultural forms, thus becoming naturalized and accepted as inherent" (2013, p.311). This complements Chris Barker's statement that we are not an "inner core of beliefs and attitudes", but a "network of attitudes", which affects the way in which we act and, thus, our agency is 'socially constructed' (2005, p.13). Marinetti argues that drawing attention to the power of performance and the concept of performativity could open the door to further interdisciplinary research. This research could take into account "issues of both power and identity, but also the hermeneutics of theatre practice" (2013, p.316). Since power, identity, and the communication implied through hermeneutics are key elements of agency, this further justifies a performative approach to the study of Bulgakov translator agency.

To provide clarity to the complex issue of roles and identities, and the relationship between them, it is useful to view them through performativity; an individual might perform a role in line with the typical expectations of that role, reinforcing their identity as constituted by that role and not effecting any type of change. For instance, a theatre translator might complete the literal translation for subsequent adaptation by a celebrity playwright-adaptor and have no further involvement in the creative process of theatre, reinforcing the

traditional perception that the theatre translator's role ends when rehearsals begin (Rappaport, 2007, p.70). However, a theatre translator might performatively alter their identity; if they attend rehearsals and make performance suggestions that are then adopted by theatrical actors in their on-stage performance, this demonstrates their performative power to effect change, as theatre collaborators beyond the writing stage. By performing extra roles in addition to that for which they were commissioned, theatre translators may act performatively, resulting in a new identity, so translator identity is a direct result of the role(s) that a translator may enact in the context of their overall performance in the page-to-stage process. This thesis will demonstrate how identity can also be a matter of self-perception, i.e., a matter of how translators choose to identify themselves, by highlighting certain roles on their personal websites or agency profiles, for example, further complicating this already complex issue, and linking it to other complex issues such as visibility.

An approach based on the concept of a 'theatre of translation' also invites us to rethink the Bourdieusian concept of 'field' as a 'stage'. Where Bourdieusian theory has been criticised for being vague and abstract (e.g., Croce, 2015, pp.328-329), recasting 'field' as the visual metaphor of the stage is a more accessible method of accounting for the agency of the (multiple) individual agents involved in theatre translation. Furthermore, this brings the question of translator agency to the forefront of scholarly discussion, which is justified in light of Butler's definition of 'performativity' as an "account of agency". Considering theatre translation in these terms allows for a reconceptualization of the role of the translator/adaptor in staged productions of Bulgakov's work, or, vice versa, the role of Bulgakov's work in establishing the translator's role in this context. It also allows us to revisit the role played by the interdependent relationship between structure and agency in this process.

vii. Introducing the 'cast' of agents involved in the theatre of translation

The theatre of translation is constructed by conscious and unconscious repeated behaviours by a network of agents, who both compete for power and collaborate within that network. Reimagining the Bourdieusian concept of field,

where actions are performed within a social sphere, in terms of the physical space of the theatre incorporates both the visible, onstage spaces and invisible, backstage spaces. This allows scholars to consider not just those taking centre stage, but also the figures who exist on the periphery or occupy multiple or changing positions in the performance of theatre translation.

This performance is enacted and realised by the social agents involved in the process of transposing the work from source text (ST) page to target language (TL) stage. Within a field, or, as it is reconceptualised here, the theatre of translation, “the agents struggle for the maintenance or change of power relations on the basis of the various types of capital they have” (Wolf, 2011, p.4). The type of influence that an agent can exert influences their ability to maintain or change power relations, determining the structure of the theatre of translation. In turn, this both shapes and is shaped by the performative (repeated) actions performed by the agents involved in the process.

Citing Jacques Derrida (2007), Rachel Pacheco Aguilar and Marie-France Guénette argue that “translation and interpreting practices do not take place as a result of a performed script”, since they are “iterative enactments which are permanently open to rearticulations, rearrangements, and other reworkings” (2021, p.13); the performance enacted by the translator is inevitably subject to change. Contrary to the belief that translation does not arise from a performed script, I posit that the translator’s social script is not a static object – like scripts in the traditional theatrical sense; instead, it is subject to alterations in the revision and rehearsal process (see Section 1.3.2). The continuous repetition of these new behaviours by multiple agents contributes to the disruption of existing social scripts and writes new ones, reflecting the dynamic nature of the role of translators/adaptors in theatre production.

To analyse the fluidity of agency in a specific translation context, “it is necessary to investigate the broader concept of the translation process in which different agents exert their power” (Zhang, 2019, p.186). I expand upon this to investigate how these exertions of power by different agents relate to the development of the role of the translator. Andrea Bergantino encourages the consideration of “those inherently human aspects – such as psychological dynamics, emotional responses, ethical conundrums, the interplay between life and translation” (2023, p.766). These agents are humans, whose actions

may hinge upon factors other than business or economics, for example. This is not only necessary for analysing the behaviours displayed by translators, but also those displayed by the other agents with whom they interact in the theatre of translation. Considering the figures involved in constructing the theatre of translation in terms of both human and professional factors, allows us to establish a more holistic view of translator/adaptor agency in bringing Bulgakov to Anglophone British and American audiences.

Pym posits that humanisation is “to do with searching for the multiple causes that give intermediaries various freedoms to choose” (2009, p.34) and these factors are crucial to the study of agency in the theatre of translation. This follows the recent trend in scholarship observed by Massimiliano Morini, which has seen “a lot of important work [...] done on how bringing translations to the stage can be seen as a complex collaborative effort, one in which a whole theatrical team – rather than a unique creative individual – has a hand” (2022, p.2). To investigate the impact of this ‘whole theatrical team’ on theatre translator agency, this section introduces the cast members who feature in the case studies presented in this thesis; I begin with the translator (Section a), highlighting their central role, with the subsequent order progressing from the ST to its intermediaries (the ST author, Section b; ST rights holders, Section c; publisher, Section d), and then to academic and practical contexts (Section e and Section f). The adaptor is discussed in Sections a, b, and f, as they primarily interact with the agents outlined in those sections.

a. The translator

Traditionally, the translator is a marginalised figure in theatre translation, who “find[s] remarkably little place in the world” (Pym, 2009, p.27). This is surprising, given the central role that they often play in the many daily interactions that occur between a whole network of agents in the theatre of translation; the translator may interact with one or a combination of agents. This complex range of interactions which may occur between translators and other agents in theatre were explained by playwright-translator Caridad Svich:

In between, there are [...]: actors, directors, designers, collaborators. They may also be in mind as you work or you may meet them later in rehearsal, but they are always part of the translation. (2019)

Thus, translator agency in the theatre of translation may be dependent upon agents with whom they may not have initial or, even, direct contact. On the other hand, translators may have regular close contact with other agents and directly influence the rehearsal process. Thus, the situation must be examined on a case-by-case basis, to take into account the factors which may afford the translator greater or reduced agency in a given situation.

Just as in the publishing sphere, a celebrity name is often employed to enhance the perceived prestige of a production. Indeed, the former NT Literary Manager Jack Bradley notes that “[t]he same few people were increasingly asked to do the relatively few available high-profile translations” (2016, p.197). Centre stage in the theatre of translation (and the translation of theatre) is usually dominated by these celebrity playwright-translators/adaptors, and other names will rarely find a place in this exclusive club. British theatre translator William Gregory laments that the literal translator, whose work forms the basis of productions, receives a flat fee for their work and does not typically retain copyright of their translations, nor do they receive equal billing for their work or regularly have the opportunity to actively collaborate in the rehearsal process (Jones and McKenna, 2021). Furthermore, theatre translators “are often asked to deliver drafts in ridiculously short amounts of time under duress” (Svich, 2019), and have rejected the term ‘literal translator’; Gregory refers to the role of “quote unquote literal translator” as something he avoids, due to its pejorative connotations of low pay and status (Jones and McKenna, 2021).

The similarities and differences between individual translators contribute to the development of the individual translator’s identity, or ‘translator brand’, which Zhang perceives as “a translator’s powerful and distinctive status” (2021, p.128). Zhang posits that a ‘powerful’ status is not constituted by “a translator’s dominant position”, instead it emphasises that “they are in a position to exert influence” (Zhang, 2023, p.133). Indeed, translators may be able to exert influence, even from a less dominant position in the power hierarchy in which they perform their actions. As will be

demonstrated throughout this thesis, in some instances, translators may enjoy a “powerful and influential status” which “contrasts with the translator’s traditional, invisible, secondary and subordinate status” (Zhang, 2019, p.200). This special status, which sets them apart from other translators, may be attributed to other roles they occupy, for example, in academia, publishing or other positions of authority. This status is unusual, as they are not invisible, nor are they celebrities in the traditional sense of a figure with a prominent public image, instantly recognisable to millions. However, this thesis will argue that they do enjoy high status and a large degree of agency in their work, especially in their dealings with other agents in the theatre of translation.

Consequently, the theatre of translation takes into consideration both the interaction between translators and other agents and how the translator’s multiple roles and identities influence their overall performance. As this thesis demonstrates, translators may collaborate to bring Bulgakov’s work to Anglophone British and American stages. It also takes into account their potential to influence the production through their role as agents of change. I will now consider how translators function as agents of change in relation to the ST author, whose work they ‘change’ to meet the needs of a new audience.

b. The ST author

As Jansen and Wegener have argued, “the translator’s agency is intertwined with that of other parties in the process of bringing the translation into the world” (2013, p.1). This phenomenon, which they refer to as ‘multiple translatorship’ includes an entanglement of their agency with that of the ST author. Scholars such as Jack Stillinger (1991), Kirsty Gover (2016), and Martin Zeilinger (2021) have emphasised the collaborative nature of the creative process, dispelling the myth of the solitary author, which is applicable to both translators and ST authors (see Section 1.4.1). The implications of this ‘multiple translatorship’ in the Bulgakov-translator/adaptor relationship primarily concern the issues of authorship and visibility; Bulgakov’s name features most prominently on published editions of the translations, affording him greater visibility than the translators whose names typically feature below Bulgakov. Their name may appear in a smaller font size, or may only be visible

on the copyright page and/or translator's comments section. Despite authorship of translated texts being shared between the ST author, the translator who adapts that ST, and the adaptor who subsequently adapts the TT to meet the needs of a new context, the common perception among audiences is that they are experiencing the original text. Indeed,

literary scholars, critics, reviewers, bloggers, and non-professional readers often comment on translations as though the source-text author's voice is the only one that is present [...] they may inadvertently [...] disregard[d] all the other voices that have taken part in shaping the translation. (Alvstad et al., 2017, p.9)

Therefore, the theatre of translation considers the indirect interaction with Bulgakov as ST author (who is physically absent, yet intellectually present) during the writing process, and, where relevant, interaction that is mediated through access to the TT (Robinson, 2001, p.24). Thus, the ST author is involved in the theatre of translation implicitly and intellectually, rather than explicitly and directly, and they are a significant cast member, whose contribution to the creative process must not be overlooked. Similarly, ST rights holders must be considered as powerful agents in the theatre of translation.

c. ST rights holders

As individuals holding the ST rights, which is particularly relevant in the case of Bulgakov, who died in 1940, before many of his works could be published, ST rights holders are key figures in bringing Bulgakov's work to Anglophone audiences. Firstly, they must be considered as figures who are empowered to answer two key questions: *who* is permitted to translate the work and *which* works they are permitted to translate. This places them in a more powerful position than the translator, who attempts to persuade them to grant the rights to translate the ST, and the publisher, whose ability to profit from the publication of the TT depends on the translator's ability to procure the text. In this regard, as the translator deals directly with ST rights holders, they are arguably more empowered than publishers in these relations.

Furthermore, the actions of different ST rights holders may be governed by different motivations, as examined in Section 3.3.2; for example, the family members of the ST author may have an emotional investment in ensuring that the author receives recognition for their work among new audiences or that the voice of that author is communicated in a manner that reflects their style, such as Bulgakov's widow. However, this investment may also be financial if the ST rights holder intends to benefit financially from the ST. If the ST rights holder is not a family member, but someone who possesses the ST, it may be more likely that they are financially-motivated, particularly if they are in an impoverished position, as was the case with many Soviet émigrés. However, they may also display some degree of sentimentality, if they had a personal connection with Bulgakov, and may even reject the notion of selling the text in spite of the promise of financial recompense, on that basis (see Section 3.3.2).

While these interactions and power dynamics may not feature in most discussions of agency in theatre translation, and are generally overlooked in scholarship (there were no scholarly works found on this particular issue, highlighting a significant research gap), they are crucial in the discussion of the translation/adaptation of Bulgakov's work in the theatre of translation. Publishers are other powerful figures in this context, and will now be examined.

d. Publishers

Publishers are powerful figures in the theatre of translation. According to Sapiro, they "play a major role in the international circulation of books, in their original language as well as in translation" and it is for this reason that the present study "needs to take into account this category of agents" (2008, p.154). While Sapiro refers to publishers of literary translations, this study considers the literary translation and subsequent staged adaptations of prose works which were first commissioned by individual publishers, as well as their commissions of theatre translations. Indeed, there are a number of prominent theatre publishers (such as Nick Hern Books and Samuel French), who act as gatekeepers, determining which plays are published, funded, and licensed for performance, and who distributes scripts for productions worldwide. Their

decisions directly impact which cultural narratives are performed and experienced by new audiences. Thus, there are similarities between their roles across both contexts, both of which are relevant in discussions of the role of publishers in the broader power structures in the theatre of translation. Since translators rather than adaptors are typically involved in the early stages of the publishing project, the latter are not discussed here.

Publishers are often represented by editors, who are “potentially an influential presence” (Zhang, 2019, p.194) and, thus, as figures endowed with the power to influence other agents, they enjoy a large amount of agency. Their influence is mainly traced through “the constraints or norms that the editor/publisher imposed in the process of editing the manuscript” (2019, p.194). This research considers how the social constraints imposed upon the translator by the publisher in the editing process can become internalised by translators, forming a part of their everyday translatorial behaviour. The ways in which translators rebel against these constraints to rewrite their social script in the theatre of translation will also be examined in greater detail. While editors are often in a position to exercise power, Sondra Bacharach draws attention to the relative ambiguity of their role, in the sense that they are a ‘secondary agent’, who “act[s] on behalf of a primary agent” (2020, p.65). Editors can be regarded as a type of secondary agent as they are not writers in their own right, but their actions determine how the work of the primary agent, i.e., the author, is presented to the public. This also applies to translators, as the intermediary between the authors and editors.

The publisher who the editor represents “function[s] as a ‘brand-name’ which labels certain kinds of products” and their status in the global market is directly connected to the works they choose to represent (Sapiro, 2016, p.93). For instance, the British publisher, Penguin is renowned for its Penguin Classics range, which includes literature from the global canon, while the American publisher, New Directions, has garnered recognition for its publication of modernist authors from around the world (both of which are examined in Section 3.3.4). Sapiro makes the further distinction between non-profit publishers (such as university and independent presses) and trade publishers (mass market) in the US; the former are more likely to publish ‘upmarket’ books, such as playscripts and translated fiction, although the latter

may also publish them, but less often (2008, p.160). The actions of publishers are motivated by the question of *which* works by *which* authors, translated by *which* translators will yield the greatest profit, in terms of status and finances.

In the specialist industry of theatre publication, where a play is usually published to coincide with an initial run of performances onstage, Bloomsbury is the self-proclaimed “leading publisher in drama and the performing arts” (Bloomsbury, 2024), with its ownership of Methuen Drama and Oberon Books, among others, allowing them to monopolise the market. Meanwhile, Nick Hern Books have declared themselves “the UK [United Kingdom]’s leading specialist theatre publishers and performing rights agents” (Nick Hern, 2023), having been founded in 1988 by the eponymous former drama editor at Methuen. In the theatre industry, all of the aforementioned publishers are synonymous with good quality and enjoy an elevated status in publishing circles. This prestige translates to an ability to exert power over translators. Robert Wechsler indicates that the balance of power typically favours the editor (and the publishing houses they represent), who exerts influence in terms of finance, the material to be translated and the commissioning of a specific translator to perform the translation (1998, pp.219-220). Twenty-seven years later, this is arguably still the typical editor-translator power dynamic.

However, power may also be spread more evenly – the editor may give more established translators the freedom to propose projects, or ask them to provide a collection based on material of the translator’s choosing. In this way, the translator may be seen as a ‘literary scout’ (see McLay, 2016), which Corinna Norrick-Rühl and Miaïna Razakamanantsoa have highlighted as an example of the invisible “actors involved in these pre-publication selection and gatekeeping processes” (2022, p.2). Norrick-Rühl and Razakamanantsoa highlight that those scouts “engaged in transatlantic dealings needed to be well-versed in multiple markets (and, ideally, languages)” (2022, p.5). The way in which translators capitalise on knowledge of languages and ‘multiple markets’ to source material for publication is a form of invisible labour which is crucial for the publishing industry and tips the balance of power in the favour of translators, even if only at the early stages of the publication process. The notion that publishers wield absolute power is an illusion and, just like other agents, they are subject to factors which may alter the balance of power in

favour of other agents. The influence of translators as literary scouts is particularly under-researched (2022, p.12), and is addressed in this research.

Considering the interactions between translating and publishing agents, Wenqian Zhang emphasises that the relationship between the agents involved in the process of bringing a translated book to the market exists only “because of their common interest”, stressing that “it only existed temporarily” (2019, pp.197-198). This relationship is temporary since it only exists as long as there is a common interest, and any of the agents involved may dissolve the collaboration at any time. For example, if the publisher merges with another or is liquidated, or if their aims are incompatible with those of the translator and their agent, then the translator may connect with another publisher (for instance, see Section 3.3.4). Sapiro highlights the importance of taking all the circumstances of the publisher’s actions into account:

[i]n order to understand the significance of a single publisher’s selection principles, one has to reconstruct the whole space in which [they] act[s] and his/her relation with rivals. (2008, pp.155-156)

While Sapiro is referring to actions of the publisher, this is applicable to all agents in the theatre of translation; it is necessary to reconstruct the space of (inter)action as the theatre of translation, to consider all the spaces that they occupy, both centre stage and backstage. Sapiro’s mention of ‘rivals’ has applications beyond the context of competing publishers; they can be viewed as any agent with whom the publisher competes for power in the theatre translation process. Another category of agents who also interact with translators/adaptors and publishers in the theatre of translation is scholars.

e. Scholars

According to Sapiro, “scholars play a central role in the international circulation of works” in human and social sciences (2008, p.159). Indeed, scholars are able to exert power by choosing certain texts by certain authors for teaching purposes on certain academic courses. These texts may otherwise remain neglected, in educational programmes for future generations of translators, theatre practitioners, and publishers. The scholar’s choices, in turn influence

which works are published by university presses (Sapiro, 2015, p.337). Scholars may choose texts based on their own research or personal interests, further indicating their large degree of agency within the academic system. As will be demonstrated in this thesis, scholars use their connections with publishers and translators, among other agents, to promote neglected authors. Scholars have also demonstrably assisted translators with sourcing rare works or ones which are difficult to obtain, through their academic networks and connections in the ST's country of origin. This enables scholars to use the resultant translation for their own teaching and personal purposes. In this way, they are endowed with the ability to influence the commissioning of certain translators by publishers to translate specific authors, with mutual benefits.

Narratives that exist about translators, and are perpetuated by scholars, as agents in studies of translation history, “revolve around translators in their own specific ways, shedding light on these typically overlooked figures” (Bergantino, 2023, p.768). Given this central position of scholars in perpetuating these narratives, it is time to recognise their role at the centre of the theatre translation process. This is not a case of affording scholars visibility for the sake of visibility, but, rather, considering the human actions which develop their ‘multifarious nuances’, which Bergantino uses to refer to translators and is also applicable to scholars (2023, p.768). Here, ‘multifarious nuances’ are the multiplicity of roles that scholars embody as agents in the theatre translation process. Consequently, scholars play a crucial role in the theatre of translation; they are able to use their status to establish connections between key figures in the translation and publishing spheres. They are also responsible for determining which writers students will be exposed to and in what manner, as they have the power to frame discussions surrounding authors, playwrights, and their associated translators. Finally, we must consider the role of theatre practitioners in the theatre of translation.

f. Theatre practitioners

The influence of theatre practitioners and their companies in the selection and commissioning of translated/adapted stage productions cannot be overstated.

Each theatre, or company, has its own agenda, which influences their policy and interactions with other agents in the theatre of translation. Theatrical agents who influence the theatre of translation include the Artistic Director (the theatrical equivalent of the Chief Executive Officer), producers, directors, actors, adaptors, and, indirectly, audiences.

On *The Writing Life* podcast, Sue Healy, Literary Manager at London's Finborough Theatre, notes that the theatre displays "a resistance [towards theatre translation], whether that is acknowledged or not" and they require "persuasive proof that this is a good investment" on the translator's part (Jones and McKenna, 2021). This bears similarity to the stance of publishers in the commissioning of translated works, where generating profit is a key motivating factor. Just as each publishing house has its own 'brand' identity, so too does each theatre, which is supported by Healy, who explains the significance of the niches of individual theatres in selecting and commissioning specific texts:

We don't have a great record [for staging translated plays...] I think it's partly to do with the niche thing [...] for many years [...] the Gate was the translation playhouse and the Finborough stuck to its niche [...] – the Anglophone world. (Jones and McKenna, 2021)

This implies that each theatre's repertoire is in keeping with its perceived identity, with little deviation. In the US, New York's Public Theater is known for its annual New York Shakespeare Festival, which has expanded to include Anglophone productions of Russophone plays, such as Chekhov's *Chajka* (*The Seagull*, 2001) and Bulgakov's *Master i Margarita* (*The Master and Margarita*, 1978). Meanwhile, university theatres such as the American Repertory Theater at Harvard University and the Yale Repertory Theater (YRT) in New Haven, Connecticut are renowned for offering a balanced repertoire of new work by American playwrights and reinterpretations of classic or neglected works of the past (for more detail, see Section 4.2.3). It is worthwhile to now consider state-funded theatres, which are in a stronger financial and reputational position to commission theatre translations.

Perhaps the most pertinent example of state-funded theatre is the London-based NT. Its main competitors are the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), with whom it competes for power, funds and status in the theatrical

sphere, and the West End (Bradley, 2016, p.190). Financial considerations, specifically, box office sales generated by ticket sales, play a central role, impacting the actions of all agents in theatre. This is especially true of regional theatres; as UK Theatre joint President and Chief Executive of Nottingham Playhouse Stephanie Sirr has stated: “Regional theatres, even those subsidised, generate the majority of their income through box office” (Masso, 2024). Thus, saleability and economic factors dominate this sphere (cf. Espasa, 2001), both in metropolitan and regional theatres, which are equally dominant considerations for publishers, as discussed in Section d.

In British theatres, Literary Managers have traditionally decided the selection and production of certain works. The Literary Manager receives the proposed works and acts as a type of literary scout, bringing new or lesser-known works to the attention of the Artistic Director. Bradley admits that “sometimes less honourable motives drive” Literary Managers in their selection of plays (2016, p.198). For example, when scouting Russophone plays, Bradley admitted to selecting a play he had already seen instead of the better play for an NT production, in order to “sho[w] off [his] erudition” (2016, p.198). This justifies Bergantino’s call for scholars to consider decisions motivated by human emotions as a crucial factor in the performance of a social role, involving interactions with multiple agents in the theatre of translation.

Bradley’s description of how the institutional hierarchy functions at the NT is also insightful: “Literary Managers are advisors, advocates, occasionally gate-keepers and cultural bodyguards for their building”, subordinate to the whims of the Artistic Director, who may be determined to stage a certain play, or convinced by the passionate advocations for a play by an associate (2016, p.198). These associates could include directors, producers, actors, adaptors, or other figures involved in theatre production. Again, this demonstrates the significance of the strength of human emotions in displays of power and consecration through the selection of certain texts for production.

In American theatres, it is more typical to commission a ‘reader’ to write a report, including details which are intended to inform the decisions of the commissioning agent(s). This role appears to be akin to that of the Literary Manager, since the work is quality-assessed through both the Reader and the Literary Manager. However, the Reader does not appear to be a permanent

member of staff within the theatre, nor is it a specialised role; in a file held by the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts (NYPLPA), the Reader, Rozanne Ritch, compiled a report on Jean-Claude van Itallie's adaptation of Michael Glenny's translation of *Master i Margarita*, comparing two scenes (1981). There is no further mention of Ritch and, thus, it can be assumed that her role is more peripheral in the wider operations of the theatre.

The power dynamics between agents involved in regional theatres in the commissioning of translated plays differ vastly from those in metropolitan theatres. While London- or New York-based theatres may be able to rely on a more stable income, generated by government-level funding and a steady tourism industry, regional theatres in both Britain and the US tend to rely more on local funding and the local community of regular theatre-goers. However, this may also afford them greater creative freedom, with an established audience to rely on. Accordingly, there is a greater tendency to promote local writers, and "it might take a little bit of convincing that funding local translators is just as commendable as supporting local playwrights" (Jones and McKenna, 2021). Consequently, regional theatres may be even less inclined to collaborate with translators than larger theatres, given the comparatively smaller budgets of regional theatres. Thus, there are multiple theatre practitioners who function as agents, significantly contributing to activities in the theatre of translation, whose involvement must be taken into consideration.

viii. Summary of contributions

According to Marinetti, "the concept of *performativity* itself has yet to be fully articulated in relation to translation" (original emphasis, 2013, p.309). Arguably, this is best achieved by examining how a select group of translators/adaptors performatively (re)construct their own identities in the theatre of translation, by reimagining the boundaries of the 'fifth wall'. This occurs through the repeated performance of multiple roles across performative steps, responding to Rakefet Sela-Sheffy's call for a "comprehensive research project that centers on the complex factors concerning the agency of the practitioners [...], as those who perform these practices in their immediate [...] surroundings" (2011, p.2).

Furthermore, this research considers what Julie McDonough Dolmaya has suggested as an avenue for future research in terms of the “role translators play in [...] collaborative networks”, considering the issue of whether “translators, for instance, [are] given the same decision-making authority as other agents” (2018, p.357). This work does not claim to fully account for these lacunae in Translation Studies research, but it does contribute to addressing them, since performativity “can open new spaces for developing research in theatre and translation that are more aware of issues of both power and identity” (Marinetti, 2013, p.316). Both of these issues are inextricably linked to discussions of agency, further justifying an exploration of the benefits of applying a performative approach to studies of translator agency in theatre.

Another significant contribution of this work is the analysis of creative labour of women in publishing through the case study of Mirra Ginsburg in Chapter 3, which has been highlighted as an under-researched topic in existing scholarship (Wilson et al., 2024). While not the sole focus of this research, Ginsburg’s case study draws attention to the activities of a figure who is marginalised in two respects; as a translator and a woman. This analysis follows in the vein of Sara Sullam’s case study of the work of Gwenda David, who, like Ginsburg, was a Jewish Russian-to-English translator and literary scout in the Anglophone publishing industry (2024). In highlighting Ginsburg’s activities and agency in the sourcing, translation, and publication of Bulgakov’s work, this recognises the creative labour of a doubly invisible agent in the theatre of translation, paving the way for further such studies.

Finally, the bibliography of productions compiled as part of this research (see Klimas, 2025) is, to date, the most complete bibliography of Anglophone British and American staged productions of Bulgakov’s work. This both draws attention to the widespread influence of Bulgakov and highlights the contributions of individual theatre practitioners, revealing information about productions previously been neglected in scholarship. Specific examples of neglected productions include those staged in regional locations (i.e., outside of London and New York), amateur productions, student productions, and productions that may have accidentally been overlooked because of a change of play title. Thus, this bibliography has yielded many meaningful insights.

ix. Scope and definitions

The corpus of this study has been limited to British and American Anglophone staged productions of Bulgakov's work. While relevant productions were found in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and Northern Ireland, they were too few for an investigation of translator agency. However, this narrow geographical scope has allowed me to examine metropolitan, regional, amateur, and professional productions, (see Section viii), developing a more holistic picture of theatre translator agency. The STs studied were also limited to two original plays and two prose works. Bulgakov wrote twelve original plays and ten prose works, and it was not possible to analyse all these works, so some works are mentioned fleetingly, and are covered in less detail than *Dni Turbinykh* (*Days of the Turbins*), *Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh* (*Molière/A Cabal of Hypocrites*), *Master i Margarita*, and *Sobach'e serdtse* (*Heart of a Dog*).

In focusing this study of translator agency on the specialist area of theatre translation, this research addresses the traditional perception of “the stage play [...] as a work of literature”, whereby theatre translation can be assessed by the same ‘scholarly criteria’ as literary translation (Snell-Hornby, 2007, p.107). Trubiano has argued that considering translation as “a derivative literary form continues to obscure its importance as a creative artform supported by complex theoretical underpinnings” (2023, p.153). This is supported by Howard Davies, who directed three Bulgakov plays for the NT: “I don’t regard drama as literature. I regard drama as drama, it’s theatre. It’s a very different thing reading a text from seeing it performed on the stage” (*TheatreVoice*, 2010). Thus, this study follows the lead of both the theatre practitioners who interact with theatre translations and their translators, and Brodie (2022, p.423), by presenting theatre translation as a specialist category, related to, but significantly different from, literary translation. It also recognises the value of conducting studies on individual theatre translators.

This thesis does not seek to cast translators in an overwhelmingly positive light as heroes and the rest of the cast as villains attempting to limit translator involvement in theatre. Rather, it aims to provide a balanced account of translator/adaptor involvement in theatre, reflecting the true extent of

translator/adaptor labour in theatre, whether this meets traditional expectations of limited involvement or transcends the limitations of these expectations. To maintain balance, the case studies were limited to one British and one American translator/adaptor per production. However, Chapter 3 studies one British and one American translator, comparing them across a broader context, establishing the two as the Bulgakov translators who set the scene for subsequent Bulgakov translators/adaptors.

There are current ethical debates surrounding the study of Bulgakov, as an ethnic Russian (and perceived Russian ‘imperialist’, see Ukrainians’kij Institut Natsional’noj Pam’jati, 2024), born and raised in the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, under Russian Imperial rule. These follow previous debates on the controversy of his identity and position in the post-Soviet period (see Popovich, 1995; Nestruck, 2008), but there has been a renewed interest in the ethical implications of Bulgakov’s status in light of the ongoing Russian war against Ukraine (see Dearnley, 2024). This research does not aim to perpetuate a narrative of Russian imperialism by examining the work of a famous ethnic Russian, nor does it seek to enter ongoing debates regarding the question of Bulgakov’s nationality; that is beyond the scope of this research, though it is a question that merits further examination and will continue to be assessed from a postcolonial angle. For the purposes of this research, Bulgakov is considered as Soviet. While not a perfect definition, it is adequate for the purposes of this research. How scholars should navigate the study of Bulgakov and other writers from the former ‘provinces’ of the Russian Empire and Soviet Union (USSR) is still a grey area, though decentralised approaches are, rightly, gaining more traction (see, for example, Fowler, 2015).

It was also necessary to consider how to accurately categorise production genres in the case studies examined. Initially, it seemed that Marsh’s categorisation of “plays ‘after’ novels” in her own study of translated Russophone theatre was appropriate for this study (2020). However, ‘plays adapted from prose’ was chosen instead, since some of the works adapted for the stage were novellas rather than novels, so prose better encapsulated that nuance. Additionally, ‘adapted from’ provided a more accurate reflection of the focus on adaptors of Bulgakov’s prose in Chapter 5, as opposed to the vague term ‘after’. Finally, the literary and theatrical agents referenced in this thesis

are not to be understood as interchangeable with the term ‘agent’ as developed in sociology and Translation Studies scholarship. Instead, they constitute one type of agent within the complex networks in the theatre of translation.

x. Notes on translation and transliteration

All translations from German and Russian are my own, unless indicated otherwise. The transliteration style used to Romanise the Cyrillic alphabet of Russian is the updated Library of Congress System (LCS, 2012). This system has been used together with the ‘J-modification’, transliterating the letter ‘и’ as ‘i’ and ‘й’ as ‘j’ (Edgerton, 1989, p.99), to account for plural noun forms; e.g., in LCS, the possessive pronoun ‘свой’ (my, masculine) is transliterated in the same way as ‘свои’ (their), leading to potential misunderstandings. Edgerton’s system remedies this issue, by transliterating the two words as ‘svoj’ (my, masculine) and ‘svoi’ (their), differentiating them. Furthermore, the style of transliteration employed here omits diacritics, and is thus stylistically compliant with American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) encoding conventions (see Wittern, 2013). However, in instances where a spelling is considered common usage, such as ‘Gogol’ or ‘Gorky’, these are employed.

xi. Thesis structure

This thesis explores the complex, often-overlapping roles and agency of Bulgakov translators and adaptors in theatre, through a novel performative framework. This research addresses three core questions: 1) To what extent does collaboration occur between the translator/adaptor and other agents, what is the nature of this collaboration, and how is it affected by external factors? 2) How does the translator/adaptor (re)construct their own identity as a Bulgakov translator and how does this relate to trends in identity construction? 3) How does the terminology used to describe translators/adaptors affect their actions and sense of identity?

Chapter 1 introduces the novel performative framework underpinning the study, and defines *actor* and *agent* in relation to *performance* and

performativity. It also develops the novel approach of ‘performative steps’ and an adaptation of Bermann’s “theater of translation”, together with conceptualisations of the ‘fifth wall’ in theatre, considering the benefits of this approach. Chapter 2 demonstrates the practical applications of the performative theoretical framework proposed in Chapter 1. This framework is realised through a mixed methodological approach, developing the performative steps and theatre of translation, providing practical examples.

The empirical section chronologically accounts for Bulgakov translator/adaptor behaviour. Chapter 3 explores how Michael Glenny and Mirra Ginsburg set the scene as early Bulgakov translators, through their interactions with other agents involved in the theatre of translation. This chapter uses under-researched archival materials to consider how these two translators established the social script for subsequent Bulgakov translators through their repeated actions. Chapter 4 analyses translators/adaptors of Bulgakov’s original plays, using archival resources and interviews to assess their behaviour against traditional expectations of their roles, and implications for their agency. Chapter 5 examines plays adapted from Bulgakov’s prose, exploring how his ‘dramatic’ prose influences adaptors. This analysis, based on survey responses and an interview, compares practices across the genres of Bulgakov’s original plays and plays adapted from his prose.

Finally, Chapter 6 concludes the thesis, summarising the research findings by responding to the three project research questions, ending with an overview of the implications of this study for future research, and a recommendation of potential future avenues for research.

Chapter 1: Defining performativity and translator agency

This thesis aims to provide clarity to the complex and multifaceted issue of translator agency in theatre, which has been obfuscated by the lack of a consistent definition of agency in Translation Studies. Providing clarity to this key, yet poorly-defined, concept enables an assessment of the roles played by individual translators in Anglophone British and American staged productions of Bulgakov's work. This research is driven by the ontological question of what it means to be a Bulgakov translator in theatre, in terms of the specific qualities of this role, and the implications of this classification for a discussion of agency.

To achieve these goals, this thesis develops a novel framework based on performative theory, adopting an interpretivist epistemological stance. This approach is a meaningful lens through which to consider the subjectivity of each Bulgakov translator's experience, determined by their own unique background. It also facilitates an exploration of how translators continuously engage in what Peter J. Freeth has termed the "performance of translatorship" (2024), considering how this performance empowers translators to (re)construct their respective identities over time (Bermann, 2014).

Initially, concrete definitions are provided for *performance* and *performativity*, informing my proposed definitions of the contentious terms of *actor* and *agent*. This is achieved by considering not only the differences, but also the degree of conceptual overlap between them, as visualised through Venn diagrams. Key concepts of the 'performative turn', which has dominated Translation Studies discourse of the past decade (see Bigliazzi et al., 2013; Wolf, 2017), are expanded upon to meet the needs of this research into translator agency in theatre. Namely, Bermann's discussion of 'social' scripts and the "theater [sic] of translation" (2014), supplemented by what I introduce as 'performative steps' of the creative process.

Finally, the implications of breaking the 'fourth wall' for translator agency are examined, informing my reimagination of the 'fifth wall' as a fluid space of collaboration. This is crucial for recognising the impact of the dynamic nature of the performance of Bulgakov translators and adaptors for studies of theatre translator agency. The inherent fluidity of theatre, as an environment where

one actor may embody multiple or varying roles, ironically, provides a more stable method for considering the fluidity of the Bulgakov translator/adaptor's performance. Drawing upon performative concepts allows a consideration of the implications of this 'translatorial performance' for the agency of figures involved in theatre translation. This offers new insights, which provide clarity to what has been a notoriously troubled notion in Translation Studies – agency.

1.1 Defining performativity

In the past decade, discussions of a 'performative turn' have gained traction in Translation Studies discourse (see Marinetti, 2013; Pacheco Aguilar and Guénette, 2021; van der Watt, 2021). Michaela Wolf promotes the application of a performative approach to Translation Studies research as it allows scholars to explore "the conditions of the translation process" and "the scope of action generated through this process" (2017, p.38). Despite the growing scholarly interest in the 'performative turn', it has proven notoriously difficult to define. Generally, *performance* is understood as "the doing of an action", often in the context of acting out a play in theatre (*Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*, 1989a). Meanwhile, *performativity* is defined as the "fact or quality of being performative" and "the fact or quality of performing" (*OED*, 1989b), which does not clearly explain this key term. The definition of these terms has long been the subject of debate, which will now be explored as I establish my own definitions of *performance* and *performativity* in the context of this research.

Shannon Jackson avers that "P-words of various sorts – couched among various prefixes and suffixes – circulate in the contemporary academic discourse of various disciplines in the humanities and social sciences" (2004, p.3). This is symptomatic of Richard Schechner's admission that performativity is a "term hard to pin down" (2020, p.231). Bert O. States also highlights this terminological confusion: "[t]o adopt the performance lingo, we might say that a performative event is not exactly a performance but it is not exactly *not* a performance" (original emphasis, 1996, p.15). Indeed, Jonathan Bollen recognises the "intricate complexities of wilful performance and performative force" and "the difficult of distinguishing between the two" (1997, p.114). This

points to what Bollen refers to as “the instability of the relationship between performance and performativity” (1997, p.112), all proving a need to develop a concrete understanding of performativity in relation to translator agency.

Thirty years ago, Andrew Parker and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick described a theoretical shift which “pushed performativity onto center stage” (1995, p.1), establishing a clear link between performativity and theatrical terminology. Here, they criticised “the oblique intersection between performativity and the loose cluster of theatrical practices, relations and traditions known as performance” as “[o]ne of the most fecund, as well as the most under-articulated” of interdisciplinary theory” (1995, p.1). Elin Diamond has lamented that “performance discourse, and its new theoretical partner, ‘performativity’,” were “dominating critical discussion almost to the point of stupefaction” (1996, p.2). According to Diamond, performativity “must be rooted in the materiality and historical density of performance” (1996, p.5). Schechner demonstrates the type of ‘under-articulated’ explanation of *performance* and *performativity* criticised by Parker and Kosofsky Sedgwick, stating: “[p]erformativity – or, commonly, ‘performance’ – is everywhere in life” (2003, p.326). Although these concepts are inextricably linked, Butler warns against using them interchangeably, since “the reduction of performativity to performance would be a mistake” (1993, p.234).

However, more recent scholarship has recognised the two as separate terms, and the complexity of defining them. Katherine Johnson notes that performance and performativity are “equivocal words and concepts, with diverse connotations in different fields and contexts” (2019, p.169). Johnson claims that “while all forms of reenactment can be productively analyzed [sic] as performance, many reenactments are not theater [sic]” (2019, p.169). This implies that, as a repeated action, ‘reenactment’ is performativity, rather than performance in the theatrical sense. That being said, Johnson does not offer a definition of performativity beyond “literally, the quality of being performative”, revealing little advancement in defining performativity since the 1989 *OED* entries. Instead, Johnson reviews the definitions provided in the seminal works of J.L. Austin (1962) and Butler on performativity theory (2009). There is no clear understanding of these terms, with scholars exploiting this ‘unstable oppositio[n]’ to “delineate their own interests, to target others, and to stake

new claims” (Jackson, 2004, p.188), and there is still a need for a concrete definition of *performativity*, as distinct from *performance*.

Agency is arguably the most fruitful context for distinguishing between *performance* and *performativity*, providing a lens for examining the specific, deliberate (performative) acts of individuals and how these acts contribute to shaping outcomes, moving beyond a sole focus on the broader, often less conscious, constitutive processes (performance). Cindy Paton distinguishes between “bodies-in-performance” and “their performative acts” (1995, p.181). The former indicates a lack of identity, simply unidentified ‘bodies’ without the power to effect change. Meanwhile, the latter implies a degree of power in performing an act, resulting in social change. Paton reinforces this assessment, viewing *performance* as “less labile, less subject to intervention by resistant forces”, while *performativity* concerns “an actant within a place in which the constitution and reproduction of citational chains [something which is recognisable and can be repeated] is constitutive of power” (1995, p.183).

Paton regards the difference between *performance* and *performativity* as a question of agency; a lack of “intervention by resistant forces” indicates a lack of power to act, or agency, whereas the implicit power in the “reproduction of citational chains” is clearly associated with the ability to intentionally effect a series of actions. For example, an actor delivering lines in a play during rehearsal involves reciting the script exactly as written and fulfilling a prescribed role. This is a pre-defined action, without explicit personal reinterpretation or subversion and is thus a type of performance. However, a protestor quoting a famous speech or re-enacting a well-known symbolic gesture during a demonstration is a conscious choice, aiming to evoke particular emotions, draw parallels, or mobilise support for their cause, which can be considered an act of agency.

This understanding of performance and performativity, in relation to agency, leads to one of the key questions posed by Butler in ‘Burning acts’: “[i]f performativity requires a power to effect or enact what one names, then who will be the ‘one’ with such a power, and how will such a power be thought?” (1996, p.204). In turn, this links directly to one of the key questions of this research, which concerns the factors affecting a translator’s agency in relation to Anglophone British and American staged productions of Bulgakov’s work.

These factors affecting translator agency can be determined by the questions ‘what?’ and ‘who?’. Thus, it can be ascertained that there is a fundamental difference between *performance* and *performativity*, though they are related concepts, as is demonstrated in Figure 1.1.

As Figure 1.1 reveals, the common thread between *performance* and *performativity* is that both indicate that an action is being carried out, though that is where the similarities end; *performance* is a singular, ephemeral act, which occurs once and can never be repeated in exactly the same way. On the other hand, *performativity*, “is not a singular act, but a repetition and a ritual [...], understood, in part, as a culturally sustained temporal duration” (Butler, 1989, xv). However, some activities fall under both categories; for example, theatre translation is both a performance, since it involves active engagement with a ST over a limited period (the production project), and performative, since it is a continuous action (across multiple projects) resulting in social change, continuously (re)constructing the identity of the theatre translator.

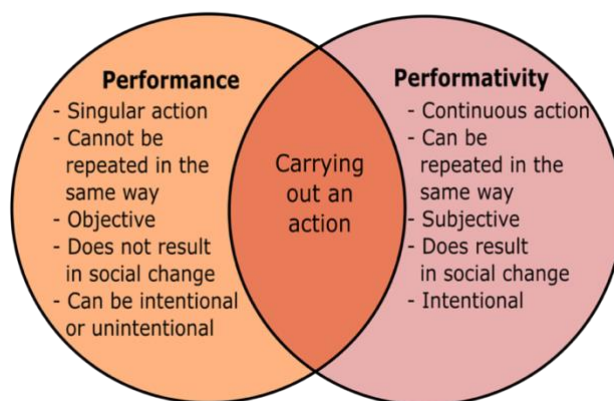


Figure 1.1 – Venn diagram of the similarities and differences between *performance* and *performativity*

Furthermore, *performance* has an objective, whereas *performativity* is an ongoing subjective process, concerning how the subject is both formed by existing parameters and behaves or ‘acts’ within these parameters. While *performance* can consist of either intentional or unintentional actions, *performativity* is a process of repetition, whereby social identities and norms are continually constructed and reinforced through actions performed with intent. This demonstrates Marinetti’s definition of “[t]he characteristic of being

performative”, which she views “as pertaining to performance” and “carries with it a foregrounding of ‘agency’, whereby cultural signs are not read or transmitted by mediators but constructed, and co-constructed” through ‘action, interaction and relation” (2013, p.310). Therefore, performativity is an especially useful lens through which to view the agency of Bulgakov translators/adaptors.

I derive my understanding of the terms ‘actor’ and ‘agent’ from this understanding of the distinction between the equally contested terms of *performance* and *performativity*. This understanding underpins the performative approach to theatre translator agency which forms the basis of this work; *performativity* has the power to challenge and disrupt existing norms and power structures, which is a useful framework for reimagining the complex issue translator agency in theatre, as a concept encompassing issues of power, status, and identity. This discussion will now consider how the definition of *performativity* established here can be applied to offer a more concrete definition of the terms ‘actor’ and ‘agent’ in Translation Studies.

1.2 Using performativity to define ‘actor’ and ‘agent’ in Translation Studies

In order to explore the complex theme of translator agency in theatre, it is important to establish a concrete definition of agency in Translation Studies. This is especially necessary for the study of agency in theatre translation, since the vocabulary of performance (from which performativity theory originates) requires a clear distinction between ‘actor’ in the theatrical sense and ‘actor’ as it is understood in sociology, as a term connected to the concept of agency. However, just as scholars are yet to establish clear, consistent definitions of *performance* and *performativity*, there has been a lack of consensus among scholars in defining *actor* and *agent*, and *agency* more broadly. Part of the issue in defining the broader concept of *agency* in Translation Studies results from its application to both individual translators and the translation process.

As Jeremy Munday and Jacob Blakesley put it, the term *agent* “has recently been a key, but ill-defined concept in Translation Studies” (2016, p.5). They assert that this issue has arisen from the application of this term to

address a diverse and complex range of topics, from translatorial ‘habitus’ to “a whole range of intermediaries between translator and end user”, to issues of power (2016, p.5). This mirrors Jackson’s discussion of the issues surrounding existing definitions of *performance* and *performativity* in Section 1.1, with scholars adapting vocabulary to suit their own agendas, regardless of the resultant terminological confusion. The lack of consistent definitions for *agent* can be attributed to its wide range of interpretations and the complex interplay between factors governing this multiplicity of definitions.

Existing sociological studies of translator agency in Translation Studies tend to favour one of two theoretical approaches: either *habitus* theory, proposed by Bourdieu (1977), or Latour’s ANT (2005). While some aspects of these models are useful for examining translator agency, they have been criticised for opposing issues: *habitus* for adhering too rigidly to structure and not allowing considerations of social action (King, 2000) and ANT for disregarding the significance of hierarchical structures in determining translator agency (Elder-Vass, 2008). Performativity theory emerges as a means to consider structure as a significant, yet dynamic force, which both shapes and is shaped by translator agency. The potential benefits of applying performativity theory to provide concrete understandings of the ill-defined terms of *actor* and *agent* in Translation Studies will now be ascertained.

The question of who or what constitutes an *actor* and *agent*, and the differences between them, remains a highly contested issue, which has parallels with the *performance* versus *performativity* debate outlined in Section 1.1. The primary issue in defining these two terms is the degree of overlap between them. For example, Kristina Solum (2017) herself acknowledges that she uses *actor* and *agent* interchangeably, which has parallels with Schechner’s interchangeable use of *performance* and *performativity*, as discussed in Section 1.1. This is problematic, as she provides separate definitions for these terms, defining *agent* as “human actors endowed with agency and intentionality”, seemingly aligning with Buzelin, and *actor* as “agents as well as other actors that do not exert their power intentionally”, indicating that not every actor is an agent (2017, p.43). Inevitably, this leads to a lack of coherence in her theoretical deployment of these terms.

In response to the inherent tensions in Solum's definitions, theatre is a useful way to break down the *actor* versus *agent* debate; as previously mentioned, the vocabulary of performance demands a clear definition of *actor*, and Solum's unclear definitions highlight the need for clarification of these crucial terms. This need is especially apparent in theatre translation studies, given the established understanding of what constitutes an 'actor' in theatre, i.e., a person who performs a role onstage, and an agent as an intermediary, representing the interests of their client (an actor) in negotiations with theatres.

Therefore, as a direct response to Kaindl's assertion that "a clear theorization of the concept [of agency] is still largely lacking" (2021, p.20), I draw upon the definitions of *performance* and *performativity* developed in Section 1.1 in order to form my own definitions of *actor* and *agent*. These definitions, and their intersection, are depicted in Figure 1.2. In the same way that *performance* and *performativity* were found to overlap, since both concern the carrying out of an action, *actor* and *agent* share the common characteristic of possessing the ability to act.

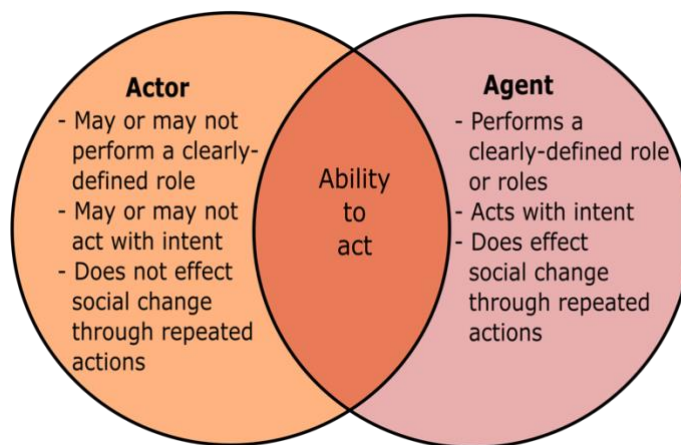


Figure 1.2 – Venn diagram of the similarities and differences between *actor* and *agent*

Performance theory has given rise to the notion that "[a]ll [theatrical] actors are performers, but not all performers are actors" (Schechner, 2003/2013, p.208), which is a fruitful analogy to apply to the terms *actor* and *agent*; while a theatrical *actor* portrays a specific character (or characters, if multi-roling) in their performance, a performer may not have a clearly-defined role, though they do perform some sort of action. Similarly, in the context of theatre

translation, all *agents* are arguably *actors* or performers, but not all *actors* are *agents*; an *agent* is a type of *actor*, but not every *actor* can be considered an *agent*. An *actor* may have the *potential* to act, but it is the *agent* who *does* act, and performs a specific role. Implicit in this theorisation of agency is the power to act performatively – in other words, to effect change and shape social realities through intentional actions.

Schechner's understanding of actors and performers in performance theory guides my own definitions: in the context of this research, *actor* is understood as an individual with the potential for action, who may or may not act with intent. Consequently, agents with the *ability* to act intentionally include figures involved in the creative process of theatre, such as playwrights, actors and directors. Meanwhile, *agent* refers to figures, or performers, who have the *potential* to perform a specific act and who *do* perform that act. In the context of this thesis, this refers to translators and adaptors. It is acknowledged that 'actor' would be the more obvious term to be used to refer to individuals who act performatively in theatre. However, my conceptualisation of *actor* aligns with *performance*, while *agent* corresponds to *performativity*, since all actors are engaged in a type of performance, but only agents act performatively.

To further clarify this stance, other *actors* involved in the theatre production process, such as directors and funding bodies, have the power to influence the actions of the translator. However, these *actors* do not perform the act of translation – it is only the translator who has both the *potential* to act in this capacity and who *does* complete this specific action. In a performative sense, the repeated behaviour of the translator constitutes translatorial identity, which cannot be achieved by other *actors*. Although other *actors* cannot performatively construct translatorial identity, they do have the power to construct their own identity for their own role, such as that of director. This links to discussions of agency in sociology, whereby having the power, or capacity, to act, does not automatically equate to the completion of an action.

Unlike Solum, I posit that these labels cannot be used interchangeably, using performative terminology: the role performed by the translator, as an *agent*, (the act of translation), cannot be performed practically by other actors, such as the director. The translator, as an *agent*, may perform multiple roles in the creative process, owing to the specific skills they possess and for which

they are commissioned, not just as a linguist, but also as an expert on foreign culture. A theatrical actor, for instance, is not commissioned to act as a translator and are therefore not able complete this task. That is not to say that the translator is an actor in theatrical terms – such an equation of roles would certainly be a misrepresentation – as that would imply that they are already positioned in a visible role onstage. Instead, my definition of *actor* refers to an individual who performs an act across a limited time period. Meanwhile, *agent* refers to the figure who not only has the *potential* to complete an action, but who *does* complete it, reinforcing their identity through a repetition of certain behaviours. Therefore, the term *agent* takes on a performative quality.

Having highlighted the significant parallels between performativity and agency, I posit that a performative approach is an especially useful prism through which to resolve existing tensions inherent in recent definitions of *actor* and *agent* in Translation Studies scholarship. Since performativity theory encompasses notions of power and identity, which are crucial concepts in the discussion of translator agency, along with status, it is a particularly appropriate theoretical approach to apply to the study of translator agency in theatre.

In establishing my own definitions of *actor* and *agent* in the context of theatre translation by drawing upon relevant parallels with performativity theory, I have demonstrated that there is potential to reconsider how agency is understood in Translation Studies through this disciplinary intersection. This also highlighted the need for a clear distinction between the performance terms *actor* and *agent*, which have significantly different meanings in theatre and sociology. Section 1.3 uses the definitions established in this section to discuss the metaphorical ‘social’ script, originating from the theatrical object of the playscript. Thus, this will make the case for a performative approach to studies of the complex issue of translator agency in theatre.

1.3 Developing the ‘social’ script of translators

Building upon the definitions established in Sections 1.1 and 1.2, it is necessary to lay the theoretical foundations for a performative framework as a lens through which to clarify the nature and extent of translator agency in

theatre. Thus, the discussion now turns to the metaphors of the 'social' drama and the 'social' script, to demonstrate the power of these metaphors in making sense of the complex matter of translator agency in staged productions of Bulgakov's works. Understanding agency in this way challenges existing narratives that locate the translator at the periphery of the creative process.

1.3.1 Performing everyday life: The 'social' drama

Sixty-six years ago, Erving Goffman established a dramaturgical approach to social life, in order to understand the complex interactions between humans and accounting for these behaviours (1959). Goffman views the 'performance' of social (everyday) life as enacted by 'teams' of participants, i.e., 'social actors', in three separate 'regions': 'front stage', 'back stage' and 'off stage' (1959, p.107). This theory considers figures in social life to be engaged in a continuous process of 'impression management' (1959, p.208). 'Impression management' refers to how an actor (in a sociological sense) transmits a certain 'impression' to others through performance, which is then interpreted by others as the identity of the actor in that specific context. Performers are judged against this constructed 'impression', in terms of whether they meet the standards imposed upon them and which they impose on others in repeated social interactions, forming the basis of Goffman's 'dramatic realization' in everyday life (1959, p.30). These concepts of 'impression management' and 'dramatic realization' are also performative, through the repetition of certain actions, resulting in a desired outcome – the construction of a specific identity.

This performative metaphor of life as performance is developed further by Victor Turner, who imagined the performative ritual of the 'social drama' as a space where conflict (social action through repeated performance), effects social change (1974, p.37). Turner's view of the social drama as a space for repeated social actions (demonstrating conflict between resistance and norms), is corroborated by Butler, who infers that "social action requires a performance which is *repeated*" (original emphasis, 1988, p.526). Such conflict could include the complexity of the multiple agents involved in the theatre of translation and how they use their respective degrees of power to effect social

change, to borrow Turner's words. Thus, the foundations have already been laid for a discussion of everyday social life as a form of theatre or performance, facilitating the discussion of the social act of translation itself as a performance.

1.3.2 The 'social' script and translator agency

The transformative power of the theatre in transforming text into performance (Worthen, 1998, p.1100) provides an apt metaphor through which to examine the complex issue of translator agency in theatre production. In Translation Studies, there has been a growing focus on sociological research that has made "translators and interpreters more visible as social actors", in the tendency of researchers to focus on the interaction between agents and the issues of the power structures in which agents operate (Inghilleri, 2005, p.142). Bermann's assertions that "everyday life is often called a social 'performance'" and "the script itself exists in society long before we arrive on the scene" (2014, p.291) are insightful in this study on the agency of Bulgakov translators/adaptors in theatre. The 'script' can be regarded as the cue for our own everyday performances, which is just as applicable to scholars and practising translators as to theatre practitioners. Drawing inspiration from Bermann, the script for the translator's role has long existed, and has often been rewritten in society, through years of translated practice (as a performative action).

Moreover, Edith Grossman avers that "translation [...] is a kind of interpretive performance, bearing the same relationship to the original text as the actor's work does to the script" (2010, p.110). Here, Grossman directly compares the act of translation, as performed by the translator (the *agent* according to my definition in Section 1.2), and an actor's performance in conventional theatre practice. Both Grossman and Bermann's postulations hinge on the metaphor of the theatrical playscript as a catalyst for instigating interpretive practices, thereby creating a new reality. This sets the scene for a performative approach to examining the role and associated behaviour of the Bulgakov translator in theatre, employing the metaphor of the social script.

In considering the behaviour of individual translators and adaptors, in relation to the (re)writing of social scripts, it is necessary to note that it is “instructive to consider the extent to which this is done, how this is done, the differences between scripts, and so on” (Manning, 1991, p.78). Therefore, it is not enough to merely consider the existence of a ‘script’ governing translator behaviour. Instead, it is necessary for this thesis to analyse and compare scripts, by comparing translatorial roles in Anglophone British and American staged productions of Bulgakov’s work. Performance requires a setting, a backdrop, which is provided before any dialogue in a playscript. This Anglo-American context provides the backdrop to this study of translator agency and the role they play in bringing Bulgakov to foreign stages.

To that end, I introduce the ‘social’ script as a non-identical twin to the playscript of theatre. These two concepts are compared in Figure 1.3, which demonstrates that, like the historical textual artefact of the theatrical script, or playscript, the unwritten ‘social’ script functions as a guide to actors (here individuals involved in staging Bulgakov’s theatre in translation) on how they should perform the actions expected of their role, indicating the elevated status of the ‘social’ script.

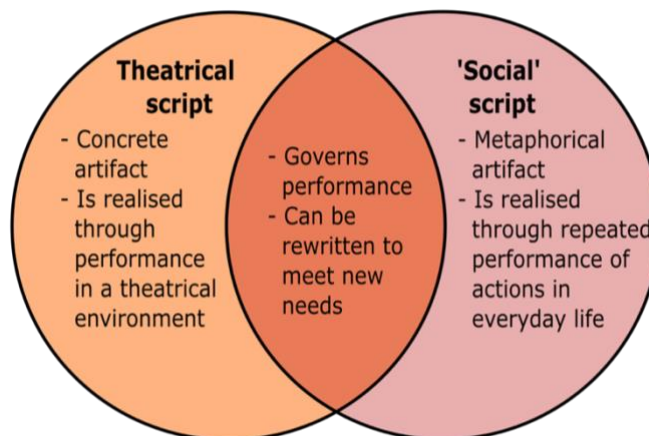


Figure 1.3 – Venn diagram of the similarities and differences between the *theatrical script* and *'social' script*

William Worthen alludes to the performative power of theatre in terms of how it “recasts and so re-creates the script in another idiom” (1998, p.1100). In the same way, the performative nature of translatorial action recasts and so re-creates the ‘social’ script with other normalised translatorial behaviours. In

Butlerian terms, these behaviours writing the 'social' script can be regarded as "an act that has been going on before one arrived on the scene" (1988, p.526). However, it only becomes a reality when performed by agents, indicating the subordinate status of the 'social' script to the agents. Performative acts may disrupt existing 'social' scripts and rewrite the (unwritten) rules.

Reconceptualising agency in translation as a performative act, based on multiple metaphorical 'scripts' for performing the role, acknowledges that there are multiple possible ways to perform the role, which have been shared in various ways by different agents over the years. It also provides a concrete point of reference and a clear visualisation of this complex issue in theatre. This metaphor also challenges the established 'script' in theatre, which would typically cast translators in the role of a 'subservient' agent (Simeoni, 1995, p.452), who is "constantly relegated backstage" (Simeoni, 1998, p.12). As Goffman theorised in his dramaturgical approach to social life, the performer has the power to portray themselves in a certain light, as they are the one realising (and reinforcing) their own status through 'impression management'. Thus, translators and adaptors have the power to construct their own identity.

In relation to the role of the Bulgakov translator/adaptor in Anglophone British and American staged productions, the translator both writes and adheres to the 'social' script developed by years of translation practice. Considering how the translator (re)constructs their own identity as a Bulgakov translator/adaptor over time, it is necessary to explore how translators have shaped and been shaped by the years of practice contained in the 'social' script. Theoretically, this thesis moves away from the Bourdieusian emphasis on the translator's internalisation of and adherence to fixed social structures, as reflected in their everyday practice. Instead, it considers translator behaviour as dynamic, changing to meet the needs of different situations across the page-to-stage process, as part of the fluid construct of the 'fifth wall'.

This work also seeks to understand how 'social' scripts relate to two genres: Bulgakov's original plays and adaptations of his prose, to account for the established genre of works intended to be performed and a newer genre that renders works intended for performance, respectively. This approach follows Phil Manning's suggested focus on "the differences between scripts" (1991, p.78). As Kaindl argues,

[t]he investigation of the personal response of a translator to social structures, cultural traditions and ideological values helps to detect the cracks, conflicts and contradictions in the grand narratives of translation. (2021, p.23)

This humanised approach to translator agency “promote[s] a holistic understanding of translation” (2021, p.23), with the personal stories of individuals serving to challenge assumptions of translatorial performances in theatre. The ‘social’ script serves a further function, in that the ‘social’ script and the agents who realise it are themselves open to critique and, crucially, change. This is akin to a style of theatre which encourages active spectators to openly engage with and critique the performance which they are exposed to – the Brechtian ‘Epic Theatre’, which will be explored in Section 1.5. This essentially invites participants to disrupt the script and rewrite the narrative on translatorial behaviour and how the role of the translator is perceived in theatre.

This approach also has implications for the investigation of the characteristics of a Bulgakov translator, and if there are trends across social scripts. The existence of social scripts implies that there is some level of consistency, and the extent to which this is true will be examined in the comparison of the social scripts of Bulgakov translators and adaptors in Chapters 3-5.

1.4 Establishing a performative approach to translator agency in theatre

The relationship between the roles played by agents in theatre, and the labels attached to them, is garnering greater interest in Translation Studies. Roger Baines et al. (2016) recognise that scholars in both North America and Europe (including Britain and the US) “have looked at translation as a paradigm for the exploration of blurred boundaries between national dramatic traditions, theatre histories and the set role of theatre makers” (p.1). Of particular interest here is the use of translation to examine the “set roles of theatre makers” through the blurring of boundaries. The very blurring of boundaries between roles implies that an individual may embody multiple roles in the course of one production.

Moreover, Pacheco Aguilar and Guénette have proposed the benefits of approaches that ‘disrupt’ existing narratives by reconsidering translation practice as a “situated and performative enactmen[t]” (2021, p.18). They posit that considering the intersections between these terms offers “an expanded view of the field” and encourages “new interpretations of well-established concepts” that remove boundaries, focussing instead on enacted performances as a site of change (2021, p.18).

Regarding these blurred boundaries, Brodie infers that “[m]odern translation theory locates translation within cultural performativity”, since it raises the question of “whether translation itself is a creative function” and how it blurs “the divisions between origination and representation” (2016, p.84). This reinforces the notion that the act of translation, as well as the role of the translator performing that act, is not easily classified. It also has implications for specific issues relating to agency in terms of creativity, authorship and ownership, which Sections 1.4.1 and 1.4.2 explore in greater detail. This reveals a scholarly need for an analytical framework that takes these ‘blurred boundaries’ into account. The performative approach adopted in this research breaks down the traditional barriers to studies of agency by considering all participants involved, including the translator. This is achieved by implementing performative steps to identify the roles played by translators across various stages of the creative process, which will now be introduced.

1.4.1 Performative steps

According to Arvi Tavast, “translatorial action covers the whole process of communicating across cultures, starting with negotiations between the initiator and the translator, who knowingly undertakes to perform translation” (2024, p.25). That is to say that the performance of translators is not limited to the act of translation or even the rehearsal process, instead beginning with the initial stage of theatres/companies commissioning the translator.

It is necessary to develop a theoretical tool that enables a clear visualisation of the extent to which translators perform different roles across different steps of the creative process of bringing Bulgakov’s work from

Russian page to Anglophone British and American stages. In this vein, I propose the concept of performative steps as a means of breaking down the supposed barriers between the three steps of production and discussing their implications for translator agency in theatre. These three steps are broken down as: 1) Pitching, 2) Writing, and 3) Rehearsal, as seen in Figure 1.4.

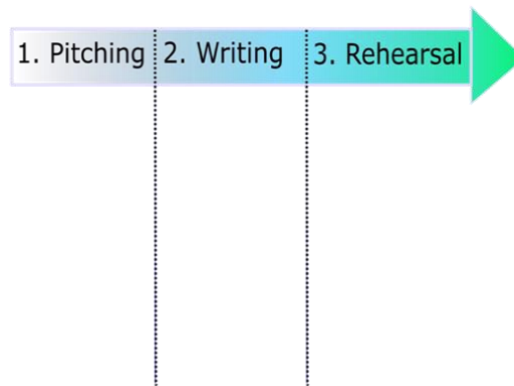


Figure 1.4 – The proposed visualisation for ‘performative steps’ in the theatre of translation

It is acknowledged that these performative steps are not always performed in a linear manner as part of a unilateral process, ending with rehearsals. For example, the writing process may continue during rehearsals, with edits being made to draft scripts based on issues uncovered when actors perform based the script, which may then require a return to the second performative step. In terms of the duration of the steps, some theatre translators may discuss their work online, for example, after the production run has ended, which would necessitate the inclusion of an additional performative step to reflect this additional role. However, the performative steps outlined here end with rehearsal, since the Bulgakov translators and adaptors studied did not apparently engage in activities relating to their respective TTs, post-rehearsal.

The first performative step of ‘pitching’ is meant in terms of marketing, as this stage of the creative process is “an attempt to sell [or pitch] a concept, idea or product” (*Oxford Dictionary of Marketing*, 2016). In this ‘marketing’ process, the pitcher (here, the translator/adaptor) proposes the project to the business (the theatre company), who then determines whether it is a project which can be sold to audiences, as reflected by ticket sales (see Espasa’s discussion of saleability, 2001). It would be idealistic to view this performative

step as being purely motivated by creativity and artistic vision – the success of the pitcher in this context depends on the company's assessment of the commercial and pragmatic viability of the proposed project. This role remains publicly invisible, occurring behind the scenes, though it changes significantly across the case studies of Bulgakov translator/adaptors examined. Generally, theatre translators are commissioned by companies rather than being pitchers in their own right (see Chapter 4), but the majority of the adaptors analysed in Chapter 5 demonstrate involvement in this performative step.

The second performative step of 'writing' is a space that invites collaboration between translators as rewriters of the ST, the ST author (whether through direct contact or indirectly, through the ST) and potentially other figures such as directors, Artistic Directors, adaptors, and actors, depending on the approach implemented in each production. The traditional "assumption of the existence of a singular and unified human artist figure" (Zeilinger, 2024, p.61), whose work is solitary, has long been dispelled as a myth by scholars, who have emphasised the collaborative nature of the creative process, which involves multiple agents (see Section b). Indeed, it is unhelpful to view the Bulgakov translator as performing their role in this solitary manner precisely because creative agency is shared among many individuals in theatre; both translation and theatre are inherently social acts, the realisation of which are dependent upon interactions between multiple agents. Zeilinger expands on these views, asserting that creative agency

encompasses a wide range of issues, including the ability of an agent to express themselves creatively, their ability to claim authorship of the resulting artwork, and their ability to exert any measure of control over the artwork's continued existence as well as its ownership and distribution. (2024, p.61)

This interpretation of creative agency in terms of authorship, creativity, and control over the TT is relevant to the experiences of the individual Bulgakov translator/adaptors studied in this work; the agency of individual theatre translators/adaptors varies across each of the issues mentioned by Zeilinger, across not just the second performative step, but also the third performative step.

Finally, the third performative step is that of ‘rehearsal’. Rehearsals, as conceptualised in performance theory, are an inherently creative and collaborative space (cf. Marsden, 2022). As alluded to in the discussion of the second performative step, this collaboration has implications for the ability of individuals to influence the rehearsal process; theatre director and researcher Robert Marsden poses the question: “[h]ow does the playwright directly (or indirectly) inform production and rehearsal choices?” (2022, p.2). When considering the rehearsal of Bulgakov’s work in a British or American context, this requires the addition of the question: how does the translator/adaptor directly (or indirectly) inform production and rehearsal choices?

As Marsden highlights, this performative step primarily concerns “creating the world of the play” and the voices of the agents involved in realising this world “are woven into the text” (2022, p.2). Therefore, this third performative step considers the capacity/capacities in which the Bulgakov translator/adaptor is, or is not, involved in this creative process. It also invites a discussion of whether it is possible to track the abstract concept of individual agency across each performative step, particularly in terms of creativity, authorship, and ownership, which result from collaborations in theatre.

Aaltonen comments that “not all translators are granted equal power by the theatrical system” (1997, p.91). This disparity between the experiences of translators across different settings, both temporal and spatial, highlights the need to compare the social scripts of the figures studied, as asserted by Manning in Section 1.3.2. Thus, the analysis of the roles played by each individual across these performative steps considers three key concepts: *status*, *power*, and *agency*. ‘Status’ refers to the position occupied by the translator within the theatrical hierarchy, ‘power’ refers to their ability to influence decision-making processes, usually determined by their status, and ‘agency’ is the extent to which they are endowed with the ability to act across the three performative steps, as enabled by a combination of *power* and *status*.

A performative approach to translator agency based on the structure presented in Figure 1.4 facilitates an investigation of how translators (re)construct their identities across the various performative steps of the creative process of theatre, to meet the demands of each performative step. This concept draws upon Bulgakov’s own experiences as a writer and

dramatist; as Anatolij Smelianskij explains, “[i]n 1926, Bulgakov told P.S. Popov how, for him, prose and dramaturgy were like the right and left hand of a pianist” (1986, p.40). Bulgakov’s description of how he viewed his own work implies that he used the skills acquired both from his work as a writer and as a dramatist in his overall performance throughout his career.

Kaindl notes that “[p]utting the translator center [sic] stage also enables us to show which (life) paths lead to translation and what role or significance translation can play in a person’s life” (2021, p.23), indicating that the performance of translators may be influenced by their other experiences. The performative steps developed here consider how the cast members examined in this thesis (either as the cast of translators of Bulgakov’s original plays or the cast of adaptors staging his prose) draw upon skills from different aspects of their professional life to perform in the various roles outlined across performative steps, to meet various demands in the theatre of translation.

1.4.2 A new perspective on the ‘theatre of translation’

Bermann coined the “theater [sic] of translation” as part of a performative take on translation in her chapter ‘Performing translation’ (2014, pp.285-297). However, she does not provide an explicit definition of this metaphor, beyond outlining how a performance poem “presents translation as an ongoing act, a performing that engages reader or audience as much as translators themselves” (p.286). Despite the lack of clear definition, as with the other terms previously explored in this chapter, this metaphor has the potential to draw attention to theatre translation and the performative power of Bulgakov translators and adaptors in theatre, which will now form the basis of discussion.

Wolf has argued the need for translators to question the extent to which “we are background actors in the sense of extras, or protagonists” (2017, p.38). Identifying Bulgakov translators and adaptors in this way could be expanded into other conventional roles in theatre, such as understudies and the stereotypical figures of the hero, the villain, the fool, or even gender-specific roles. Where a celebrity playwright-adaptor is involved, a translator can typically be regarded as their understudy, playing second fiddle to the celebrity

playwright-adaptor in the theatre hierarchy. These stereotypes are useful for visualising the role of specific agents bringing Bulgakov to Anglophone theatre audiences in the “theatre of translation”, as it is understood in this thesis.

Other scholars have also set the scene for constructing a ‘theatre of translation’ as a theoretical space in which to probe translator agency (see the discussion of Brodie’s work in Section vi). Angela Locatelli has highlighted how the “style of [the translator’s] rendering is unique and recognizable, even if his presence is discreet, like that of an actor who does not foreground her/himself by effacing the *dramatic persona* s/he is performing” (original emphasis, 2021, p.105). This further justifies the consideration of the Bulgakov translator/adaptor as a performer whose work is “a unique ‘rendering of the script’” (Locatelli, 2021, p.96).

This process begins by “forg[ing] new space from known place” and “locating and crossing, simultaneously, finding a place for communication, and opening up and moving across new space” (Johnston, 2013, p.367). In the theatre of translation, embodying multiple roles across performative steps can be seen as a change in translatorial behaviour, in the manner of the performance of their role, in taking on the roles of other figures in the production process. This then alters the social script of individual Bulgakov translators/adaptors, as described in Section 1.2. To date, the implications of this concept have been neglected in scholarship. However, the lack of scholarly attention to the role of the theatre translator is symptomatic of a general lack of attention to translation, outside of its own discipline. Theatre translation is unique in terms of agency, since it involves social interactions between multiple agents (such as translators, actors, directors, and adaptors).

By comparison, there are a limited number of agents involved in publishing novels in translation (primarily, publishers, and translators) (see Sela-Sheffy, 2010), and the translation process concerns written rather than plurisemiotic texts, such as theatre translation. Sarah Neelsen points to the relative instability of staged translations, since each performance of a translated script will, inevitably, differ to varying degrees – such is the ephemeral nature of theatre production (2021, p.21). In the same way, each translator performs their social script differently, resulting in inevitable

variations in practice. Again, this raises the ontological question: what is a (Bulgakov) theatre translator/adaptor?, which is at the core of this research.

Considering translation as a type of performance in the theatre of translation is useful for recasting translators in a more significant role. This highlights their actual contribution to the translation process, the possibilities of which, beyond the process of interlingual transfer, are explored in Sections 1.5 and 1.6. It also highlights the potential for expanding on the translator's role, as it is currently perceived. The concept of the performativity of translator agency in terms of the metaphor of the theatre of translation forms a significant part of my research into the role of the translator in British and American theatres, allowing this project to delve into the reality of theatre translation. Performative language, by nature, seeks to cast the translator as an active agent in the creative process of theatre. The extent and nature of this participation in the creative process in Anglophone staged productions of Bulgakov's work constitutes one of my key areas of investigation.

The dynamic nature of translation demands an equally dynamic means of analysis. Ironically, the fluid environment of theatre, where one actor can embody multiple or varying roles, provides a more stable method through which to account for the fluid nature of the translator's performance. It is more stable in the sense that the nature of theatrical performance is a long-established and easily recognisable point of reference. Situating the translation of theatre within the concrete physical spaces of the theatre constructs a theatre of translation. Based on a recognised existing structure, this constructed notion provides greater clarity on the roles performed by translators in theatre. The application of this theoretical framework also allows for the examination of the collaborative processes taking place between the various agents involved in the theatre translation process. The theatre of translation will now be contextualised further, by exploring the possibilities of reimagining the 'fifth wall' performatively in the context of this metaphor, as a concept emerging from the accepted performance convention of breaking the 'fourth wall'. This will culminate in a visualisation of the theatre of translation, and the 'fifth wall', in Section 1.6.1, as applied in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

1.5 Implications of breaking the ‘fourth wall’ for a performative study of translator agency

A performative study of translator agency through the use of theatrical metaphor requires a discussion of an existing performative theatrical metaphor that permeated theatrical practice and scholarship to the point that it has become an accepted performance convention; breaking the ‘fourth wall’. First, it is necessary to understand its initial conceptualisation, before assessing its implications for a performative study of translator agency. This situates it as a theoretical foundation to the ‘fifth wall’ in the performative space of the metaphorical theatre of translation, as developed in Section 1.6.

1.5.1 An introduction to breaking the ‘fourth wall’

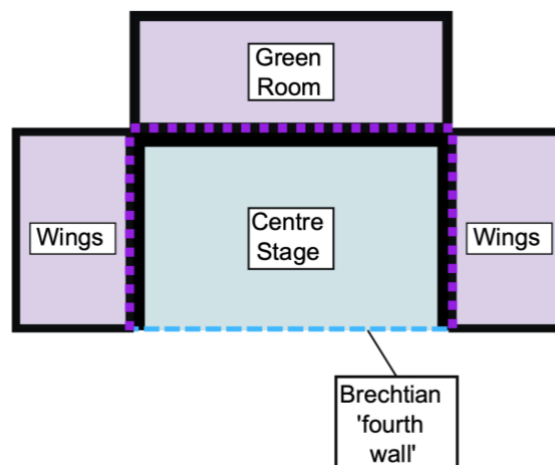


Figure 1.5 – Visualisation of the Brechtian ‘fourth wall’ in the theatre of translation

Breaking the ‘fourth wall’ is an established performance convention, whereby performers break an invisible wall between themselves and the audience when addressing the audience directly (represented by the dashed blue line in Figure 1.5). This makes “observers aware that they are being watched and that performers, in turn, are watching their own behavior” (Bell, 2008, p.203). The practice of inviting collaboration between (theatrical) actors and audiences in the same experiential space is nothing new, having been developed in the early twentieth-century.

The main proponent of this approach was Bertolt Brecht, the renowned twentieth-century German theatre director. Brecht shared his view on how actors should perform in theatre: “[t]he actor masters his character by paying critical attention to its manifold utterances, as also to this of his counterparts and of all the other characters involved” (1964, p.198). This forms the basis of his ‘Epic Theatre’, which Kenneth Pickering describes as a ‘distance’ “method of acting, through which the actor attempts to demonstrate rather than impersonate this role” (2005, p.138). The acting in this type of theatre is not just a performance – it is performative, as per my development of the term in Section 1.1, indicating a continuous repetition of actions. These repeated actions create a new reality and shape existing realities, rather than embodying a specific role in theatre. Brecht’s quotation also has implications for agency and collaboration, presupposing agency on an individual level and within the group (rehearsal) setting through collaboration. This Brechtian understanding of ‘actor’ informs my own interpretation of this term, (see Section 1.2), indicating a figure who has the potential to act and, crucially, who does act, intentionally.

Collaboration is the second defining characteristic of Epic Theatre, and occurs not just between theatre practitioners in rehearsals, but between actors and audiences during the theatrical performance. The unique aspect of this type of collaboration is in actors and audiences sharing the same experiential space. Schechner highlights the famous Brechtian rehearsal practice of “inquiring of his actors and even of persons sitting in on rehearsals, about their opinions of the scenes being worked on” (2020, p.134). Monika Krause refers to the collaboration in this ‘workshop process’ as “an extreme case of sustained collective production” as the participants are engaged in a constant process of “collecting material, translating sources, putting texts into verse and editing and reediting after rehearsals” (2007, p.215). This is an endless cycle of collaborative practice, continuously constructing and reinforcing social realities, thus indicating the performative power of this practice. This collaboration also affords individuals greater agency, by empowering them to intervene in the production process, in a way that disrupts the social script, highlighting their performative power to challenge norms.

The Brechtian concept of breaking the 'fourth wall' is a useful lens through which to expose the power of collaboration in transcending the invisible barriers between actors and spectators embedded in existing power structures. However, to fully comprehend how the translator collaborates with other agents involved in theatre, a theory that expands on the Brechtian breaking of the 'fourth wall' to expose the various positions that translators occupy at different stages of the creative process is required. Thus, it is necessary to conceptualise the 'theatre of translation', allowing an insight into the interactions and power structures reinforced through performative (repeated) behaviours, being acted out behind the scenes.

The relationship between performativity and the Brechtian model of theatre, which affords participants greater agency through collaboration, has been alluded to in scholarship, further justifying the adoption of a performative framework for a study of translator agency in theatre. Jackson notes that by "lodging Brechtian defamiliarization inside Butlerian resignification [a key component of Butlerian performativity theory]", theatre theorists have been able to 'reconcile' theatre and performativity, citing Diamond and Worthen as examples (2004, pp.190-191). Indeed, Jackson explicitly states that there is a connection between the "Butlerian concept of disidentification, of theatrical hyperbole, and of Brechtian distancing" (2004, p.210). Brechtian theatre rejects the notion that the actor embodies a singular, specific role. Instead, it actively encourages intervention, disruption and displays of resistance to directorial power, challenging the status quo in theatre.

Similarly, Butler construes performativity as a site of resistance, since "constraint is not necessarily that which sets a limit to performativity; constraint is, rather, that which impels and sustains performativity" (1993, p.95). If performativity is understood in this sense, as a force enabling intervention by resisting existing power structures, this identifies it as a site of agency, where the actions of individual agents construct new social realities. Establishing performativity as a site of agency links to the concept of the 'social' script (see Section 1.3) and the idea that translators are empowered to disrupt the script to expose and critique existing practices, as actors performing their profession. Indeed, "Brecht argued that art is not a mirror held up to nature but a hammer with which to shape it" (Schechner, 2020, p.134), suggesting that the social

script was made to be rewritten. Brecht's breaking of the 'fourth wall' has become embedded in Performance Studies discourse through years of repeated, ritualistic actions. However, the discourse surrounding the 'fourth wall' is not, itself, immune from being written, and this research offers a new perspective on its many possibilities, by incorporating some elements as building blocks of a reimagined 'fifth wall'.

Applying an approach based on the Brechtian theorisation of breaking the 'fourth wall' to the study of Anglophone staged productions of the work of Bulgakov, as a lesser-known author-playwright, has interesting implications for the study of translator agency. As a non-canonical writer, Bulgakov translators/adaptors are relatively free of the cultural impositions placed upon translator/adaptors involved in staging the work of canonical playwrights such as Brecht or Chekhov. Anglophone audiences' understanding of these canonical writers' works is shaped by decades of staged productions, and this understanding therefore affects their reception of subsequent productions.

By comparison, the relative lack of expectations arguably afford the Bulgakov translator/adaptor greater agency in reshaping subsequent productions. Anglophone staged productions of Bulgakov's work arguably provide a more suitable concept for reimagining the 'fifth wall', as a concept which challenges dominant narratives of translator involvement and agency in theatre. The adaptation of some elements of Brecht's concept of breaking the 'fourth wall' to construct a new understanding of the 'fifth wall' in theatre translation is a reflection of the Brechtian notion that art is a hammer which can shape nature. Section 1.6 will now discuss the way in which the 'fifth wall' takes a metaphorical hammer to the invisible boundaries of theatre and its benefits for a performative study of translator agency.

1.6 A performative approach to the 'fifth wall'

The concept of breaking the 'fourth wall' has been presented as a means to investigate the performative power of collaboration in dismantling perceived actor-audience boundaries, affording both parties greater agency in the creative process. Building upon this conceptualisation, a reimagination of the

'fifth wall' has the potential to effect the same change in relation to the boundaries between translators and other agents in the theatre of translation.

Brazilian literary translator Bruna Dantas Lobato has lamented that there is a dominant narrative that translation is "a transaction, and it's one-directional" (Barbassa, 2023). Similarly, Singaporean playwright and translator Jeremy Tiang has expressed frustration that "[t]he idea that translation is a collaborative process, that the author and the translator are building something together, doesn't really get as much airtime as [he] would like" (Barbassa, 2023). The 'fifth wall', as reimagined in Section 1.6.1, facilitates a reimagination of this dominant narrative and fulfils Dantas Lobato's desire "to have more of a conversation", through the recognition of collaborations that occur in the theatre of translation, across the performative steps outlined in Section 1.4.1.

Developed from the concept of breaking the 'fourth wall', as discussed in Section 1.5.1, the construct of the 'fifth wall' in theatre has long been subjected to theoretical postulations. Before exploring the nuances of reimagining the 'fifth wall', as it is understood in this research, and its benefits for developing a more holistic understanding of translator agency in theatre, it is first necessary to consider existing understandings of this term across multiple disciplines. Currently, there are a number of different interpretations of this term, which can be broken down into the pre- and post-pandemic periods.

The definitions of the 'fifth wall' established prior to the pandemic can be reduced to two main categories; firstly, scholars have conceived the 'fifth wall' as the invisible boundary between the parallel dimensions of the fictional staged world and the real world in which actors interact with one another and performance elements such as props, music, and costumes (cf. Limon, 2009, 2010). Jerzy Limon envisages the boundary between the fictional staged world and the real world as creating a 'fifth dimension' in theatre, as part of the "rule of the dual present time", hidden behind "the invisible fifth wall" (2009, p.54). This concept is developed further in Limon (2010). Here, he invokes the 'fifth wall' metaphor as a means of conveying the 'split' between "the real time of the performer, who is a live being, and the created fictional time of the figure" and the two 'presents' inherent in theatre: that of "the live performer and the audiences" and that of the 'fictional world' (p.18).

Henry Keazor also develops the 'fifth wall' in relation to the existence of multiple worlds, albeit from a different angle; in contrast to Limon, who distinguishes between the worlds of real time and fictional performance, Keazor views the primary function of the 'fifth wall' as "separat[ing] the different storyworlds in which one and the same actor/actress plays different roles" (2011, p.119). Thus, according to Keazor, the 'fifth wall' separates two fictional worlds which exist onstage through the multi-roling of individual performers, while Limon views the 'fifth wall' as a reflection of two separate timelines that occur simultaneously onstage. Both conceptualisations of the 'fifth wall' align with the duality of theatre translation, which simultaneously encompasses the performance of translation and the performance of a play onstage. Thus, this is useful for visualising the role of the Bulgakov translator/adaptor in theatre. This understanding of the 'fifth wall' also has implications for the study of individual agency in theatre, in exploring individuals who perform multiple roles across multiple performative steps. As such, their respective performances can be charted across both the more prominent and comparatively hidden sections of the theatre of translation.

Secondly, the 'fifth wall' has been categorised as an 'invisible artefact' (in this way, it is similar to the 'social' script discussed in Section 1.3.2) between theatre practitioners and either critics or members of the audience, based on the notion of the 'fourth wall' as "the barrier between actor and audience" (Hunter and Lichtenfels, 2005, p.1). This is supported by Peter Rinaldi's account of breaking the 'fifth wall' in Film Studies, which entails "stopping the narrative to talk about and show the actual actresses [or actors] and each of their real-life problems with the production" (2009, p.125). Encouraging interaction thus removes the 'invisible artefact' between theatre practitioners and spectators, mirroring Keazor's proposed removal of boundaries through breaking the 'fifth wall', albeit on the individual rather than world level. Such a reading of the 'fifth wall' considers interaction beyond the confines of the play, taking greater consideration of the figures involved in staging the play and those receiving it, and the agency of all figures involved. However, this 'invisible artefact' does not translate neatly into the physical metaphor of theatre, since it can arise between different groups at different stages of the production process. For instance, the 'fifth wall' could separate actors and the

creative team (such as set designers), the creative team and the translator, or the theatre company and the audience. Therefore, it is a fluid entity, requiring fluid conceptualisation.

On the other hand, most post-pandemic scholarship has shifted its focus towards the implementation of technology as a means of breaking the 'fifth wall'. This has been achieved by "merging the physical and digital realms" (Swillen et al., 2024, p.145), through the introduction of "a shared virtual third space" created through videoconferencing platforms (Aebischer and Nicholas, 2024, p.10). This trend is unsurprising, given the physical barriers to in-person collaboration imposed by the pandemic, which necessitated a move towards online collaborative platforms. Steve Dixon and Paul Sermon claim that breaking "a *fifth wall* of space and time" through creating theatre on a 'telepresence' stage allows people "from around the world to meet frequently, to collaborate, invent and perform together" (original emphasis, 2024, p.87), though they do not develop the concept beyond this brief description. Here, the 'fifth wall' is conceived as a physical barrier, with geographical distance and the limitations of traditional, physical theatre spaces separating individuals who perform on their own stages, which is broken through virtual collaboration.

Meanwhile, Kristof Timmerman develops the potential of the metaphor of breaking the 'fifth wall' as a means "to break down barriers and encourage collaboration" between performers and audiences in virtual music performances (2024, p.113); Timmerman avers that reimagining the role of the audience by repositioning them at the centre of the creative process in the virtual sphere of performance endows them with a greater, 'newfound agency' in that creative process (2024, p.117). Thus, "the fifth wall becomes a dynamic space co-shaped by performers and spectators alike" (Timmerman, 2024, p.128). Although this conceptualisation of the 'fifth wall' is founded on theories of music performance, positionality, and audience participation, it is applicable to this research. This understanding invites a reconsideration of how the space of theatre is performatively (re)shaped by the figures who are recognised for their role and those whose role remains relatively hidden through collaborations between individuals from both groups. In this theorisation, while the 'fourth wall' exists between actors onstage and audiences in the auditorium, the 'fifth wall' is located centre stage, as a space that is shaped

through direct collaboration between performers and spectators. This prompts a re-evaluation of the creative agency of these relatively hidden figures in bringing Bulgakov's work to Anglophone British and American stages.

Finally, Lynn Deboeck's concept of "Negotiating the Fifth Wall" (2022) is useful in developing my own conceptualisation of the 'fifth wall'. Interestingly, Deboeck distinguishes herself from other scholars, since she 'negotiates' the 'fifth wall', as opposed to 'breaking' it. Deboeck's definitions of the 'fourth' and 'fifth wall' are particularly pertinent in this research: "[w]hile the fourth wall is stationary, but always assumed to be between the spectator and performer, the fifth wall is mobile and intentionally employed and controlled by the performer" (2022, p.97). The notion of an entity controlled and enacted by the performer relates to Goffman's concept of 'impression management' as part of 'dramatic realization' (1959, p.208). Acting with intent is a key part of the definition of agency developed in this chapter, which forms a part of Deboeck's conceptualisation of the 'fifth wall'. Furthermore, while Deboeck outlines how the 'fourth wall' is generally accepted as existing between two groups, her interpretation of the 'fifth wall' remains open to the possibility of involving multiple groups, as this thesis seeks to demonstrate. Although Deboeck views the 'fifth wall' as pejorative (as "fifth wall manipulation", 2022, p.109), this research presents it as a space that is conducive to collaborative practice.

1.6.1 Reimagining the 'fifth' wall through performativity

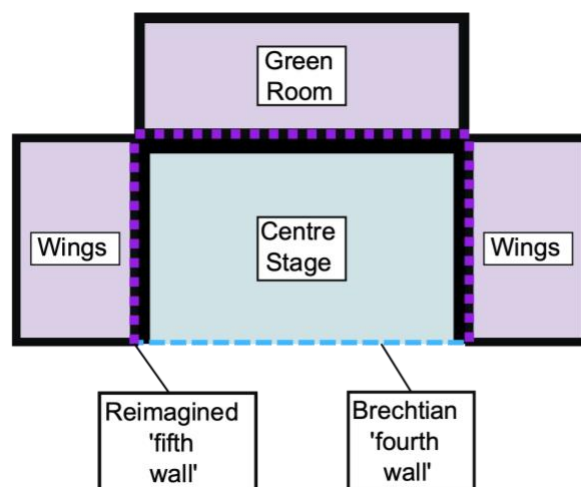


Figure 1.6 – Visualisation of the reimagined 'fifth wall' in the theatre of translation

To enable a more fluid approach to the study of translator agency, this section draws upon Deboeck's development of the 'fifth wall' as a dynamic concept, accounting for the collaborative practices underpinning the performance of the Bulgakov translator/adaptor in theatre. Just as the performative steps outlined in Section 1.4.1 are broken down into three key areas, so too is the theatre of translation, in relation to the reimagined 'fifth wall', as developed here. The reimagined 'fifth wall', represented by the purple dotted line in Figure 1.6, exists at the intersection of the area of the theatre that is visible to the public (centre stage) and those that remain hidden from public view (the wings and the green room). The repeated performance of each individual role across these three sections constitutes a performative construction of the Bulgakov translator/adaptor's identity as an agent in the theatre of translation, thus (re)writing their social script. Roles performed in the wings and the green room contribute to the performative (re)construction of identity among Bulgakov translators/adaptors. However, the roles located centre stage determine the overall label assigned to each individual, since they indicate their greatest degree of performative power and agency in the creative process of theatre.

As discussed in Section 1.6, the 'fifth wall' is a fluid entity, the boundaries of which are continuously (re)shaped through the repeated performance of actions, specifically collaborative interactions between individual agents. While Timmerman identifies a positive correlation between heightened agency and breaking the 'fifth wall' (2024, p.117), I posit that this is not a breaking, but a reimagination of existing perceptions of agency in a performative context. Reimagining how translators and other actors and agents in the theatre of translation engage with one another at different stages of the creative process allows a reappraisal of individual translator agency in theatre. This provides an opportunity to reimagine the agency of a traditionally marginalised figure, often regarded as peripheral in creative practice. This research will demonstrate that, contrary to traditional views, the position of the Bulgakov theatre translator/adaptor and their associated agency is not fixed, and changes across different stages of the creative process of theatre.

Such an intrinsically fluid entity as the 'fifth wall' requires equally fluid (re)conceptualisation, and Deboeck's assertion that the fifth wall "establishes a new horizon where theatrical walls could be built or torn down" (2022, p.111)

provides inspiration for the proposed model of the theatre translation. This model includes “theatrical conventions that audiences everywhere can recognize”, including a ‘center-stage [sic] focus’ and “sidebars that ‘break’ the imaginary fourth wall” (2022, p.97). While it is not ideal to employ a static diagram (see Figure 1.6) to represent a dynamic process such as identity (re)construction across the page-to-stage process, this visualisation was the most suitable means through which to visualise this complex phenomenon on paper. Locating the multiple roles embodied by translators/adaptors in the spaces of the theatre of translation (for example, theatre collaborator, Russian consultant, or literary scout/negotiator) draws attention to their overall performance, factoring this performance into discussions of narratives in theatre. This also highlights the fluidity of these multiple roles, and the blurred boundaries that often exist between them. Considering translator/adaptor roles and agency in the context of theatrical spaces recognises the simultaneous performance of the play and the act of translation.

Concerning the relationship between physical spaces and agency in the theatre of translation, centre stage is the publicly-visible space where the ‘protagonists’ of the cast are both recognised for their role and are empowered to act with intent; performing in this space is synonymous with a high degree of agency and visibility. The wings, meanwhile, are the location in which a performer is not immediately visible to the public, but maintains close connections with both centre stage and the green room. In this regard, performers located in the wings have the potential to influence decision-making processes in the other two sections of the theatre of translation, though this may not be the role for which they are most publicly visible.

Meanwhile, George E. Marcus has interpreted the green room as the location “where the singularity of each performance is negotiated, so to speak, by actors”, emphasising that “it is not rehearsal, it is not dramaturgy, but the mediating space between those exercises and performance” (2009, p.2). In this respect, it can be regarded as a metaphor for “a space of collaboration and negotiation (2009, p.2), involving multiple agents. Marcus and Hadi Nicholas Deeb have developed this concept to include discussions of power, in terms of ability to express ideas and influence decisions, and status, regarding the prestige associated with the roles embodied by individual agents

(2011, p.66). This realises the green room as a site where agents may exert influence with intent. Thus, the green room is never literally visible to theatre audiences and is consequently exempt from audience expectations, theatrical norms and conventions, has the power to act as a site of heightened agency for those figures empowered to act in this section of the theatre of translation.

In this model, there is a tension between different types of visibility – literal visibility to an audience sitting in a theatre auditorium and metaphorical visibility to the wider world. For instance, in a literal sense, the wings are more or less visible to theatre audiences, depending on where they are sitting. This has a metaphorical parallel with the visibility of agents operating in the wings, and how well their visibility is showcased externally, for example through promotional material and credits. Conversely, as a space that is not physically visible to theatre audiences, the green room is employed metaphorically in this thesis, in terms of whether the individuals located in that space can be ‘seen’ by those outside the physical theatrical space, through credits or interviews.

The physical boundaries implemented in theatres by the agents involved in theatre production are synonymous with the invisible boundaries both decided and maintained by existing theatrical hierarchies. The traditional perception that “the translator’s role ends as soon as the text is delivered” (Rappaport, 2007, p.70) immediately situates the translator backstage, effectively denying them any form of status or visibility. However, this traditional perception does not take into account the fact that the playscript would not exist in the TL culture without the translator. That being said, as Patrice Pavis asserts, it is “not possible to deduce from the [theatrical] performance the work that led up to it” (1992, p.24). This invites a reconsideration of the translator’s performance in theatre, by embracing a more holistic approach that accounts for the activity of the agents involved behind the scenes.

Brodie’s argument that “[m]aking the process visible validates all the contributory agents and binds them together into a team” (2018b, p.16) provides further grounds for the reconsideration of the translator’s role in theatre. This also has implications for the recognition of other, less visible figures who are ‘contributory agents’ in the theatre production process, i.e., those ‘hidden participants’ behind the ‘fifth wall’ of theatre. Moreover, Paton has warned against “dismiss[ing] or bracket[ing] the role of institutions and

discourses, not as the ‘cause’ or ‘context’ of performance, but as another actant in the performative scene” (1995, p.182). Indeed, the repeated performances of the role of the institution or commissioner of a text does shape the performance of the other agents involved in theatre production. Thus, they must not be neglected as ‘contributory agents’ in discussions of agency. Promoting the visibility of all ‘contributory agents’ in theatre raises their status as individuals and within the construct of the team, challenging the existing power structures which currently dominate British and American theatres.

However, as has been previously mentioned, there are many examples of productions where translators/adaptors multi-role, simultaneously translating/adapting and taking on other roles in the theatre, such as director or actor. A theatrical actor would not typically receive higher wages for performing multiple roles, so it would be unreasonable to expect translators to receive higher wages for multi-roling. However, a theatrical actor would be recognised for these multiple roles in the production programme, for example, while translators are usually credited for their role as a translator, or not at all. Existing scholarship has so far failed to account for this multi-roling in theatre production, which is remedied in this thesis. Such practices are now commonplace in Anglophone adaptations of Bulgakov’s prose for British and American stages, which have not always adhered to the accepted two-tier translation model. The key issue here is the labour of the translator, the tasks that they are (and have been) expected to perform and how this changes over time, as well as potential reasons behind this. Therefore, the social script may vary across productions of the same Bulgakov work in different time periods and cultures, which will be mapped onto the model of the theatre of translation.

By reimagining the metaphorical ‘fifth wall’ as part of the ‘theatre of translation’, based on performative steps, this work challenges existing notions of translator agency in theatre. Namely, the notion that translator involvement ends when rehearsals begin. Reimagining the ‘fifth wall’ as part of the “theatre of translation” also enables a clear conceptualisation of the process of theatre translation, and the collaborations that occur between the various agents involved in this process. Collaboration implies co-labour, in turn implying that each individual contributes to the achievement of shared goals in the theatre

of translation. Despite this, agency remains a largely neglected topic in theatre scholarship and it is time to redress that imbalance.

Meanwhile, Kaindl has criticised the “exclu[sion] [of translators] from the theoretical models of translation, regarded as machine-like translator-ideals or as a homogenous collective”, lamenting that “the translatorial individual was lost” (2021, p.11). In scholarship that *does* consider individuals, theatre translators are often portrayed as disenfranchised, especially literal translators, who often play the role of the ‘disappearing translator’ (Rappaport, 2007, p.75); they often receive little recognition for their work and are perceived to enjoy little to no involvement in the creative process of theatre. Admittedly, this view is changing, thanks to the work of Brodie and Rappaport, which focus on the benefits of translator/theatre practitioner collaboration. Thus, this work seeks to relocate the individual translator in discussions of agency.

1.6.2 Implications of the ‘fifth’ wall for a performative study of translator agency

As has been demonstrated in this chapter, a theoretical framework founded on performativity, realised through performative steps and the metaphor of the theatre of translation, provides a fresh angle for examining the complex issue of translator agency in theatres. Firstly, establishing the translation of theatre as the “theatre of translation” is a natural progression from what is arguably the current ‘performative’ turn in Translation Studies. Secondly, as has been established, there is a strong connection between performativity theory and the understanding of issues such as power and status as part of the wider issue of agency in the Brechtian model of theatre. Finally, the Brechtian notion of breaking the ‘fourth wall’ in theatre prompts a scholarly evaluation of how the ‘fifth wall’ is perceived and can be used to extend the debate surrounding agency in theatre beyond the actor-audience relationship.

While the concept of the ‘fifth wall’ in theatre is nothing new, its proposed application as part of the theatre of translation, in conjunction with performative steps, allows for a more comprehensive scholarly investigation of the multiplicity of agents involved in theatre. Specifically, how these agents (inter)act and collaborate with the translator, as the agent performing the act

of translation, affording the translator greater visibility in the process. This research also highlights how theatre translation practices have changed, and how this has both shaped and been shaped by the performative labour of Bulgakov translators/adaptors. The theatre of translation provides a recognisable metaphor for contextualising this discussion and is useful for reconsidering existing perceptions of the roles played by various agents in theatre production. It does so by ‘recasting’ these performative agents in roles that more accurately reflect the extent of their labour in the creative process.

Furthermore, the visual models developed in this chapter form the basis for analysis of the roles played by the Bulgakov translator/adaptor in their performance across the performative steps of the creative process. Reimagining the ‘fifth wall’, in a Brechtian sense, situates the translator in relation to two genres: Bulgakov’s original plays and staged adaptations of his prose. It also takes a metaphorical hammer to the illusion of the role of the celebrity translator/playwright-adaptor as the most significant ‘rewriter’ in theatre. This work rewrites the long-established social script on translator involvement in theatre, by highlighting the significant contribution of other agents across performative steps, specifically the Bulgakov translator/adaptor. These contributions cover both Bulgakov’s original plays and staged adaptations of his prose from 1934 to 2024. This allows us to question whether separate social scripts exist for each genre and, within each category, how the expectations of translator/adaptor labour have evolved over time, to meet changing needs. To ‘reimagine’ Shakespeare’s famous quotation, all the world of the theatre translator (or, theatre translation) is a stage.

Chapter 2: Applying a performative approach to translator agency in British and American theatres

Empirical research of the past decade has perpetuated the notion that translation is a type of performance, which is subjective and characterised by collaborations with multiple agents at various stages of the performance (see Aaltonen, 2013; Cheetham, 2016; St André, 2017). Recent research in theatre translation studies has demonstrated the benefits of employing a mixed methodological approach to develop a holistic picture of theatre translation practices. Dominic Glynn (2020) has outlined the benefits of applying a mixed methodological approach to theatre translation research, by demonstrating how removing the limitations imposed by the dominant narrative of binaries in Translation Studies discourse can yield new insights. This is achieved by considering qualitative data on translation processes and end results in this area of research. Such information includes “factual data about translated plays” and “various documents, including translated plays, press reviews, and promotional materials” (2020, p.5).

Meanwhile, Margherita Laera (2022) demonstrates an approach utilising both surveys and interviews to gather quantitative and qualitative data, and develop a holistic, comparative overview of theatre translator practices across various European countries. This invites a reconceptualization of traditional binary ‘opposites’ such as process- versus product-oriented research, and quantitative versus qualitative approaches as two sides of the same metaphorical coin. Indeed, Jennifer Mason argues that a mixed methodological approach allows us to consider the ‘multi-dimensional’ nature of “social experience and lived realities”, which are realised through ‘habitual’ and ‘routinized’ practices (2006, pp.10-11). The focus of mixed methodology on ‘habitual’ and ‘routinized’ practices indicates its suitability for the performative study of translator agency in this thesis, which considers how repeated, or habitual, actions (re)construct translator identity and, thereby, agency. Philosophically, this mixed methodology aligns most closely with an interpretivist approach, owing to the subjectivity of this performative framework, which accounts for the varied experiences of individuals across different contexts, which results in the experience of different social realities.

As developed in Chapter 1, the theoretical framework applied in this thesis combines theories of performativity (in relation to agency) and the ‘fifth wall’ as a lens through which to conduct a critical evaluation of the research questions which have guided this work. Performativity theory has been applied to analyse a diverse range of issues in Translation Studies, including: the identity constructed through the cultivation of translator brands (Zhang, 2021), the reconsideration of theatre translation as an inherently social and performative practice (Marinetti, 2013), and the plurality involved in ‘performing translation’ which enables the disruption of dominant narratives in Translation Studies discourse (Bermann, 2014). These issues have implications for the study of translator agency in theatre, which are best illustrated through a reimagination of the ‘fifth wall’ as a collaborative space of heightened agency among individuals (Timmerman, 2024), inviting a rethinking of the roles performed by translators in theatre. Drawing upon the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 1, this study has sought to provide answers to three research questions:

RQ1: To what extent does collaboration occur between the translator/adaptor and other agents, what is the nature of collaboration and how is it affected by external factors?

RQ2: How does the translator/adaptor construct their own identity as a translator/adaptor of Bulgakov and how does this relate to trends in identity construction?

RQ3: How does the terminology used to describe translators/adaptors affect their actions and identity?

In order to critically engage with these questions, this chapter illustrates the methodological tools which have been employed in order to realise the theoretical framework, practically speaking. Chapters 3-5 then provide in-depth analyses of the data collected using the methods outlined in this chapter.

The present chapter begins with an explication of the research design in Section 2.1, with a view to justifying this particular approach to answer the

research questions listed above. Particular elements covered include: the justification of a mixed methodological approach, the benefits of case study research, data collection methods and their implications, data sources, their implications and limitations, and the analytical tools implemented. The chapter concludes by summarising the benefits of this methodology for a performative study of translator agency in theatre.

2.1 Research design

This research conducts a comparative analysis of multiple case studies of individual translators and adaptors involved in staging Bulgakov's work in an Anglophone context in Britain and the US. John W. Creswell and Vicki L. Plano Clark posit that mixed methods are useful for contextualising results, especially in instances where "[o]ne type of evidence may not tell the complete story" (2011, p.8). For example, a production programme can be useful for identifying a translator, though they may either provide just a name and no biography for the translator, or even neglect to mention them at all. Indeed, further contextualisation and the consultation of multiple sources of evidence are required to uncover the hidden stories of Bulgakov translators and adaptors.

A range of qualitative research methods were employed to gather relevant primary and secondary data on which to base these analytical case studies, including digital datasets, archival materials, as well as survey questionnaires and an interview. These analyses draw upon the novel theoretical framework developed in Chapter 1, realised through the implementation of three steps, in chronological order: firstly, networks of contacts are developed for each individual. Secondly, the roles embodied by the translator/adaptor are charted across each performative step (pitching, writing, and rehearsal). Finally, the roles played by each individual across their overall performance in the context of the production are mapped in the theatre of translation, to offer a re-evaluation of the label assigned to their overall role in the creative process.

Each of the following sections explicates the relevance of the data collection and analytical tools used in order to generate responses to the

research questions outlined at the beginning of this chapter. The discussion opens with a demonstration of the benefits of a case study-centred approach for a comparative study of theatre translator agency, as opposed to the increasingly popular practice-as-research model in theatre research. This section then covers the processes used to identify relevant translators and adaptors, culminating in the rationalisation of the decisions to explore the experiences of certain translators and adaptors in case studies. The compiled bibliography of productions generated as part of this research has been made available on an open-access basis (see Klimas, 2025). Attention then turns to the data collection methods used and their implications, before introducing the analytical tools implemented in the case studies in Chapters 3-5. The final section then considers the limitations of the study.

2.1.1 Case studies

The past five years have observed a growing tendency among theatre translation researchers of employing a methodology based on a practice-as-research model. This sees researchers conduct ethnographic fieldwork to develop an in-depth understanding of the multifarious factors and issues affecting everyday theatre translator practice. A pertinent example is Angela Tiziana Tarantini's autoethnographic investigation of the performance elements of rhythm and gesture in translated theatre (2021). Similarly, from the view of a 'practitioner', Sarah Maitland draws upon her own experiences as a theatre translator as part of a hermeneutical investigation of 'spectatorly expectation' (2023). These intensive individual case studies are beneficial for developing a heightened understanding of translator agency in theatre. Ethnographic fieldwork was not an appropriate methodology for this research, partially owing to the time, financial, and practical constraints of immersing oneself in the creative process. However, the main problem was that this approach did not allow for comparison of the experiences of translators/adaptors regarding their collaborations with other agents and the (re)construction of their identities, which are key elements of RQ1 and RQ1.

Chesterman suggests that research based on multiple case studies of individual subjects “allows us to see both similarities and differences in a perspective that increases our understanding of the whole picture, and also of how this picture relates to other pictures” (2004, p.33). This implies that case studies are useful for understanding and fully exploring the implications of social phenomena, both individually and in the context of other phenomena.

These case studies involve the comparison of metaphorical social scripts as discussed in Section 1.3.2. It has been ascertained that translation is a “social [...] and interactive practice” (Bochmann, 2022, p.1781), in the same way that theatre has been described as “a particular sort of social practice with a particular set of social functions” (Edelman et al., 2016, p.12). Thus, case studies are appropriate for examining the factors affecting translator agency in theatre. Moreover, Gabriela Saldanha and Sharon O'Brien highlight that case studies are especially useful for “testing the viability of a new model”, which can “contribute to general knowledge” and may serve to “challenge established theories”, revealing a need to shift the focus of scholarly attention (2014, p.210). Thus, this is useful for testing the theoretical framework proposed in Chapter 1, further justifying a case study-based approach.

In line with the approach outlined by Hamed Taherdoost (2021, p.28), this study consists of multiple case studies and is a holistic mode of analysis, encompassing ten case studies of individual translators and adaptors, but the analysis is narrow, focussing on the same core range of issues across the broad range of individuals under examination. To maintain the balance demanded by the scope of the project, the subjects comprise of five American and five British translators/adaptors of Bulgakov. The workflow for this study, including the subjects of the ten case studies, is depicted in Figure 2.1 – Workflow of the thesis research design.

Initial research allowed me to identify Michael Glenny and Mirra Ginsburg as the first translators whose repeated actions in the mid-to-late twentieth-century wrote the ‘social’ script of Bulgakov translators. A comparison of their case studies forms the basis of Chapter 3, demonstrating how the two serve as a ‘blueprint’ for the behaviour of other Bulgakov translators/adaptors. This facilitates the discussion of Bulgakov

translators/adaptors, in the context of his original plays and staged adaptations of his prose.

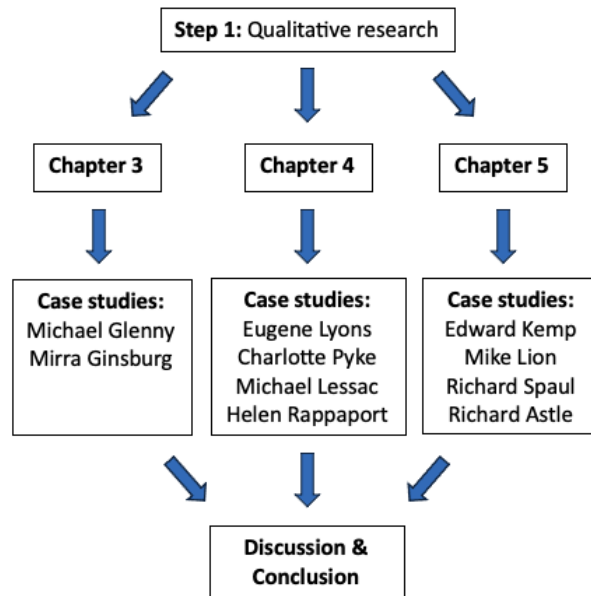


Figure 2.1 – Workflow of the thesis research design

Given the prioritisation of the comparative aspect of this research, it was decided to limit the case studies in Chapters 4 and 5 to one British and one American translator/adaptor each for two of Bulgakov's works, to allow adequate space for the evaluation of each pair in the context of the ST. Consultation of the data gathered in the compiled bibliography of productions resulted in the decision to study *Dni Turbinykh* and *Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh* (original plays) in Chapter 4, and *Master i Margarita* and *Sobach'e serdtse* (plays adapted from prose) in Chapter 5. The translators/adaptors for each of these case studies were first identified from the compiled bibliography and then chosen on the basis of available qualitative data, and are arranged as follows:

Dni Turbinykh:

- **US:** Eugene Lyons – New Haven, Connecticut (1934)
- **Britain:** Charlotte Pyke – London (2010)

Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh:

- **US:** Michael Lessac – New York (1981); Stamford, Connecticut (1981)
- **Britain:** Helen Rappaport – Stratford-upon-Avon (1982), Newcastle-upon-Tyne (1983), London (1983)

Master i Margarita:

- **Britain:** Edward Kemp – Chichester (2004)
- **US:** Mike Lion – Seattle, Washington (2024)

Sobach'e serdtse:

- **Britain:** Richard Spaul – Edinburgh (1988)
- **US:** Robert Astle – Allentown, Pennsylvania (1995)

To facilitate a more meaningful discussion about how translators/adaptors have constructed their identity over time, each pair of case studies is presented in chronological order for each production. This resulted in the case studies in Chapter 4 appearing first in the American context and then the British, with the reverse being true of Chapter 5. Considering these particular productions means that it has been possible to accurately reflect on the performances of translators and adaptors across seven decades, from 1934-2024.

The only period that is not covered in this thesis (1940s-1960s) is a result of the restrictions on cultural exchange between the West and the USSR during that time – Bulgakov's works were not accessible, thus his works were not translated or staged abroad. This significant gap likely hindered the early establishment of his prestige and cultural currency outside the USSR. This hiatus meant that Western audiences and literary circles were deprived of exposure to Bulgakov's unique voice, potentially delaying his broader recognition and reception. Conversely, the renewed interest in Bulgakov from the mid-1960s onwards as a 'Russian' or potentially 'dissident' author may have subsequently shaped the positionality of Bulgakov translators, influencing their interpretive approaches and the framing of his works for newly receptive Western audiences. The implications of the access to these STs (or lack thereof) for translator agency and the task of securing Bulgakov's place on the world stage are discussed in more detail in Chapters 3-5.

Kaisa Koskinen emphasises that "there is no way to account for everything" in reference to the study of translator agency (2010, p.80). Therefore, so as not to overcomplicate the analyses to the point that important information is lost amidst copious details, each case study consists of four key factors:

1. Micro-history of the individual
2. Network of contacts of the individual
3. Charting the individual's interactions in the theatre of translation in a production-specific context
4. Mapping the individual's performance in the theatre of translation diagram

This ensures consistency across each case study, facilitating clear comparison across these core areas, (for more details, see Section 2.3). Reducing analysis to an in-depth exploration of this limited range of key factors in the case studies examined ensures that the resultant conclusions are meaningful. These areas are elaborated on in the case studies of Glenny and Ginsburg in Chapter 3, to reflect that their case studies cover their whole career as opposed to one production. This level of detail was necessary to establish their roles as significant figures whose practices provided a 'blueprint' for other Bulgakov translators. Comparing their identities as early Bulgakov translators to those (re)constructed by subsequent translators/adaptors facilitated a discussion of RQ3, in terms of how the language used to describe these figures affects how translators/adaptors perform their roles and (re)construct their own identities.

Having justified the mixed methodological approach to this research, based on case study analysis, it is pertinent to consider how evidence was gathered to support the findings of this study and the implications of these data collection methods.

2.2 Data collection methods and their implications

From the start of this project in October 2021, until the finalisation of the compiled bibliography in November 2024, this study employed a diverse range of tools to collect the data necessary to achieve the research aims. Therefore, I will now review the tools used to first identify and subsequently collect relevant primary and secondary data, and consider their implications for this research, including a discussion of their benefits and limitations in this context.

2.2.1 Digitised performance records and databases

The first category of methodological tools implemented in the data collection process was digitised performance records and databases. Sandra Poupaud et al. aver that the first stage in the study of translation is to “decide what is to be counted as a ‘translation’ [...], usually through recourse to bibliographical databases” and that “[r]esearch processes then necessarily impose their own selective filters” (2009, p.264). The secondary data contained in these bibliographical databases provide a particularly relevant starting point for a study of translated theatre, through the clear and concise presentation of insightful factual data pertaining to productions. This factual data gathered for the purposes of this research included elements mentioned by Glynn, such as production titles and the names of key figures, including directors, translators, and adaptors (2020, p.6). Existing datasets and digitised performance records shed light on information that is not easily accessible. They may be created by either professional or amateur individuals, or professional or amateur organisations.

The digitised performance records and databases consulted in the course of this research were a mixture of amateur and professional, individual and institutional, and were, as follows:

- About the Artists
- BroadwayWorld International Theatre DB
- doollee.com
- Internet Broadway Database (IBDB)
- Internet Movie Database (IMDb)
- Internet UK Theatre Database (iUKDTb Archive)
- masterandmargarita.eu
- National Theatre Archive
- Playbill Vault
- Royal Shakespeare Company Performances Database
- Theatre Record (formerly London Theatre Record)
- Theatricalia

On one hand, digitisation of this information may reduce errors and inconsistencies through the standardisation of data entry according to consistent format of preconfigured categories. On the other hand, it was also necessary to consider the possibility of inaccuracies in the data provided. These inaccuracies could be a result of human error, errors in the source material, or auto-complete functions predicting the wrong information in data compilation software such as Microsoft Excel. Human error may occur across both professional and amateur datasets, which necessitated cross-referencing of all data gathered from these sources prior to analysis.

The level of access afforded to dataset users was at the discretion of the provider, whether individual or institutional; some sources were open access, which eased the data collection process. Meanwhile, other sources were only available on a subscription basis, which had implications for accessibility. I was able to access all relevant datasets for this research, improving its overall quality and the reliability of its findings. The data gathered from these datasets was crucial in the development of my own bibliography of productions, to remedy oversights, errors, inconsistencies, omissions, and potential areas of confusion in existing databases.

Initial research expanded upon Glynn's taxonomy for information relevant to quantitative theatre research (2020, p.6) to include data that is useful for a diverse range of users; for example, the addition of the 'production title' category accounts for adaptations to the generally accepted title in translation, such as *Heart of a Dog* being staged as *The Shaggy Dog* in 1995. The adapted title *The Shaggy Dog* is not immediately recognisable as being connected to *Heart of a Dog* and may even be confused with the 1959/2006 American comedy films of the same name. Therefore, the inclusion of this category ensures that productions are not accidentally bypassed for consideration.

Furthermore, the 'region' category is also useful for resolving potential misidentifications. For instance, the bibliography compiled from initial research features entries from both Cambridge, England and Cambridge, Massachusetts. This is a common issue when considering productions in both Britain and the US and the 'region' category resolves this potential confusion by including England, Scotland, or Wales for Britain, and 'state' for the US. It

also allowed me to correct errors in open-source data, such as the masterandmargarita.eu entry for Double Edge Theatre's 2004 production of *Master and Margarita*, which identified the production as being staged in 'Ashfield (UK)', when it was actually staged in Ashfield, Massachusetts. Resolving these issues in my own research has contributed to knowledge in Slavonic Studies, Theatre Studies, and Translation Studies.

This research has resulted in what is, to date, the most comprehensive list of Anglophone staged productions of Bulgakov's work in Britain and the US from 1934 to 2024 (Klimas, 2025). The bibliography has provided an accessible starting point in this study of translator agency, particularly in relation to RQ3, in terms of how the terminology used to describe translators and adaptors affects their actions and identity. This was achieved by identifying the terminology used to describe the process and whether or not the translator was credited for their work. It must be stressed that this bibliography is not exhaustive, instead offering a holistic view of the main production details, facilitating easy comparison between productions and factors such as location, performance venue, dates, and names of key individuals.

It is acknowledged that to uncover information about people, "one has to go beyond the lists" and it must be recognised that, in attempting to uncover individual stories, "[b]ibliographical databases are no more than the traces of such stories" (Poupaud et al., 2009, p.278). With that in mind, digitised performance records and bibliographical databases were used to collect the data necessary as a starting point from which to narrow analysis down to the ten case studies of individual translators and adaptors presented across Chapters 3-5. It was then possible to uncover significant information about these individuals through archival research, which will now be discussed.

2.2.2 Archival research

Archival research was critical in the process of cultivating an understanding of the conditions of translatorial practice in a historical context. This process was facilitated through an initial search of online archive catalogues, which enables users to search for specific information. Based on initial searches of

catalogues, a total of eight archives (four in Britain and four in the US) were identified as holding useful material for this research. These were a mixture of publicly-accessible and university-based archives, whose use was restricted to researchers only. The archives accessed were, in order of consultation:

- National Library of Wales (Aberystwyth)
- New York Public Library for Performing Arts (New York)
- Columbia University's Rare Book and Manuscript Library (New York)
- Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (New Haven)
- Robert B. Haas Family Library, Yale University (New Haven)
- Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University (New Haven)
- School of Slavonic and East European Studies Library (London)
- National Theatre Archive (London)

A visit to the National Library of Wales in July 2022 allowed me to collect primary data relating to translator recognition by consulting published playscripts. My subsequent research trip to the US in April 2023 facilitated the gathering of data relating to translators and productions of Bulgakov's work based in the US, most notably Ginsburg, who is the subject of a case study in Chapter 3. A research trip to the School of Slavonic and East European Studies Library at University College London (UCL) in August 2023 allowed me to consult the Glenny Collection, relating to Glenny, as the subject of the other of the two case studies examined in Chapter 3. Finally, at the NT Archive, in February 2024, I was able to obtain drafts of Charlotte Pyke's literal translation and Andrew Upton's subsequent adaptation of Bulgakov's *Belaja gvardija* (*The White Guard*) for the 2010 NT production of *The White Guard*, (for further details see Section 4.2.7). Together with the initial data gathered, these sources were crucial in the process of identifying suitable subjects for case studies in this project.

Additionally, in October 2024, the Office of Cultural Affairs within the local government of the city of Charleston, South Carolina was able to provide me with a scanned copy of a programme for theater simple's 1998 production

of *The Master and Margarita* at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival. This allowed me to fill some gaps in the compiled bibliography.

Regarding limitations that affected the data collection process, the inconsistencies between archives in terms of the level of detail provided for catalogue entries resulted in a longer time taken to source relevant information. Furthermore, it was ironic that in conducting research which aims to reveal global practices among theatre translators of a select corpus of works, this research was, to a certain extent, limited by this global scope, in terms of physical access to archival materials. Despite these challenges, I was able to access the relevant archives and gain a substantial body of evidence, which allowed me to develop case studies. Upon completing the process of archival research, I was able to establish the remaining gaps in my knowledge that I needed to fill in order to be able shed light on the complex issue of translator agency in theatre. I then developed a survey questionnaire in an attempt to obtain targeted responses, to fill the specific gaps identified.

2.2.3 Survey questionnaire

To address the lacunae identified from initial research, I developed a survey questionnaire titled ‘The role of the translator in British and American staged productions of Bulgakov’. The first phase of the recruitment process consisted of identifying potential participants (PPs) who met the necessary requirements. These individuals were contacted on the basis of the following criteria:

- The PP had been involved in at least one staged production of Mikhail Bulgakov’s work
- The PP performed one or more of the following roles in the production(s): translator, adaptor, director, actor
- The PP was involved in a production staged in either Britain (England, Scotland, or Wales) or the US between 1970 and 2024

To maintain relevance to the research aims, the study excluded those who had only been involved in staged productions of playwrights other than Bulgakov

and those who had exclusively been involved in productions of Bulgakov's work outside of Britain or the US.

Initial contact was established via email, in order to reach as wide a group of relevant PPs as quickly as possible. Of the approximately 150 PPs contacted, 15 participants were successfully recruited to contribute to the surveying process – around 10% of those contacted. However, there were several factors that hindered the recruitment process for the survey questionnaire; firstly, the ninety-year time span under study raised the practical issue that many PPs were either deceased or unable to contribute to this study. Secondly, there was a lack of availability of accurate contact details for some of the PPs identified, while some were only contactable through theatrical agents, contact with whom resulted in mixed levels of success, in terms of obtaining consent for survey participation. Finally, as was expected, some PPs displayed a lack of willingness to participate in the survey, while some PPs signed consent forms, but were unable to complete the survey questionnaire before the deadline. These obstacles did hinder the recruitment process, though the data that it was possible to obtain was invaluable in furthering my understanding of translator agency in theatre.

Primary data was collected from participants surveyed between May and August 2024, comprising of a range of practitioners involved in staging Bulgakov's work in an Anglophone British and/or American context. These participants performed at least one of the aforementioned roles in their respective productions, though many performed multiple roles, as indicated in their responses. While some of these additional roles were already known prior to the survey, others were only revealed through the survey findings. Therefore, this was an invaluable contribution to my research.

Microsoft Forms was the chosen platform for the survey questionnaire because of its accessibility features for both users completing the survey and myself as a researcher, in terms of collating the data gathered; this platform enabled users to edit their responses within the specified timeframe, to access the survey in large font or through a reader function, and also offered them the option to receive a copy of their responses. As a researcher, it was useful to be able to set questions as mandatory or optional, to ensure that all necessary data was gathered. Furthermore, the data collation process was eased through

automatically-generated graphical representations of data, summarising all responses, and the option to review the responses of each individual.

The structure followed some of David De Vaus' main suggestions for conducting a survey questionnaire, including: moving "from easy to more difficult questions" and "from concrete to abstract questions", with open-ended questions "placed towards the end", and introducing "a variety of question formats so that the questionnaire remains interesting" (2013, p.111). This improved both the user experience and quality of answers, by drawing on cognitive theories relating to questionnaire participant motivation (2013, p.111).

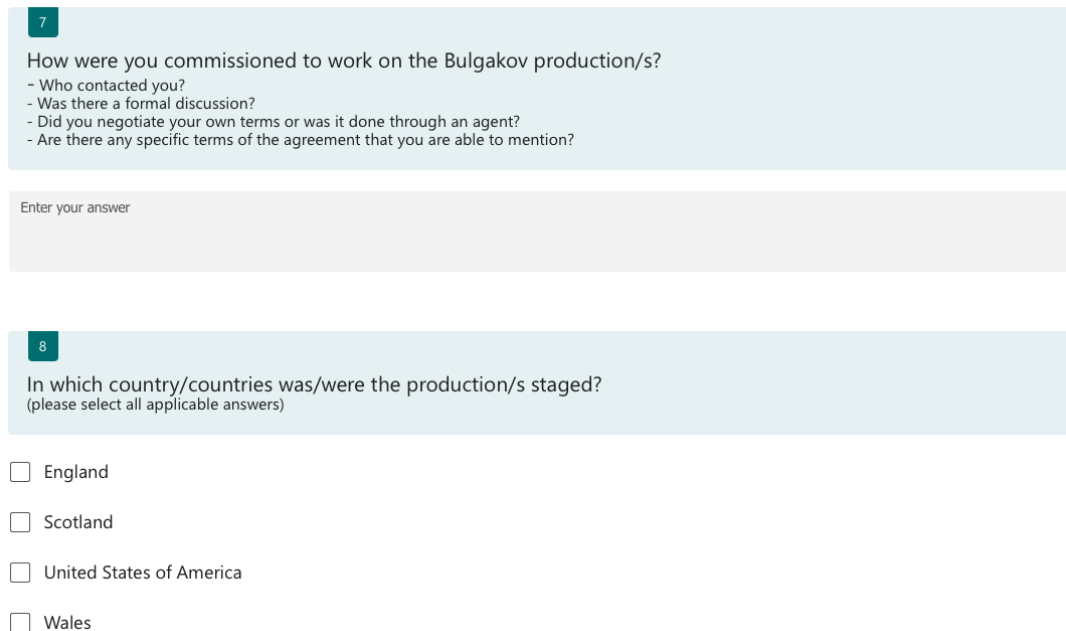
The questionnaire consisted of 20 questions (see Appendix), with an additional comment box, which was an optional element, designed to allow participants to reveal information that was not covered by the questions asked or for them to reflect on their experiences more generally. Approximately half of these questions were intended to generate quantitative data, with the other half providing meaningful qualitative data. Apart from Question 2, which required participants to choose one of the specified answers and Question 13, which was answered on a yes/no basis, all questions allowed an open space for participants to add their own options. With multiple choice questions, the 'Other' box allowed participants to include options which were not listed, while open answer boxes allowed them to expand on the issues discussed in the necessary level of detail, at the participant's own discretion.

Questions 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 were closed-ended answers, designed to gather quantitative data for the purposes of producing statistics regarding the participants' personal and professional backgrounds and how they would identify their own role. These were multiple choice answers, with some questions allowing only one response, such as Question 2, which asked "How would you describe your level of Russian?", from "I have no knowledge of Russian" through to 'Native'. Knowledge of participants' level of Russian was useful for developing a picture of the characteristics of a Bulgakov translator working in theatre. This relates directly to the ontological consideration of this work, in terms of the nature of the Bulgakov translator and how this might aid in the classification of theatre translators as a separate

category from the general label of ‘literary translator’, which is often mistakenly applied to these translators.

The other questions posed in the survey allowed the selection of multiple answers, to ensure that all relevant data was captured, for example, Question 5 invited participants to select all applicable answers for the question “Which of Bulgakov’s works have you been involved in bringing to the stage?”. This took into account that some participants may have been involved in staging multiple productions, providing context for their answers.

Similarly, Question 8 (shown in Figure 2.2), enabled a consideration of the implications of analysing the experiences of practitioners who have been involved in staging the relevant productions in both Britain and the US.



7

How were you commissioned to work on the Bulgakov production/s?

- Who contacted you?
- Was there a formal discussion?
- Did you negotiate your own terms or was it done through an agent?
- Are there any specific terms of the agreement that you are able to mention?

Enter your answer

8

In which country/countries was/were the production/s staged?
(please select all applicable answers)

- ☐ England
- ☐ Scotland
- ☐ United States of America
- ☐ Wales

Figure 2.2 – Questions 7 and 8 from the survey questionnaire completed by participants

Indeed, of the ten individuals the centre of the case studies presented in this work, four of them have had their translations/adaptations of Bulgakov’s work staged in both Britain and the US, so this is an important consideration. Of the case studies examined in this thesis, three individuals who adapted Bulgakov’s prose for the stage consented to participation in the survey: Edward Kemp, Richard Spaul, and Robert Astle, whose experiences are explored in Chapter

5. Mike Lion was unavailable for survey, though it was possible to indirectly interview him via social media, as is explicated in Section 2.2.5. The findings generated from this primary data have enhanced the quality of the analyses in these research.

Meanwhile, the remaining questions were open-ended and sought to elicit responses which provided more details on the experiences of individual participants, which could not be determined through the quantitative data gathered through the other questions listed. These open-ended questions included prompts to guide participant responses, in terms of the level and nature of detail that I was aiming to gather. For instance, as shown in Figure 2.2, Question 7 includes prompts beneath the question ‘How were you commissioned to work on the Bulgakov production/s?’. These prompts allowed me to elicit responses that revealed the nature of the pitching process, for example whether it was a formal or informal process, whether the translator/adaptor negotiated their own terms or it was achieved through the involvement of a third party, i.e., a theatrical or literary agent and, crucially, whether the project was pitched to the translator/adaptor or they pitched it to the theatre company themselves. These elements of the process are typically hidden from public view, so the questionnaire results provided new information that was essential to a study investigating translator agency across the entire creative process, from pitching to rehearsals.

An unexpected result of these interactions with practitioners was that a number of practitioners generously provided additional material which furthered my understanding of the role of the translator in Anglophone British and American staged productions of Bulgakov’s work. Such additional material included annotated playscripts, programmes, and video recordings of staged productions, which would otherwise have been unavailable for consultation.

2.2.4 Interview

On 12 June 2024, a telephone interview was conducted with Bill Alexander, a former Associate Director at the RSC, who was recruited via the questionnaire recruitment process. Alexander expressed a preference to be interviewed via

telephone, which required a rethinking of the format for this method of data collection. As De Vaus points out, there are additional considerations that need to be taken into account when conducting questionnaires in the format of a telephone interview. These considerations include the lack of visual aids to support the participant in response to more complex questions, the need to build rapport with new contacts to elicit meaningful responses, and how the framing of questions may influence responses (2013, p.128). In response to the first two considerations, a semi-structured approach was implemented, affording the flexibility required to adapt to the needs of both participant and researcher, resulting in the gathering of high-quality data.

In terms of framing impacting responses to the questions asked, neutral wording and intonation were used to ask open-ended questions, again allowing for flexibility. The questions posed to Alexander in the interview were the same as those asked in the survey, as described in Section 2.2.3. The only difference was that the semi-structured nature of the telephone interview afforded the flexibility to ask spontaneous follow-up questions to gain clarifications on some of the participant's responses. From the outset, Alexander was made aware that one hour had been allotted to this interview, as opposed to the 15 minutes indicated as an average completion time for online questionnaire participants. This allocation of additional time allowed the inclusion of follow-up questions during the interview, which removed the need to email participants for clarification, as was the case with questionnaire participants, thereby speeding up the data collection process. This was also a certain method of gathering data, as opposed to sending follow-up emails to questionnaire participants, which did not always result in an answer.

The telephone interview with Alexander was particularly fruitful in filling gaps in my case study on Helen Rappaport (see Section 4.3.7), who was unavailable for survey. Alexander had worked closely with Rappaport in the 1982-1983 RSC production run of Bulgakov's *Molière*, so his input was invaluable in developing a holistic view of Rappaport's agency as a Bulgakov translator. The next section provides a discussion of the uses and implications of social media as a means of data collection.

2.2.5 Social media

The final method of data collection is also the newest existing method implemented in this research: social media. This tool was useful for gathering information that it had not been possible to obtain via the other methods outlined in this chapter, and possesses additional features which aid the data collection process, such as the use of hashtags.

According to a report from May 2024, the number of Instagram users worldwide increased from 1.04 billion in 2020 to 1.4 billion in 2024, and is projected to grow to 1.44 billion in 2025 (Statista, 2024a). Meanwhile, in April 2024, it was reported that Facebook was the most popular social network on a global scale, with 3.065 million monthly active users, followed by YouTube with 2.504 million and Instagram with 2 million, while X (formerly Twitter) had 611 million monthly active users (Statista, 2024b).

This research uncovered many amateur productions that had only been advertised via social media, using the aforementioned platforms. These types of production are often neglected in scholarship, so this has implications for their visibility, in terms of the number of users who are made aware of the production, and for the visibility of research on these productions as this thesis seeks to draw scholarly attention to these relatively under-researched productions. Social media also allowed me to gather data about productions staged in regional locations (i.e., outside of the recognised theatre hubs of London and New York, particularly the West End and Broadway). This has helped to fulfil another aim of this research: to remedy the “persistent metropolitan bias [that] has long distorted existing accounts of British [and, I argue, American] theatre” (Reid, 2024, p.246).

Indeed, Renée Desjardins has identified “the new possibilities social media afford Translation Studies researchers” as being “worthy of discussion in the digital era” (2017, p.82) and this research capitalises on this valuable resource for collecting quantitative and qualitative data relating to productions and the role of the translator in the creative process. For example, the case study of Mike Lion (see Section 5.3.7) relied primarily on data gathered from an Instagram Live discussion between Lion and Dacha Theatre (DT)’s PR and

Marketing Manager, Audrey Herold, on 7 March 2024, about the company's 2024 production of *The Master and Margarita*.

As will be discussed in Section 5.3.7, hashtags are used to convey key themes of a post, and clicking on a hashtag directs a user to further posts related to that topic. Gevisa La Rocca and Giovanni Boccia Artieri point to the additional benefit of using hashtags to gather data: “by extracting data through a computer, it is possible to extract them in a short time”, making hashtags “an important development tool for social research” (2022, p.2). Not only do hashtags on social media accelerate the data collection process, they also offer an insight into which specific topics a theatre company, translator /adaptor may wish to highlight, depending on the motivations of these groups. This has implications for investigations of translator agency in the ‘digital era’: firstly, it may influence how either translators/adaptors themselves or theatre companies want to make translators/adaptors visible to a public audience; and, secondly, it helps to establish how the experiences of translators/adaptors are affected by the discussion of their practice social media.

In this vein, Haidee Kotze has highlighted that social media is “a fluid discursive and *performative* space constructed by people” (my emphasis, 2024, p.3). This performative aspect of a social media presence makes it particularly suitable as a data collection tool in this performative research on translator agency. Specifically, it is useful determining how translators (re)construct their identity over time and subsequent implications for their visibility. Indeed, Venuti has argued that social media is an example of a ‘new visibility’ in which “the literary translator possesses a different sort of identity”, together with other methods such as podcasts (2023), both of which have been employed as significant data collection methods in this research.

Desjardins has also emphasised that this type of research raises the issue that “translators cannot lament that they are invisible if they do not seize the opportunity to self-represent” (2024, p.68). In this regard, social media can be used as a means to gather data about how translators/adaptors respond to the opportunity to visibly promote themselves, whether they choose to or not, and the same principle can be applied to the analysis of the personal websites of these figures to answer the question of how translators/adaptors want to be visible, as explored in Chapters 4-5. Ultimately, this new type of visibility has

the potential to recast translators as more prominent, publicly visible figures, the implications of which are explored more fully in Chapter 5.

Prior to the Instagram Live discussion, DT actively encouraged Instagram users to engage with the DT team by posting comments, prompting me to comment with my specific questions, which were then posed to Lion by Herold during the discussion. The findings from this interview are discussed in Chapter 5. This method of data collection was especially useful as it circumvented the issue of Lion's unavailability for participation in the survey questionnaire, allowing me to ask questions to elicit the desired responses. The only difference between this approach and the survey questionnaire was that the questions were posed indirectly, through Herold. The main implication was that Herold possessed the agency to either disregard questions or ask them in a way that suited DT's agenda. Fortunately, Herold posed all of my questions to Lion in the intended manner, contributing positively to the data collection process. Although Instagram Live is ephemeral, the discussion was recorded by DT and posted on their Instagram account under the 'story' category of 'Shop Talk'. As a researcher, this was a useful tool for data collection on account of its easy accessibility because of its public nature.

2.3 Data analysis tools and their implications

It was necessary to code the data gathered through the methods outlined in Section 2.2, "in order to find commonalities, differences, patterns, and structures" (Basit, 2003, p.144). This coding was carried out by analysing documents and survey questionnaire and interview findings to identify key themes and patterns in the data. Additional tools developed as part of the theoretical framework have been used to interpret the data, namely performative steps and the theatre of translation. However, as a precursor to these tools, networks of contacts have been implemented to identify the agents who both exert influence over and are influenced by translators/adaptors. Data coding in this research was bipartite: "one [phase] focusing on meanings inside the research context and the other concerned with what might be meaningful

to outside audiences” (Basit, 2003, p.144), to ensure the relevance of these research findings to the widest possible audience.

2.3.1 Document analysis

Initial analysis consisted of reviewing the relevant documents sourced through archival research. According to Munday, this type of data “enables a detailed picture to be constructed of the role of translation in concrete socio-historical contexts” (2015, p.130). The categories of documents were consulted as part of this research included: both personal and professional correspondence between translators and other agents, notebooks, translation drafts which may be annotated, and additional material such as press reviews, journals, newspaper and magazine articles, promotional posters and postcards for the translated stage productions.

Document analysis yields insights into the conflicts, collaborations and motivations that determine micro-level practice, which enables the construction of micro-histories for individual translators/adaptors (cf. Munday, 2014; Batchelor, 2017). These micro-histories provide the foundations necessary to contextualise the data in individual case studies, by “allow[ing] us to explore marginalised aspects that might otherwise have been overlooked and thus [...] bring fresh and often surprising insights to historical narratives” (Batchelor, 2017, p.7). Considering the history of individual translators/adaptors, especially those who have been under-researched in existing scholarship, can challenge dominant narratives in Translation Studies historiography.

This research uncovered a variety of materials written in English, German, and Russian, all of which have been under-researched in existing scholarship, but especially the German- and Russian-language materials. Despite making a vital contribution to this study, the analysis of this archival data was limited in certain regards; the quality of material negatively impacted my ability to interpret the data, particularly low-quality photocopies which were difficult to read, and it was difficult to decipher handwritten materials, especially those written in Russian cursive, which is notoriously challenging to interpret.

It was not just helpful, but also practically necessary to collect data in this manner; of the ten case studies in this thesis, three pertained to deceased subjects, therefore rendering any type of survey or interview impossible. As such, the data gathered through archival research was essential in conducting this investigation into translator agency from 1934 to 2024. Furthermore, this analysis facilitated a discussion of variation between the social scripts of individual translators/adaptors. As Outi Paloposki highlights, comparing the experiences of translators/adaptors across different times and spaces “enhances our understanding of translators’ agency, of the development of work practices in different parts of the world, and of collaboration between various agents of the translation event” (2017, p.32). This is precisely what has been achieved through conducting document analysis, the findings of which has been supplemented by considering the data gathered from the survey questionnaire and interview conducted in 2024.

2.3.2 Survey questionnaire and interview analysis

As with the findings resulting from the process of document analysis outlined in Section 2.3.1, the data gathered from responses to the survey questionnaire on Microsoft Forms and the telephone interview conducted was collated on a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. From this collated data, it was possible to extrapolate qualitative data, which was meaningful in answering the RQs posed in Section ii. Data which has been used to support the assertions made in case study analyses includes the percentage of practitioners who felt that the role for which they were credited in the production adequately reflected the role they did perform, and the periods in which the practitioners were involved in staging Bulgakov. The responses of those who participated in the questionnaire feature in the images in Figure 2.3, which was automatically generated by Microsoft Forms. Such automatically-generated images served as visual aids for analysing the results.

8. In which country/countries was/were the production/s staged?
(please select all applicable answers)



Figure 2.3 – Automatically-generated visual representation of results from Question 8 of the survey questionnaire

Data presented in Figure 2.3 was useful for understanding the geographical spread of these productions, which served to contextualise the answers given. The two countries with the highest representation by proportion were England and the US, which reflects the prioritisation of locations in the case studies: four case studies are situated in the US (across the states of Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, and Washington) and three in England (representing London, the Midlands, the North East, and the South East), with one in Scotland (Edinburgh), and Wales is mentioned briefly in relation to an additional production resulting from Rappaport's translation of *Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh* in Chapter 4.

Most important for the purposes of this research were the labels which practitioners chose as most accurately reflecting their labour in the creative process. Despite 100% of participants (adaptors, actors, directors, and translators) reporting that they felt satisfied with the roles for which they were credited, the findings revealed that 71% of British translator and adaptors, and 100% of American translators and adaptors felt that a new, hyphenated role best defined their overall role in the context of producing Bulgakov's work for the stage. 44% of those British and American translators/adaptors who chose a hyphenated role felt that a label indicating a triple role that incorporated translator or adaptor best represented the extent of their labour. Two of the chosen roles (director-tradaptor and actor-tradaptor) combine the roles of translator and adaptor with other theatrical roles. These findings have implications for the present study. Firstly, in terms of how performing multiple

roles affects a translator/adaptor's agency, in terms of influencing decision-making and how they separate roles, or if such separation is even possible.

Secondly, they raise a key question surrounding the ontological state of the theatre translator, to quote Paloposki: "who *is* a translator", which Paloposki maintains is "still an open question" (original emphasis, 2017, p.44). This relates directly to the discussion of RQ3, in terms of whether it is really possible to distinguish between translators and adaptors, suggesting that hyphenated roles may better account for translatorial labour in theatre. These are issues which permeate the case studies presented in this thesis, and have a bearing on the development of networks of contacts for each translator/adaptor in this thesis.

2.3.3 Networks of contacts

In this research, networks of contacts have been established for each translator/adaptor examined, based on the analyses of documents and responses provided for the survey questionnaire and in interview. These networks "are open-ended in that they lack clearly defined borders and are constantly restructured and reshaped as members join, leave and participate in new ways" (McDonough Dolmaya, 2018, p.347). As such, this is a useful analytical tool for a performative approach to translator agency, by considering how the translator/adaptor and other agents interact (perform) in relation to one another, resulting in the (re)construction of their identities over time. This sets the scene for the analyses based on performative steps (see Section 2.3.4). The graphical depictions of these networks, based on the structure in Figure 2.4, are included in each case study, as part of the development of the micro-history of each translator/adaptor with which each case study opens.

By way of example, Figure 2.4 presents my own network of contacts in the process of conducting this research, with the individual under study at the centre. Green spheres represent indirect contacts, while blue spheres indicate those with whom I had direct contact. For instance, Bulgakov is an indirect contact, since he predeceased me, and there was no opportunity for direct contact, while I was able to directly contact theatre practitioners and translators

through the survey questionnaire and interview. Unidirectional arrows indicate the direction of contact and related influence, such as the ST author/playwright, who passed his work on to ST rights holders (see Chapters 3-5). Multidirectional arrows indicate that communication occurred in both directions, such as when I contacted literary/theatrical agents, who then contacted the translators/theatre practitioners they represented, who subsequently engaged in two-way communication with myself.

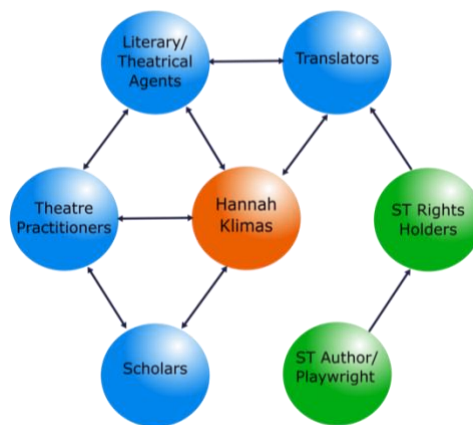


Figure 2.4 – My own network of contacts

While this work does not adopt a practice-as-research model in its analysis, it does draw upon some of the self-reflexivity implicit in that approach; my own network is primarily intended to illustrate how the networks function in this thesis, though it is also useful to reflect on my own positionality in the context of this research; as a scholar who has also worked as a translator, this has naturally shaped my own perspective on these matters, and, to refer back to the discussion of hashtags in Section 2.2.5, this has shaped the elements of the creative process which are afforded visibility in this thesis.

Although my own positionality is not directly under study, it contextualises the methods chosen to facilitate this performative investigation, which must be recognised when justifying this approach to the study of translator agency in theatre. Applying this tool to my own case also demonstrates the applicability of this model to the study of translators outside of theatre, as an additional benefit. Mapping the networks of contacts for each translator/adaptor contextualises the circumstances of TT production, which is crucial for examining the performance of these figures across the production as a whole.

2.3.4 Performative steps

After analysing the relevant network of contacts for each case study, as well as data from archival research, the findings of the circulated questionnaire and interview conducted, translator/adaptor involvement in the creative process, in various capacities, is charted graphically through performative steps. Figure 2.5 is an example visualisation of the performative steps theorised in Section 1.4.1. Each role played by the translator/adaptor across different steps of the production process may be limited to one step, or it may occur across multiple steps, depending on the evidence gathered for each individual examined.

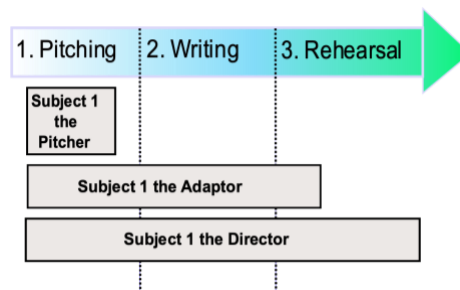


Figure 2.5 – Example visualisation of roles across the three performative steps

In Figure 2.5, the dotted lines represent the fluid boundaries between the performative steps, allowing a reconceptualization of roles from being ‘unrealistically static’ (Barnette, 2018, p.122) and limited to certain stages of the creative process to being realistically dynamic. This example presents an imagined individual (‘Subject 1’), who adapted and directed a production, since I was not involved across all three steps.

Here, the individual simultaneously acted as pitcher, adaptor, and director during the initial pitching stage, with each role influencing their actions and associated agency during this step. The writing stage was then influenced by the two primary roles of the individual in this production: adaptor and director, with the competing interests of each individual role affecting the translation/adaptation process.

Both roles are then shown to carry on over to Step 3, overlapping, since it is difficult to pinpoint the exact moment when their role as director took over from the role of adaptor. This was a useful tool for analysing the extent of the individual roles that a translator/adaptor plays in the course of their overall

performance in the context of the production as a whole. It is a meaningful way to account for the degree of overlap between these roles which influences their decisions and actions taken during each stage of the production process.

Therefore, the roles played by each translator/adaptor as part of their overall performance is visualised thus in each case study. Indeed, as will be made apparent in Chapters 3-5, some of the individual roles performed by the subjects of the case studies span multiple performative steps, while others are limited to fewer stages of the creative process. Considering the overall performance of translators in this manner facilitates a discussion of the implications of these positions in terms of structure and agency. The holistic picture of the interactions between translators/adaptors and other agents in theatre presented through networks of contacts and the visualisation of performative steps culminates in a final mapping of their overall performance in the visualised theatre of translation.

2.3.5 The theatre of translation

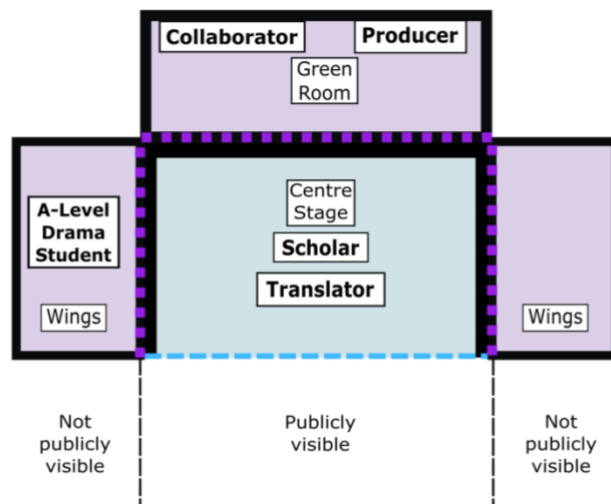


Figure 2.6 – My own roles in the theatre of translation

In line with the conceptualisation of the theatre of translation, including the reimagined, fluid 'fifth wall', in Section 1.6, this section demonstrates how this metaphor is applied in practice. Specifically, as an analytical tool through which to assign translators and adaptors a role which more accurately reflects the complex and multi-faceted nature of their labour and, therefore, their agency.

The outline in Figure 2.6 again draws upon my own positionality; in my case, the roles of scholar and translator take centre stage. This is because these are the roles for which I am most publicly visible, through my academic presence in conference programmes and presentations, and articles, though I do also have visibility as a translator with a professional website. Since the wings house roles which are not immediately visible to the public yet strongly connect the roles occupied centre stage and backstage, this is where my role as an A-Level Drama student is placed, connecting my role as a scholar researching theatre to my backstage work as a producer.

Finally, in my past experiences as a producer, I was able to exert influence over the relevant productions and have drawn upon this experience in my current role. Despite being empowered to act with intent, and collaborating with the cast during the performative step of rehearsal, this role was not publicly visible, so it is located backstage, in the green room. As a translator, my role as a collaborator is also found in the green room as the direct and indirect collaborations that take place between myself and the ST author and/or the translation client are not publicly visible, yet inform my performance as a scholar-translator. This work will draw upon such hybrid labelling in the analysis, so as to provide a more accurate reflection of the fluid roles played by Bulgakov translators/adaptors in theatre.

According to this performative evaluation, I would assign myself the hyphenated role of scholar-translator. While I have also played the roles of A-Level Drama student, producer, and collaborator, which have informed my overall performance, it is these two roles for which I am most publicly visible. Most importantly, these are the roles which I promote most visibly. The hyphenation of my self-assigned overall role based on a mapping of the roles I have played in the theatre of translation also bears significance in the case studies in Chapters 3-5; hyphens “locate intermediate, often invisible, and shifting spaces between what often are supposedly oppositional binary structures” (DeVere Brody, 2008, p.98). This is yet another way in which this novel performative framework reimagines supposedly dichotomous terms.

As was demonstrated in Chapter 1, it is worthwhile to consider the ways in which supposedly dichotomous terms overlap, as much as the ways in which they are different. Returning to the matter of translatorial identity, this

hyphenation of roles indicates “not a fixed point, but rather a joint – a shifting positionality – a continually collapsing structure” (DeVere Brody, 2008, p.98) which supports the notion that the identity of translators and adaptors is continuously constructed and reconstructed through repeated actions.

Following these principles in the subsequent case studies, this has resulted in the reimagination of the roles played by the relevant translators and adaptors to suggest a label that offers a more holistic overview of their labour in the creative process of theatre. This is based on the evidence gathered from the document analysis described in Section 2.3.1, which revealed the intricate details of the translator/adaptor’s role in the creative process, and the survey questionnaire and interview findings on how the roles of translators and adaptors are perceived by themselves and by other theatre practitioners, as outlined in Section 2.3.2. It must be mentioned that the mapping of a translator or adaptor’s role in the theatre of translation may vary between performances, if the subject of the study has performed different roles in the context of different productions. This fits the theorisation of translator/adaptor identity and the ‘fifth wall’ as a fluid and adaptable space, allows for different extents of collaboration, revealing different degrees of agency, in different contexts.

2.4 Summary

This chapter has outlined the methods implemented in order to answer the research questions that have guided this research, which were, to recapitulate:

RQ1: To what extent does collaboration occur between the translator/adaptor and other agents, what is the nature of collaboration and how is it affected by external factors?

RQ2: How does the translator/adaptor construct their own identity as a translator/adaptor of Bulgakov and how does this change over time?

RQ3: How does the terminology used to describe translators/adaptors affect their actions and identity?

The present study draws upon a variety of materials (in English, German, and Russian) collected through a range of methods. These materials are analysed through a mixture of existing tools and tools developed for the purposes of this research, based on a performative framework. This research examines the experiences of Bulgakov translators and adaptors in both Britain and the US, allowing a comparative analysis of these experiences across geographical locations and time. This approach allows a consideration of how the different conditions imposed by time and space affect “their possibilities to influence their own work” (Paloposki, 2017, p.44), which is at the core of this study. A mixed methodological approach allowed the triangulation of data, presenting a holistic view of translator agency in theatre through multiple case studies, viewed through the interpretivist lens of a performative framework.

Section 2.1 has outlined the research design, consisting of ten case studies of Bulgakov translators and adaptors, working between 1934 and 2024. Initial quantitative data, resulting in a compiled bibliography of productions, allowed me to narrow down the corpus of the research to the study of four key Bulgakov works: *Dni Turbinykh*, *Mol’er/Kabala svjatosh*, *Master i Margarita*, and *Sobach’e serdtse*. Within that corpus, five British (Michael Glenny, Charlotte Pyke, Helen Rappaport, Edward Kemp, and Richard Spaul) and five American subjects (Mirra Ginsburg, Eugene Lyons, Michael Lessac, Mike Lion, and Robert Astle) were identified as suitable subjects for case study analysis. Qualitative research was then collected to contextualise the findings of the initial research, revealing the diverse experiences of Bulgakov translators and adaptors. This data then facilitated the development of case studies, according to the four key aspects of the study: 1) the micro-history of the individual, 2) their network of contacts, 3) their interactions in the theatre of translation in a production-specific context, and 4) a mapping of the individual’s performance in the theatre of translation, as presented in Chapters 3-5.

Section 2.2 has presented the data collection methods implemented during the research process, highlighting the applicability and limitations of each method. This process first employed digitised performance records and databases to obtain quantitative data, which provided a starting point for the research, identifying specific individuals and productions for further research.

Archival research was then conducted to gather qualitative data relating to these individuals and productions, including personal correspondence, annotated translation/adaptation drafts, professional contracts, and promotional material. This was essential for collecting data relating to deceased subjects. Primary data regarding living subjects, meanwhile, was collected through a self-designed survey questionnaire and telephone interview, which allowed the collection of consistent, targeted data across a narrow cross-section of participants. These participants were recruited according to the criteria outlined in Section 2.2.3, to ensure their suitability for this study. Social media was then used as a secondary method to obtain data relating to Mike Lion, who was unavailable for survey through the questionnaire or interview. These data collection methods provided sufficient evidence to then conduct the next step of analysis.

Finally, Section 2.3 has introduced and explained the tools used to analyse the data gathered from the collection methods applied in Section 2.2. Initially, archival documents, questionnaire and interview results were analysed to provide the micro-histories of each translator and adaptor studied, which constitutes the first section of each case study. Examples of survey questions were presented, as were automatically-generated graphical analyses of the data collected, which aided the analytical process. Analytical tools were then developed to enable the practical application of the performative framework outlined in Chapter 1. Namely, networks of contacts, identifying key collaborators, both direct and indirect, and whether or not their ability to influence was unidirectional or multidirectional, supporting the development of the micro-histories of translators and adaptors in each case study. The extent of translator/adaptor labour was then examined across each performative step, from pitching to writing to rehearsal, corresponding to the third core area of study outlined as part of the case study structure. This all culminated in the mapping of the translator/adaptor's overall performance in the theatre of translation diagram, relating to the fourth and final element of the case study structure. This assigned an overall role that better captures the extent of the translator/adaptor's labour in their overall performance.

While the findings of this study provided valuable insights, some limitations were encountered, including the unavailability of some case study

subjects for participation in the survey questionnaire. Information pertaining to these individuals thus had to be gleaned from secondary data sources. This has implications for reliability, though these materials were cross-referenced to test their validity prior to the data analysis stage. The relatively low sample size of the questionnaire and interview research conducted could also be considered as a form of limitation. In turn, this limits the generalisability of the findings of these data collection methods, though it must be acknowledged that the framework applied in this research generates specific findings as opposed to universal conclusions. Though this may be regarded in one sense as a limitation, it is in line with a growing research interest in human translator studies, prioritising the individual over the collective.

The focus of this thesis will now turn to the empirical findings of this work, as demonstrated through case study analyses; Chapter 3 presents the case studies of Michael Glenny and Mirra Ginsburg as early Bulgakov translators who established the original social script for this performance. This sets the scene for Chapters 4 and 5, which provide in-depth examinations of the agency of translators and adaptors involved in staging Bulgakov's original plays and plays adapted from his prose, respectively. Such an investigation enables a comparative analysis of the experiences of these translators and adaptors, both within and between the genres outlined above. This then yields meaningful conclusions to be drawn about the agency of translators and adaptors of Bulgakov in the Anglophone context of British and American theatres and how this has changed over a ninety-year period.

Chapter 3: Setting the scene: Exploring the roles of Michael Glenny and Mirra Ginsburg as early Bulgakov translators

The notion that translators act in complete isolation as they perform the act of translation is a fallacy. In reality, the translation product is “created by individuals who belong to various social systems and who are continuously creating values and meanings in and with their translation” (Berneking, 2016, p.266). This indicates that translation is a social act and translators must act in collaboration with other agents as they perform this act. Thus, the agency of the translator must be analysed in the theatre of translation, where multiple agents perform a range of roles and interact with one another in these roles.

A performative approach to the interactions between the translator and the various other agents involved in bringing Bulgakov’s work to Anglophone British and American stages allows us to consider two key aspects of translatorial performance. Firstly, how external factors influenced their respective collaborations with other agents (such as publishers and scholars) in translating Bulgakov’s work. Secondly, how they each (re)constructed their respective professional identities as specialists in translating Bulgakov’s work over time, influenced by their career trajectories, critical reception, and changing cultural landscapes.

This chapter begins by introducing the case studies of Michael Glenny and Mirra Ginsburg, the first major translators of Bulgakov in Britain and the US, who both occupy the primary role of translator in the theatre of translation. These case studies explore how their respective agency was affected through interactions with other cast members in the theatre of translation. Specifically, it considers how Glenny and Ginsburg’s repeated actions performatively established the script for the everyday life of the Bulgakov translator (cf. Goffman, 1959), based on the concept of the ‘social’ script as has been developed in Chapter 1. The comparison of these case studies explores how the competition of the ‘translation game’ (Ginsburg, no date) became the ‘Bulgakov game’. Therefore, this allows for a consideration of how their roles extend beyond the traditional expectations of the translator as a subservient, backstage figure (cf. Simeoni, 1995; 1998).

As was outlined in Chapter 2, this analysis establishes the micro-histories of each translator, their respective networks of contacts, and roles performed across the three performative steps of pitching, writing, and rehearsal. Doing so establishes a more holistic picture of how they perform their roles, facilitating the final mapping of these roles in the theatre of translation. This accounts for the multiplicity of roles they embody, providing a label that best reflects their labour in the process of moving from Russian page to Anglophone British and American stages. This chapter also highlights how Glenny and Ginsburg were able to acquire a status that granted them agency.

3.1 Glenny and Ginsburg: Bringing Bulgakov to Anglophone audiences

The British translator, Michael Glenny (1927-1990) and his American counterpart Mirra Ginsburg (1909-2000), while not the first to translate Bulgakov's work into English, were the first to establish the script of the Bulgakov translator (cf. Goffman, 1959). Their performances as Bulgakov translators established the norms that would come to characterise their practice, and influenced the translators who succeeded them. Since then, these successors have redrafted this script many times and, in turn, their revised scripts continue to be rewritten by new generations of translators and adaptors of Bulgakov's work.

These two case studies reimagine the traditional perception of the role of the translator as a subservient, hidden participant, by recasting them as "individuals who create and shape the translating professions [...] who maintain a specific identity" (Sela-Sheffy, 2011, p.2). Through these actions, translators are empowered to assign themselves multiple roles in the creative process of theatre. This approach challenges the notion the translator is limited to a position 'behind the scenes' (cf. Jänis, 1996), relocating them as the agents placing Bulgakov and, thereby, themselves, on the world stage. Discussion of these case studies primarily concerns the issues of status and identity, in relation to the overarching theme of agency.

'Status' is a "rather slippery concept" (Ruokonen and Svahn, 2022, p.860), which has many connotations in Translation Studies, including

prestige at both the occupational and individual level, and recognition as a professional category. It is understood here as the position of translators and adaptors within the theatrical hierarchy (as was established in Section 1.4.1). Minna Ruokonen has alluded to ‘indications’ from empirical research that translator status “can be improved by means of increased visibility and cooperation among translators and other agents” (2013, p.336). The case studies of Glenny and Ginsburg further support these ‘indications’, demonstrating how both were empowered to elevate their respective statuses through heightened visibility. This visibility was granted both by their other professional roles and their interactions with other agents, including translators. Identity, meanwhile, is understood as “a dynamic and multi-layered social construct, collectively produced and re-produced through social struggles, and in transforming cultural settings, it has everything to do with status and self-esteem” (Sela-Sheffy, 2011, p.2). These definitions of status and identity guide the performative analyses of Glenny’s and Ginsburg’s performances as Bulgakov translators.

In the vein of Minna Ruokonen and Elin Svahn’s study of Finnish and Swedish translators (2022), the findings of these case studies are contextualised through comparative analysis in the British and American context. These two case studies differ from those presented in Chapters 4 and 5, since both translators operated in the same period and had indirect dealings with one another through their respective networks of contacts, which will be examined in greater detail in the following sections. To conduct a thorough appraisal of the significance of the power dynamics at play between Glenny and Ginsburg, and their respective contacts, in bringing Bulgakov’s work to Anglophone audiences and securing their own statuses as Bulgakov translators, it is first necessary to establish a holistic view of the social circumstances that affected their career trajectories as translators.

To that end, the following subsections will examine their relationships with other agents in relation to performative steps, assessing the power dynamic being enacted between them and how these interactions impacted on their social trajectory and careers as translators. Initially, their respective backgrounds must be taken into consideration as no translator (or any human being) exists in isolation from their social circumstances. By investigating

Glenny's and Ginsburg's individual backgrounds and how these were shaped by their respective social experiences, this takes into account that "no human being and no translator is a copy of another" (Bergantino, 2023, p.767). This fulfils the comparative aim of the thesis, providing insights on the situations of individuals, rather than applying a universal understanding to the decidedly complex issue of translator agency. The format of these case studies differs from those presented in Chapters 4 and 5: here, they are presented side by side, rather than case-by-case, to consider the additional aspect of the indirect contact between Glenny and Ginsburg, and their parallel experiences in their interactions with different agents in the theatre of translation.

3.1.1 Michael Glenny

Pym avers that "it is rarely easy to find out about translators as people, with their own life stories and evolving ideologies" (2009, p.32), which is especially true of Michael Glenny. Biographical information on Glenny is surprisingly scant, given his status as a prolific Russian-to-English translator. The biographical information provided for Glenny in *The New York Times* (NYT) reads as follows: "a 45-year-old Briton, Oxford graduate, sometime Army interpreter and businessman, at present a lecturer on German and Russian subjects" (Karlinsky, 1972). This information reduces Glenny to an age, place of graduation, and a handful of professional roles.

Some further exploration uncovers Glenny's education in Russian language and culture during his enrolment at the Joint Service School for Linguists (JSSL) in the 1950s. Geoffrey Elliott and Harold Shukman's *Secret Classrooms* (2003) offers a rare insight into the previously classified activities of the JSSL, especially in the chapter 'The World's a Stage'. According to Elliott and Shukman, students learned the art of Russian translation (into and out of English) by the process of 'immersion and absorption', regularly translating passages from classic Russian literature, plays and poetry (2003, pp.143-144). Interestingly, there is no direct mention of Glenny in *Secret Classrooms*, though Cathy McAteer draws scholarly attention to Glenny's membership of this programme in *Translating Great Russian Literature* (2021). Both the

omission and inclusion of Glenny affect his posthumous visibility as a translator; as a work written for a broad public audience, Glenny's omission from *Secret Classrooms* affects his recognition in the more general context of the JSSL programme. Meanwhile, McAteer's volume is intended for a scholarly audience, drawing attention to Glenny's contribution within academic circles, though this relatively narrow target audience limits the visibility of his translatorial work.

McAteer explicitly situates Glenny among the specialist social group of JSSL linguists: "[o]n paper, Glenny's credentials match many of the new Penguin Russian translators' who replaced the first cohort: military-trained, practical yet scholarly linguists" (2021, p.136). McAteer argues that such credentials qualified these linguists as being "well placed to undertake literary commissions" (2021, p.136). This seems to be the case with Glenny's contemporaries, such as Michael Frayn, who is a celebrity translator of Russian theatre. Thus, it is unsurprising that Glenny exploited the "solid knowledge of Russian literature" (2021, p.136) that he developed at JSSL to become both a Russian scholar and a literary translator. Occupying both positions simultaneously afforded him greater agency, relative to the comparatively minor degree of agency he would have experienced, had he been confined to one role. This insight into the social circumstances determining Glenny's career path is vital in understanding how his career shaped and was shaped by his performance as a translator.

The Glenny Collection at UCL has proved an indispensable resource in piecing together the puzzles of Glenny's career and social trajectory. The personal correspondence held in this archive has enabled the charting of Glenny's career development and his engagement with other agents involved in academia, literary translation, and theatre. This forms the basis of my understanding of Glenny and his agency as a Bulgakov translator, especially in theatre. The network of contacts which Glenny developed and drew upon in the course of his career is visualised in Section 3.2. Attention now turns to the micro-history of Glenny's American counterpart, Mirra Ginsburg.

3.1.2 Mirra Ginsburg

In contrast to Glenny, there is ample biographical material on Ginsburg. In her biography on Gale Literature: Contemporary Authors (Mirra Ginsburg, Gale, 2002), it states that Ginsburg was born in Bobruysk, Belarus (the Russian Empire at the time of Ginsburg's birth) to a Jewish family and "[a]ttended schools in Russia, Latvia, Canada and the United States", where the family would finally settle. Her experiences in these various social settings would come to shape her professional trajectory as a freelance translator from Russian and Yiddish into English, as well as a writer and editor.

Ginsburg's social position was bolstered through her receipt of prestigious awards, including the Lewis Carroll Shelf Award for *The Diary of Nina Kosterina* (1972). She also received a National Translation Grant for *The Master and Margarita* in 1967. Finally, she was inducted into the prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship for 1975-76 (2002). These prestigious awards afforded Ginsburg a status that granted her agency; her status had been elevated to the point that she was able to influence decisions in raising the profile of other literary translators in her translation jury duties for the NBA (1974), ABA (1982), and PEN (1984). This powerful position was reinforced by Ginsburg's membership of the American Literary Translators Association (ALTA), Authors guild, Authors League of America, and the Dramatists guild, in addition to PEN, where she served on the PEN Translation Committee.

Gale (2002) categorises Ginsburg's work according to five distinct areas: Translator (five works, including Bulgakov's *Heart of a Dog*, 1968/1987), Translator and Author of Introduction (nine works, including *The Master and Margarita*, 1967/1987; *Flight*, 1969/1985; *The Life of Monsieur de Moliere*, 1970/1986/1988; and *Bliss*, 1985), Editor and Translator (including *The Fatal Eggs*, 1965), Folk Tale Collections: Editor, Adaptor, Translator (seven works) and Picture Books: Author, Adaptor, Translator (thirty works). Ginsburg performed a variety of roles across a number of genres throughout her career, which is a consideration in the analysis of her work as a Bulgakov translator.

Greta Slobin praises Ginsburg further for her "masterful translations in the late 1960s and early 1970s", leading to the discovery of Russophone

writers including Zamiatin, Bulgakov, and Platonov in the West (2001, p.925). Furthermore, Slobin posits that these works, made accessible through Ginsburg's translations, "have contributed to the creation of the canon of early Soviet literature and have become indispensable in university courses on the subject" (2001, p.925). It is noteworthy that despite never working in academia, Ginsburg was able to exert influence over scholars and their academic courses through her translation work. This is explored in greater detail in Section 3.3.5. Therefore, Ginsburg possessed agency in a number of fields, in terms of her ability to act with intent and influence decision-making processes.

In addition to the multiplicity of roles played by Ginsburg throughout her career, her work had extensive geographical reach; according to Gale, "[m]any of Ginsburg's books have also been published in England, and translated into various languages, including Afrikaans, Chinese, Danish, French, German, Japanese, Portuguese, Swedish, and Zulu" (2002). This clearly indicates that Ginsburg's influence extends beyond the Russophone and American social spheres, again indicating her unusually high status as a translator.

The understanding of Ginsburg's life and work developed here forms a crucial foundation for the analysis of her repeated behaviours in interactions with other agents, constituting her overall performance, as she sought to bring Bulgakov to Anglophone audiences. In order to understanding these interactions, it is first necessary to situate them in the contexts in which the STs were obtained and the power dynamics affecting her ability to achieve this aim. Archival materials held in the Mirra Ginsburg Papers at CRBML provide the basis for an analysis of the nature and degree of Ginsburg's agency in bringing Bulgakov's work to Anglophone audiences, in the context of the wider network of the theatre of translation. To contextualise this network, it is pertinent to now establish Glenny and Ginsburg's respective networks of contacts, as the first core area of these case studies.

3.2 Glenny's and Ginsburg's networks of contacts

It must be mentioned that some of the contacts identified in these models, as displayed in Figures 3.1 and 3.2 fit into more than one category. For instance,

a number of translators are also scholars, which means that some individuals discussed in this chapter appear under multiple categories, reflecting the multiplicity of roles played not just by the translator, but also by other figures. Moreover, these relationships did not necessarily include Glennly or Ginsburg, which has resulted in the mapping of relationships between these contacts. Examples of this type of relationship include interactions between theatre practitioners and publishers, or, in Ginsburg's case, between her literary agent and publishers. This has implications for the discussion of agency within this network, as some interactions did not rely on direct involvement of the translators at all, therefore reducing the opportunity of translators to exert their influence with intent in these contexts.

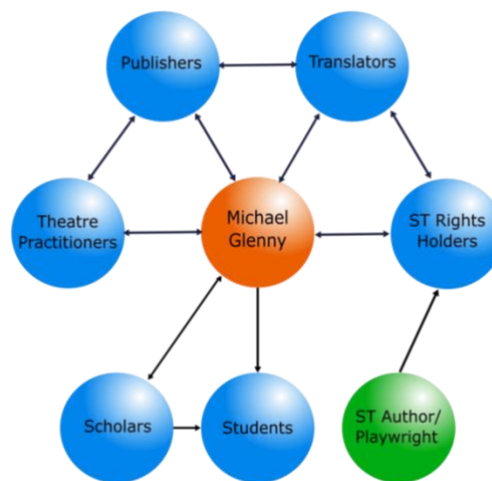


Figure 3.1 – Michael Glennly's network of contacts

Based on biographical evidence, it has been possible to establish a network of Glennly's contacts in the theatre of translation (see Figure 3.1). Some are examples of unidirectional influence, such as Glennly's influence on his students; Glennly occupied a more powerful position than his students, as their educator and judge of the quality of their work, in the form of examinations and assignments, and was able to influence them by selecting course material. This allowed him to expose them to the works which were of personal interest to him, such as those of Bulgakov. Notably, regarding the relationship between the translator and the ST author/playwright, Glennly was not able to develop a personal or professional connection with Bulgakov, as an author or playwright, as Bulgakov died in 1940 and Glennly first emerged as a translator of

Bulgakov's works in the 1960s. Nevertheless, it is necessary to chart the indirect connection between Glenny and Bulgakov, via the ST rights holders, in order to establish the indirect relationship between the translator and the ST author/playwright. The relationship between Glenny and his remaining direct contacts (ST rights holders, theatres, publishers, other scholars, and other translators) were multidirectional, as they often required negotiation or extended correspondence to achieve the aim of bringing Bulgakov to the Anglophone stage, which will be explored in more detail.



Figure 3.2 – Mirra Ginsburg's network of contacts

Ginsburg's network of contacts in the theatre of translation (see Figure 3.2) bears certain similarities to that of Glenny, in terms of the relationship with ST rights holders, theatres, publishers, scholars, and other translators. She also has the same indirect connection to Bulgakov as ST author/playwright (depending on the work). However, there are some notable differences, namely, Ginsburg had a strong connection with translation- and literary institutions, having been closely associated with PEN America (serving on the translation committee in 1977), ALTA and the Dramatists Guild among others. Ginsburg benefitted from grants and awards bestowed upon her by these organisations, and also served on translation juries and delivered talks about translation at conferences and universities. She also contributed to PEN America's Manifesto on Translation (1969), helping to establish model contracts (see "A Translator's Model Contract", 1981), and leading translation

workshops. She also listed her translated works with these organisations, for instance the Dramatists Guild listed her translation of *Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh* in *The Dramatists Guild Quarterly* (Ginsburg, 1986), boosting the profile of her translated work among theatrical circles.

Furthermore, Ginsburg was closely associated with her literary agent, Gunther Stuhlmann, at least up until the early 1970s, after which all trace of Stuhlmann ceases in the archival material consulted. Archival evidence reveals that Ginsburg received payment through Stuhlmann (Meeker, 1967), maintained strong personal connections with him (Ginsburg, 1968c), and communicated with publishers through Stuhlmann as a third party (Ginsburg, 1970b), including Stuhlmann's British publishing connections (Ginsburg, 1974). Finally, since Ginsburg was not a scholar, she did not have direct contact with students, and so could not influence them by including her own translations on reading lists. These factors must be taken into consideration when considering how Ginsburg (inter)acted in the theatre of translation.

This chapter now focusses on the interactions between Glenny, Ginsburg and their respective contacts: Bulgakov, ST rights holders, other translators, publishers, scholars, and theatre practitioners, considering the implications of these interactions for translator agency. These interactions and collaborations are explored through the prism of performative steps, which identify the following roles, across the first two steps of writing and rehearsal: collaborator, literary scout, negotiator, translator, mentor, and theatre collaborator. It must be acknowledged that these roles sometimes overlap, and occur across multiple steps, in a non-linear manner. The details and implications of these findings will now be explored, beginning with the charting of Glenny's and Ginsburg's respective roles across performative steps.

3.3 Glenny's and Ginsburg's interactions in the theatre of translation, 1960s-1990s

Given the general scope of the case studies presented in this chapter, which consider Glenny and Ginsburg's overall careers, instead of covering one production as is the format of the case studies presented in Chapters 4 and 5, their individual roles account for their entire careers, charted across

performative steps. These are shown in Figures 3.3 and 3.4, forming the basis of the establishment of their overall role in the theatre of translation.

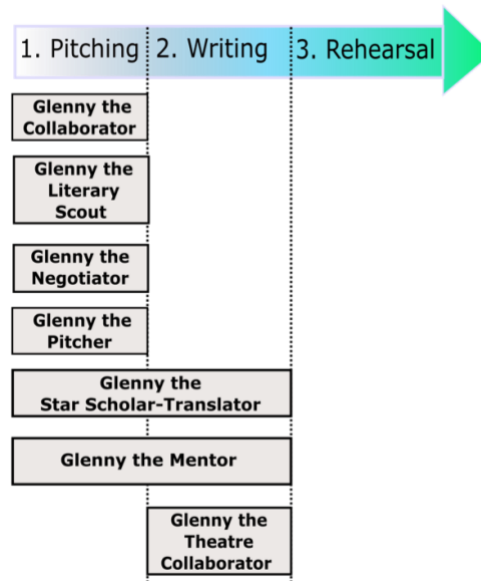


Figure 3.3 – Glenny's roles across performative steps

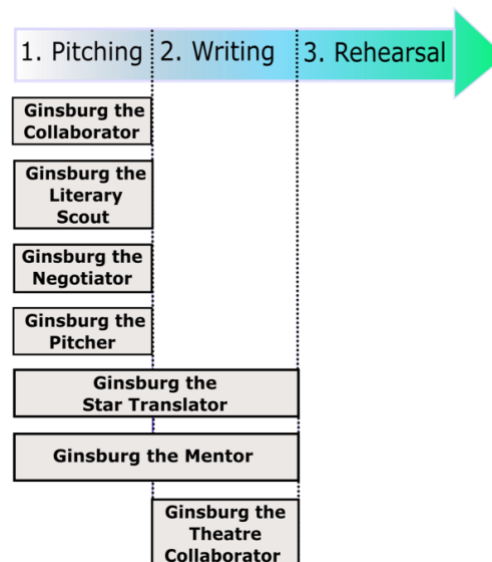


Figure 3.4 – Ginsburg's roles across performative steps

As Figures 3.3 and 3.4 reveal, both Glenny and Ginsburg displayed the greatest involvement in the first performative step (pitching), though they did have some involvement in the second performative step (writing). The full extent of these performances and their implications for translator agency will now be explored through their chronological interactions with the ST rights holders, other translators, publishers, scholars, and theatre practitioners. It also considers their indirect competition in developing connections that would allow them to achieve their aim to publish Bulgakov's work first. This is

prefaced by an initial consideration of the oft-forgotten figure of the ST author/playwright, with whom the translators indirectly collaborate as part of their overall performance.

3.3.1 Translators and the ST author

Firstly, Glenny's and Ginsburg's involvement in the first performative step can be observed in their mutual role of collaborator. This role indicates their relationship with Bulgakov, as ST author/playwright (depending on the ST text type). Although Bulgakov was not alive at the time when Glenny and Ginsburg were carrying out their translations of his work, it is necessary to consider how both interacted with Bulgakov, albeit indirectly, through ST rights holders and the STs themselves. Drawing upon Jansen and Wegener's 'multiple translatorship' (2013) as a means to shatter the illusion of the 'solitary author' in the Section iv, the agency of Bulgakov as ST author/playwright is entangled with that of each of the two translators, who adapt his ST to meet the requirements of a different temporal and geographical context.

The collaboration that occurs here is implicit and abstract, owing to the lack of direct communication between the two parties. Such collaboration is a form of intellectual dialogue between Bulgakov and the translator, occurring through translator engagement with the ideas presented in Bulgakov's work. Thus, in this context, Glenny and Ginsburg are best described as intellectual collaborators, which can be reduced to the role of collaborator in the theatre of translation. This role may not be publicly visible, which means it is located in the green room of the theatre of translation, but it does influence the translators' performances in both the first and second performative steps of pitching and writing. As the first form of interaction experienced by the translator, this influences subsequent interactions between the two translators and the other agents involved in the theatre of translation. The nature and implications of this indirect collaboration are examined further, in the translators' interactions with ST rights holders.

3.3.2 Translators and ST rights holders

The connections which arguably secured Glenny and Ginsburg's status as Bulgakov translators were the relationships which they developed through repeated interactions with those who holding the rights to Bulgakov's STs during the pitching step. According to Gill McLay, literary scouts "help alert book editors to manuscripts that they might not have seen – particularly from overseas agents" (2016) and this was certainly the case with both Glenny and Ginsburg. Thus, the translators played the dual roles of literary scout and negotiator during the initial pitching process, as will now be explicated.

As indicated in Section 3.1.2, Ginsburg was motivated to bring forgotten Soviet writers to the attention of Western audiences. Slobin notes how Ginsburg "would find a talent she was convinced of and could become impassioned about and adopt that person's work as her cause", which included Bulgakov (2001, p.925). This is arguably the cause which prompted her to contact Bulgakov's widow, Elena Sergeevna Bulgakova (1893-1970), in the late 1960s. In her first documented letter to Bulgakova, Ginsburg made her intentions clear:

I especially want to talk to you about your wonderful husband [...]. If you have any unpublished things, I would, of course, be really grateful to have the opportunity to translate them. (Ginsburg, 1968a)

In reference to 'unpublished things', Ginsburg is referring to works by Bulgakov which, at that stage, had neither been published in translation nor in its native Russian. Therefore, in translating and publishing these works, Ginsburg would be achieving something that had not been achieved, either by other translators, or by publishers inside or outside of the USSR, with the potential to afford her greater visibility and status (though it must be acknowledged that this is not guaranteed to translators). This resulted in greater agency as a translator in her performance as a literary scout and negotiator.

Despite being at a relatively early stage in her career as a freelance translator, Ginsburg exhibited confidence in her translatorial performance and ability to obtain and translate Bulgakov's work in the West. Bulgakova was

receptive to this direct approach and praised Ginsburg in their personal correspondence: “Most importantly, this is a new book to add to a growing collection of recognition of Bulgakov. I am delighted. Thank you again!” (Bulgakova, 1969) and “Thank you for your wonderful work on Mikhail Afanas’evich’s things!” (Chukovskij and Bulgakova, no date). The evidence suggests that Ginsburg was the only translator to develop a close personal relationship with Bulgakova, affording her the agency to obtain material for translation. This was mutually beneficial – while Ginsburg gained recognition as a Bulgakov translator, bringing him greater recognition in the West, Bulgakova benefitted financially as an ST rights holder; in a letter to Bulgakova, Ginsburg stated “I hope that you have already received an advance for it [Ginsburg’s translation of *Mol’er/Kabala svjatosh*]” (Ginsburg, 1969a).

This marks a significant development in the working relationship between Ginsburg and Bulgakova; in the initial letter Ginsburg sent to Bulgakova in May 1968, she appealed to Bulgakova in order to secure the ST works in her possession for translation and by September 1969, Ginsburg was in a position of power to secure remuneration for Bulgakova. Simultaneously, given the consistently positive reviews of her resultant translations, Ginsburg had gained the trust of Bulgakova and was in a stronger position to request further works for translation. Thus, the balance of power between the two had changed considerably by September 1969; by this point, Ginsburg had greater agency to influence Bulgakova, by virtue of her success. This places her in a unique position in the overall context of the agency of Bulgakov translators.

Bulgakova’s involvement in writing the ST adds a further interesting dimension to this power dynamic as Bulgakova typed the final manuscript of *Master i Margarita*, and completed the final part of the book. Again, this raises the question of who can be considered an author of Bulgakov’s texts, which has parallels with the discussion of who can be considered a translator, particularly in relation to adaptors. It also invites us to question whether it is possible to track individual agency in such circumstances, linking back to the exploration of creative agency in Section 1.4.1 and, in particular, the ability of an individual “to claim authorship of the resulting artwork, and their ability to exert any measure of control over the artwork’s continued existence as well as its ownership and distribution” (Zeilinger, 2024, p.61). While it is not clear

whether Bulgakova chose not to or was not able to claim authorship of these works, she was able to exert control in terms of deciding who had the ability to translate these works. Therefore, this has implications for Ginsburg's agency as an individual Bulgakov translator, which relied on Bulgakova using her own agency to empower Ginsburg to complete the translations in the first place.

The competition between Glenny and Ginsburg in their race to publish their respective translations of *Master i Margarita* in 1967 marked a significant point in the 'Bulgakov game', tipping the balance of power in Glenny's favour. Since Glenny was able to translate from a 'complete' version of the text, while Ginsburg was only able to access the redacted version, Ginsburg's translation was compared unfavourably to Glenny's in a review in the *NYT Book Review* (1967). In a letter Dr David Hunns of Exeter University, Glenny explains how he accessed the source material for the rival version to Ginsburg's translation:

When that translation [Ginsburg's] was already finished [...], the publishers acquired a photocopy of the original typescript of the novel, dated 1939-1940. It reached them [...] through Professor [Nikolaj] Andreyev [1908-1982] of Cambridge, who had acquired it from [...] Herr Ottokar Nürnberg [...] the nephew of [...] Yelena Sergeyevna [sic] Bulgakova. (Glenny, 1974a)

It is unclear how the work was transferred from Andreyev to Glenny. However, having completed his JSSL training at the University of Cambridge, it would be unsurprising if Glenny had made use of such a connection, while Ginsburg had no such connection to that particular institution or its individual agents.

Furthermore, Glenny was apparently able to procure some Bulgakov STs from Ottokar Nürnberg, as seen in Nürnberg's letter to Glenny:

Unfortunately, there is very little interest in Bulgakov's plays in the Federal Republic [of Germany]. [...] I have just brought some of Bulgakov's manuscripts back from Moscow [...] – *Crimson Island*, as well as *Morphine* and *The Notes on the Cuff* – if there is any interest in the purchase of these manuscripts in England, I would be very grateful if you could make me an offer in this regard. (1972)

This implies that the deal between Nürnberg and Glenny was successful because of the relative lack of interest for the plays in Germany, where Nürnberg was based. By 1972, Glenny had already garnered recognition for

his translations of Bulgakov's work, which likely made his custodianship of Bulgakov's work more appealing to Bulgakov's family relatives, financial incentives aside. In approaching Glenny directly, Nürnberg enabled him to perform the translation of these works, thus affording him a large degree of agency in relation to his competitors, such as Ginsburg. Nürnberg's specific choice of Glenny to translate his uncle's work does, however, mirror his aunt's choice of Ginsburg for the same task. It also marks the beginning of the competition between Glenny and Ginsburg in the performative construction of their identities as prominent Bulgakov translators in the 'Bulgakov game'.

Despite successful dealings with Bulgakov's relatives, it appears to have been more difficult to obtain STs from external sources. The sources consulted in this research yielded no evidence of Glenny attempting to obtain a copy of *Zojkina kvartira* (1925) (most commonly translated as *Zoya's Apartment*). On the other hand, archival materials reveal that Ginsburg expended a great deal of effort in her attempts to obtain the play. As Ginsburg wrote to Gary Kern, "I would also love to see Zoykina [sic] kvartira, but where?" (1969b). A letter to Marilyn Meeker at Grove Press, her main publisher at the time, indicates that she was actively seeking the text: "[Michael] Vasilieff wrote me that Zoyka's Apartment may be available. It seems that those who have the text want it published first in Russian to secure copyright for Mrs. Bulgakov" (1969c). Though another letter to Meeker on 28 August indicates that Vasilieff accepted the offer, this did not result in a translation (1969d).

One source detailing Ginsburg's particular difficulties in acquiring *Zojkina kvartira* is a letter to Gleb Struve (1898-1985), a fellow Russian émigré, translator, and Russian scholar:

I've wondered about Zoykina Kvartira [sic], but have not been able to obtain the text. There was an old actor in New York, [...] Boris Ianskoy, who had it, and I managed to track him down, but he proved oddly suspicious and uncooperative, despite my promise of liberal payment by the publisher if I found it suitable. Alas, I hear that he has died since and I don't know what became of the [...] manuscripts he had. (1969e)

This unsuccessful attempt to negotiate with Ianskoy indicates a lack of power on Ginsburg's part in dealing with those holding rights to Bulgakov's work besides his wife. It is unclear why Ianskoy was reluctant to sell the ST to

Ginsburg's publisher, so any attempts to explain this would be pure speculation. In this instance, Iansky was the more powerful agent, and Ginsburg was unable to use her reputation as a literary translator or connection with Bulgakova to exert the influence to achieve her desired result. Indeed, Ginsburg never translated the text, and it was first published in English in Glenny's *Bulgakov: Six Plays* (1991) as *Madame Zoyka*, though the circumstances in which he obtained the text are unclear. Therefore, although Glenny seemingly did not attempt to obtain the ST and Ginsburg's extensive efforts to do so, Glenny secured greater status in the long-term, as he was the first (and only) of the two to publish it.

Regarding the exchanges between Glenny and Ginsburg and their respective sources of Bulgakov's work in the theatre of translation, they both demonstrably exercised performative power in obtaining these works. This performative power is a socially constructed phenomenon, arising from their status as translators of Russophone literature and the respective personal relationships they were able to cultivate to obtain the aforementioned works.

In the exchanges with ST rights holders discussed in this section, it is apparent that they performed the roles of literary scout, seeking out primary works by Bulgakov during the first performative step. Their performance also incorporated the role of negotiator, using their powerful positions to acquire these works. In so doing, they were able to claim the prestigious position of being the first person to obtain and translate their respective works. However, since these dual roles were obscured from public view and they were not always empowered to act in these roles, Glenny's and Ginsburg's performances as literary scouts and negotiators remain in the green room. In considering the significance of one-on-one relationships in placing Bulgakov on the world stage, our attention must turn to the power dynamics between Glenny, Ginsburg, and other translators.

3.3.3 Translators and other translators

Naturally, the main relationship between translators examined here is the power struggle between Glenny and Ginsburg, themselves. While they did not

collaborate in their work, their respective translatorial activities each influenced the actions of the other as they performed their roles in the same literary translation ecosystem. As D. Eleanor Westley et al. explain, “[t]ranslation ecology recognizes that any specific translation process is influenced by previous translations and by other translating activities that are occurring simultaneously in the same social system (an organization, an industry, or a country)” (2022, p.7). Therefore, their competition directly affected both how they worked and their performative power as they competed in the race to be the first to translate and publish Bulgakov’s work.

Furthermore, “the different actors in an ecosystem may not interact directly, even though they are drawing on (and translating) the same resource” (2022, p.7). Indeed, from the sources available, it appears that they never engaged in any direct contact with one another, though they were connected in the context of the literary translation ecosystem through their parallel activities at opposite sides of the Atlantic. Since there was no direct contact between the two (that could be established through archival research), all information regarding their professional relationship has been pieced together from their correspondence with their respective associates. This section will demonstrate how, in their respective relations with emerging translators, Glenny and Ginsburg performatively constructed their identities as mentors, owing to their status as prominent Bulgakov translators in the theatre of translation.

Ginsburg’s personal correspondence reveals her frustration that Glenny was able to source, translate, and publish a number of Bulgakov’s works before she could. In a letter to Struve, she writes “P.S. I would love to translate more of Bulgakov, but Mr. Glenny seems to have been very energetic in cornering the field” (Ginsburg, 1967). Ironically, Glenny expresses a similar resentment towards Carl Proffer (1938-1984) and Ellendea Proffer (1944-), a husband-and-wife team of scholar-translators who aligned themselves with Ginsburg, following their acquisition of Bulgakov’s play, *Adam i Eva* (*Adam and Eve*) in a letter to director David Gothard. He employs language similar to that used by Ginsburg to describe him: “They have made something of a corner in ‘minor’ Bulgakov” (Glenny, 1973). So, it seems that these translators, as natural competitors, resented each other’s success. Ginsburg further

expresses her discontent that her translations of Bulgakov appear to be less widely disseminated to the public than those of Glenny in a letter to Meeker:

One rather unhappy fact I must mention is that I've been to several bookstores in various parts of the city in the last couple of weeks, [...] and [...] glanced at the Bulgakov books they had. None had ours, most had the Glenny versions. [...] this was quite distressing. (1969d)

In discussing the negative comparison of Ginsburg's translation of *Master i Margarita* relative to that of Glenny, an unnamed spokesperson for Harper & Row publishing house told *Publishers Weekly* in an article dated 2 October 1967 that they did not intend for either version to succeed at the expense of the other in "the translation game" (Ginsburg, no date). However, a translation game is precisely what had been established between Glenny and Ginsburg, not necessarily by themselves, but by the other agents with whom they interacted in their translatorial performances, in the race to source and publish Bulgakov. This would come to influence their actions across the first and second performative steps, in the sourcing and translation of subsequent Bulgakov STs. In a letter to Kern, Ginsburg acknowledges this race:

You speak of the danger of being caught with a half-finished work and discovering that someone else has done it. I'm afraid that this is an occupational hazard in the life of a Russian translator. (Ginsburg, 1971)

This emphasises the competitive nature of the 'Bulgakov game' which dominated the 1960s and 1970s, which affected a number of agents, besides translators. In the Bulgakov game, both Glenny and Ginsburg were able to draw upon their contacts in the world of translation to learn about the status of Bulgakov's work in the Anglophone sphere. For instance, a letter from Glenny to Alan Myers (1933-2010), a fellow Russian translator, led him to discover that Ginsburg had already translated the novella *Rokovye jajtsa* (*The Fatal Eggs*) and published it in America (1967). Similarly, Ginsburg learned from Proffer that his wife Ellendea had acquired a copy of the play *Batumi* (*Batum*), which she intended to translate and publish herself (Proffer, 1974). The connections Glenny and Ginsburg established with other translators were useful in establishing which works were available for translation and which material was

already being translated. This allowed Glenny and Ginsburg to target other STs that they could translate and publish before others, performatively constructing their identities as prominent Bulgakov translators.

Returning to Glenny, he also received praise from his fellow Russian-to-English translator and JSSL graduate, Michael Frayn (1933-). In a review of Glenny's translation of *Zapiski junogo vracha* (*A Country Doctor's Notebook*) in *The Observer*, Frayn writes:

This is the fifth of Bulgakov's books that Michael Glenny has rediscovered for English readers and superbly translated [...]; a marvellous writer I shouldn't have come across otherwise. (1975)

Frayn's review is particularly significant in two respects. Firstly, he names Glenny as the person who has 'rediscovered' Bulgakov, without whom Anglophone audiences would not be exposed to Bulgakov's work. Secondly, he credits the quality of Glenny's translation work. Since Frayn has enjoyed an illustrious career as a playwright, author, and translator, and can be considered a celebrity in these professions, his praise of Glenny is all the more significant. This personal recommendation by an award-winning celebrity results in the greater status and, therefore, performative power and agency, of Glenny as a Bulgakov translator. Such backing from a powerful figure relates to the discussion of Bulgakova and Nürnberg allowing Ginsburg and Glenny, respectively, to translate Bulgakov's STs (see Section 3.3.2). Considering Glenny's network of contacts, the indirect critic-translator relationship is valuable in the theatre of translation as theatre critics tend to neglect translators in reviews (Rappaport, 2007, p.75), so his critical recognition is particularly noteworthy.

There is also evidence that both Glenny and Ginsburg used their positions and experience to mentor aspiring Russian-to-English translators in the 1970s, exercising their agency to influence the next generation of Bulgakov translators. For instance, as a member of several translation organisations, Ginsburg ran events such as translation workshops, for example the following one at an undisclosed location on 12 May 1977: "[t]o introduce young and inexperienced translators to the craft as well as the tricks of the trade through a series of practical workshops conducted by experienced, working

professionals" (Ginsburg, 1977). Thus, this performatively constructed her identity as a mentor. It is especially interesting that Ginsburg recommended that Kern and Phyllis Reed should send copies of their translations to her own literary agent, Gunther Stuhlmann. In so doing, Ginsburg used her status as an established translator to promote the work of these aspiring translators and secure them "better terms if and when the book is placed" (Ginsburg, 1969f).

Glenny acted in a similar capacity in his dealings with Lesley Milne, directly asking her to collaborate on his translation of a selection of Bulgakov's plays and write prefaces to accompany Glenny's introduction (1975). Milne's response to Glenny reveals the significance of this collaboration for her own career trajectory, initiated by Glenny: "For someone in my position – i.e., struggling beginner – a clear credit in the book is more important than the money" (Milne, 1975). This indicates that the cultural value of association with Glenny was of greater importance to Milne in her career development than receiving payment for completing the project, and he did provide her with a 'clear credit' in the publication.

In choosing Milne as a collaborator and inviting her to write the prefaces to each play, Glenny used his own performative power to afford Milne her own agency; Milne's association with Glenny as a recognised 'brand' name (cf. Zhang, 2023) in Russian-to-English literary translation arguably provided a springboard for her own career trajectory. Later, Milne became a prominent Bulgakov scholar and in her work as a university lecturer, "always included Bulgakov in my course whenever possible, and was always gratified to see the enthusiasm with which students responded to his works" (University of Nottingham, no date). She now holds the prestigious status of Emeritus Professor at that university. Therefore, Glenny influenced Milne to continue his legacy in promoting Bulgakov in academia, indicating his large degree of agency both in the academic sphere and in his role as a mentor.

In the cases of Kern, Reed, and Milne, they were able to draw upon the standing and experience of Glenny and Ginsburg to guide their own emergence into the theatre of translation. In light of this, it can be ascertained that, in their relationships with these emerging translators, Glenny and Ginsburg performed the role of mentor, and their respective 'brands' (Zhang, 2023, p.124), developed in the 1960s and early 1970s, acted as a social script

for shaping the behaviour of the next generation of translators. While relevant to the performative construction of their overall identity as Bulgakov translators, they are not publicly visible for the role of mentor. Consequently, it is located in the green room of the theatre of translation. Glenny and Ginsburg's repeated behaviour as translators was also shaped to a large degree by their relationship with their respective publishers, so we will now examine their interactions with these key agents in the theatre of translation.

3.3.4 Translators and publishers

The complex relationship between translators and their publishers in bringing Bulgakov to Anglophone audiences in the theatre of translation across the first and second performative steps is evident in the cases of Glenny and Ginsburg. In the same vein as Section 3.3.2, the interactions between the translators and their respective publishers required them to act as literary scouts, sourcing Bulgakov STs for translation and subsequent publication. Additionally, they acted as pitchers, proposing the projects, and negotiators in securing favourable terms with both ST rights holders and publishers. The implications of which for the performative construction of Glenny's and Ginsburg's identities as Bulgakov translators will now be explored.

Correspondence between the translators and their respective direct contacts in publishing reveal that in the 1960s, the onus was on the translator to persuade the publisher that Bulgakov was worthy of consideration:

I've been trying to establish Bulgakov's work in American publishers, to no effect. Publishers here are afraid to publish the work of new writers who are unknown to the public, since they are rarely profitable.
(Ginsburg, 1968a)

In a letter to Jo-Ann Miller at Funk & Wagnalls, Ginsburg writes: "I think that even a mere listing of the newspapers and magazines from which these were taken ought to convince your salesman that Bulgakov is well known by now" (1969g). Indeed, projects suggested by Ginsburg were repeatedly turned down by publishers (especially Grove Press and Penguin Books), often due to their concerns surrounding the marketability of certain works:

We have finally been able to go over all the various projects you proposed to us [...] and I'm afraid that we do not feel that we can undertake any of them at this time. (Meeker, 1968)

[W]e still have concerns about our ability to market Bulgakov's THE LIFE OF MONSIEUR DE MOLIERE, so, however tempting the book may be, we now feel we must turn it down. (Seaver, 1978)

Despite the difficulty of convincing publishers that Bulgakov's work could be a saleable commodity, Ginsburg's actions displayed a tenacity in her determination to exert her influence in a way that yielded her desired income.

However, as Ginsburg revealed to Struve, "[f]or years no one would consider Bulgakov, though I tried again and again" (Ginsburg, 1968b). This was the case with *Blazhenstvo* (*Bliss*), until her acquaintance on the Executive Board of PEN America, Peter Glassgold agreed to publish Ginsburg's translation of the play, and Bulgakov's *Beg* (*Flight*), with favourable conditions:

[W]e can offer you an advance against full royalties (7 ½% on the paperback edition, 10% on the clothbound book) of \$1250.00. The book will of course be copyrighted in your name. (Glassgold, 1984)

It must be noted that it is unusual practice in the publishing industry for the translator to retain copyright of their own work. Indeed, as asserted by Venuti, copyright "describes a narrow space for translation", which privileges the author, "reserving for the author the right to copy and circulate his or her work" (1998: 47). Therefore, Glassgold's willingness to allow Ginsburg to retain copyright from the outset evidences Ginsburg's strong reputation and the willingness of the publisher to accommodate her needs, in return for securing her work. This also implies agency on Ginsburg's part, since Glassgold's response "of course" indicates that she requested these conditions. Furthermore, the copyright situation indicates that Glassgold valued her work, which was simultaneously published by Penguin Books Canada. This extended the reach of Ginsburg's work and, therefore, her agency in terms of her ability to influence readers both abroad and in the US.

Similarly, when Ginsburg's translation of Bulgakov's *Zhizn' gospodina de Mol'era* (*The Life of Monsieur de Molière*, henceforth *Zhizn'*), first published in 1970 by Funk & Wagnalls in the US, was "locked up in the warehouse"

(1981), Ginsburg attempted to place the book elsewhere. Networks of agents can be formed, dissolved and new ones formed in order to achieve the shared goals of the agents involved (Zhang, 2019, pp.197-198), which is seen in the case of Ginsburg. After being rejected by Dick Seaver at Penguin Books (with whom Ginsburg had previously collaborated at Grove Press), *Zhizn'* was published by Glassgold at New Directions in 1986, by which point Ginsburg acquired copyright of her translation. This has since been reprinted by Alma Classics in the United Kingdom in 2009 and again in a new edition in 2017. This demonstrates how Ginsburg attempted to capitalise on her personal connections to achieve her end goal of publication, with varying degrees of success. The reprinting of this work multiple times, and outside of the US, indicates Ginsburg's enduring significance as a Bulgakov translator in the wider Anglophone world.

Thus, this positions Ginsburg as a star translator; in fact, both Glenny and Ginsburg fit Sela-Sheffy's conceptualisation of a star, as examples of "those who set the tone in the field" (2008, p.12). This is implicit in their establishment of the social script for subsequent generations of translators, including Bulgakov translators, which is how I define a star translator. This is distinct from the concept of celebrity translators, as discussed in the introduction to this thesis, which refers to translators who are well-known as a household name, such as David Hare (1947-) or Michael Frayn. Barry King's assertion that "a star exist[s] as an impression of a person created by a character he or she habitually played" (2010, p.15) highlights the performative aspect of this identity, as constructed by habitual, repeated actions. Therefore, the identity of the star translator and its associated status is established through performativity, resulting in the acquisition of greater agency.

By 1969, Ginsburg's status among publishing spheres was such that the publisher entrusted her to decide which of Bulgakov's works were worth bringing to an Anglophone American audience. This can be regarded as the publisher authorising her to pitch specific projects, affording her performative power as a pitcher in the first performative step. When discussing the 1927 play *Bagrovyy ostrov* (*Crimson Island*) with Kern, Ginsburg wrote: "Grove would have been interested in my translating it – if I liked it enough" (1969b), later updating Kern that "I read Zoikina Kvartira [sic] (the first two acts) in Novy

Zhurnal, and did not care for it too much. Neither did I care much for the first two acts of Bagrov [sic] Ostrov" (1970a). This explains why Ginsburg never translated either play, in turn meaning that they were never published by Grove, indicating agency on Ginsburg's part as Grove enabled her to decide which Bulgakov's works would be disseminated among American audiences.

This special status is also reflected in her negotiation of contracts with her publisher, again taking place during the first performative step. After having persuaded the publisher (Grove Press) to publish her translations of *Master i Margarita*, *Sobach'e serdtse*, and *Beg*, Ginsburg was able to negotiate favourable terms in an agreement with the publisher, as outlined below:

1/ Grove Press agrees to take upon itself all negotiations, correspondence, etc. relating to dramatization, films, television adaptations [...] for the three works mentioned above, **subject to your prior approval.**

2/ It is hereby agreed that **you, Mirra Ginsburg and Grove Press will share equally in any and all proceeds** forthcoming from performance and/or dramatic rights of the above-mentioned works.

3/ Grove Press, Inc. **agrees to deal directly with you** as long as you can prove [...] that Gunther Stuhlman [sic] has no longer any claims of any sort to the above works. (my emphasis, Lane Root, 1978)

These terms indicate Ginsburg's unique status in the publishing sphere. Firstly, the fact that any agreements regarding the adaptation of her work in the aforementioned performance mediums would only be negotiated following her personal approval implies a large degree of agency on Ginsburg's part, as no business could be concluded without her personal input. Secondly, it is not typical for the translator to retain an equal share of rights in their work with the publisher. Finally, it is unusual, especially at the time when this contract was drafted in the 1970s, for a publisher to deal directly with the translator instead of through their literary agent. This implies that, by 1978, Ginsburg's status as a Bulgakov translator had afforded her greater agency, extending her ability to influence decisions made across the first and second performative steps.

It is unclear why Gunther Stuhlmann was no longer involved in such matters of negotiation, however, in dealing with the publisher directly, Ginsburg is endowed with greater power to act in her own professional interests, rather than through a third party. In this way, Ginsburg can be regarded as occupying

two roles simultaneously: those of the star translator (endowed with greater agency to influence decisions than a lesser-known translator) and the negotiator (who is empowered to negotiate more favourable terms).

In terms of financial matters, especially, Ginsburg was not afraid to exercise the power that she held according to contracts, as is evidenced in her letter to George Caldwell at Funk & Wagnall regarding her payment for the first half of Bulgakov's *Zhizn'*: "I would like to receive the second instalment of my translation fee – according to our contract" (1969h). There is no such correspondence in the Glenny Collection, so it is impossible to determine how Glenny acted in response to contracts and financial arrangements. However, as a full-time freelance translator, it is likely that payment was a more motivational factor for Ginsburg than Glenny, with multiple sources of income as a full-time scholar and part-time translator.

Regarding her relationship with the publisher, Ginsburg occupied a relatively unusual space, where she was caught between two opposing power dynamics. At one end of the scale, she had sway and influence with the publisher, who invited Ginsburg to evaluate "many plans and translations by people in the academic world" (Ginsburg, 1973b) and propose her own projects. At the other end of the scale, she was unable to persuade them to commission a project which she had proposed, nor was she able to persuade certain publishers to reprint her works, indicating her varying degrees of performative power across different stages of the first performative step.

Meanwhile, Glenny's relationship with the publisher appears to be relatively straightforward in comparison to that of Glenny and her publishers, from the limited available correspondence that was found. In an undated letter to editor Peter Lavery, Glenny provided an explanation of the supplementary material he intended to provide for a volume of six of Bulgakov's plays:

The introduction will attempt to 'place' Bulgakov as a modern Russian dramatist and to give a condensed account of his career in the theatre.
(Glenny, no date)

In this case, Glenny appears to be in the dominant position of power relative to the publisher, outlining how he intended to act, rather than asking the opinion

of the publisher. This volume was published towards the end of Glenny's life, so it is likely that he was able to leverage his strong reputation as an established Bulgakov translator to determine the nature of his own work. This is in contrast to his early career in the 1960s – specifically, when he was forced to “translate the excised passages [of *Master i Margarita*] and insert them into the first version”, which “had to be done at great speed” to meet the publication date of 16 October 1967, as he explained to Hunns (1974a). It is not unusual for the translator to be subjected to tight deadlines and this meets the publisher's horizon of expectations of the translator. Regardless of whether the translator was constrained or free to act with intent in the roles of literary scout, pitcher, and negotiator, their embodiment of these roles remains hidden from public view. As such, they do not feature prominently in discussions of their primary role, and are relegated to the green room of the theatre of translation.

In examining the relationship between Glenny, Ginsburg, and their respective publishers, it is clear that the social scripts for these relationships in the theatre of translation were continuously rewritten over the years. Initially, Glenny and Ginsburg acted more in line with the typical expectations of the role of the translator, by presenting potential projects in an attempt to promote Bulgakov as their subject of choice. Unsurprisingly, they were met with limitations and resistance. Later in their careers, however, they were able to leverage the status they both enjoyed as a star scholar-translator and star translator, respectively, to achieve their own goals and dictate the nature of their work. This would not be surprising for a celebrity translator, but they are stars in their profession, as opposed to the well-known household name implied by the term celebrity. Specifically, their stardom as translators is experienced in the spheres of literature, academic, translation, and publishing. Hence, these roles feature centre stage in their respective theatres of translation, as a core part of their performatively-constructed public identities; it is precisely this status and associated influence in the aforementioned areas that contributed to their interactions with scholars, which will now be explored.

3.3.5 Translators and scholars

The relationships cultivated by Glenny and Ginsburg with academics, specifically in the field of Russophone language and cultural studies, in bringing Bulgakov to the world stage are currently under-researched. Many of these scholars were also translators and shared a vested interest in promoting Bulgakov's work in Anglophone contexts. Glenny and Ginsburg's activities in the context of these relationships directly contributed to the performative construction of their identities as Bulgakov translators, particularly across the first and second performative steps, and, thus, warrant further scrutiny. This is explored in terms of Ginsburg's role as collaborator and Glenny's role of scholar-translator, and their agency in the performance of these roles.

Initially, there is evidence that Glenny and Ginsburg capitalised on their academic connections to determine which of Bulgakov's works had not yet been translated and where they might source them, in their role as literary scouts during the first performative step. This practice seems to have formed a core part of Ginsburg's translatorial activity in the 1960s, in the rush to publish first. Indeed, Ginsburg wrote repeatedly to Struve, asking if he knew of any available Bulgakov material for translation (see Ginsburg, 1967 and 1969c, for example). At least once, Struve replied in the affirmative, suggesting such works as *Belaja gvardija*, *Blazhenstvo*, and *Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh*, all of which Ginsburg would go on to translate. Therefore, maintaining this correspondence was crucial for the construction of Ginsburg's identity as a Bulgakov translator.

There is evidence to suggest that this was also the case for Glenny, as demonstrated in his correspondence with Professor Alec Nove (1915-1994) at the University of Glasgow. Here, Nove informs Glenny of the existence of "a recently printed edition of Bulgakov's plays" and indicates that Bulgakov's play, *Poslednie dni* (*The Last Days*) has already been produced, at the time of writing (Nove, 1967). However, as a scholar himself, it is possible that he was able to learn of the existence of such work from his internal position in the academic sphere. This may explain why he did not feel the need to pursue STs with the same amount of tenacity displayed by Ginsburg. Thus, while they both

had performative power to act with intent as Bulgakov translators, the approaches taken by Glenny and Ginsburg were notably different.

Secondly, the translator places value on their validation by the scholar, as a figure of knowledge and authority at a prestigious institution, through praise and recognition of their work. This is evidenced in a letter Ginsburg sent to Meeker at Grove, as a marker of prestige and a form of quality assurance:

I am enclosing a copy of a letter from Robert Magidoff which Grove forwarded to me. I hope it will please you too, and might please the publicity people. Of course, it is not to be used without his permission, but it is a very nice letter, indeed. (1969d)

Ginsburg receives further validation from Robert Magidoff (1905-1970), professor at New York University, who writes to the former, asking her to impart her knowledge as translator to his students, in light of her growing reputation as a translator:

The academic year 1970-71 will include a course on translation in my Department at NYU. [...] I hope you will not refuse an invitation to share with the class some of the problems of translating from Russian into English. (Magidoff, 1969)

By giving Ginsburg his seal of approval and coming from a position of power, Magidoff thereby endows Ginsburg with a secondary power, by association.

Similarly, after receiving a copy of her translation of *Mol'er*, Struve praises Ginsburg for being “quite indefatigable in [her] persistent efforts to familiarize the English-speaking public with Bulgakov’s work”, emphasising how he felt that Ginsburg was “doing a good job” in this endeavour (Struve, 1970). This is supported by Proffer, who drew upon his academic contact with Indiana University Press to endorse Ginsburg as the best translator not just of Bulgakov, but of Russian literature as a whole, in an attempt to secure her a commission for a new translation of *Master i Margarita*:

[S]he [Ginsburg] is the best translator in the field of Russian literature today. If you could get a license from Grove, and persuade her to translate the omitted passages, you could print a new edition. Certainly, a paperback is needed very much for courses in Russian literature. It will be a very steady seller for a long, long time; [...] every teacher who

knows anything at all about what he is doing would take the Ginsburg translation in preference to Glenny. [...] If you want to contact Mirra Ginsburg, her address is 150 W. 96th St. NYC 10025. (Proffer, 1973)

These affirmations endow Ginsburg with greater status, resulting in greater performative power and agency, since academics affiliated with prestigious institutions established her status as a reputable Bulgakov translator.

Glenny does not appear to seek validation from scholars in the same way as Ginsburg; instead, his validation as a translator comes from other scholars, particularly early career researchers, seeking out his work or assistance. For instance, in a letter to Hunns, Glenny writes: "I can put you in touch with a number of scholars at work on Bulgakov, not only in this country, but in France, Canada and the USA" (1974a). This implies that Glenny had a global scholarly network on which he could capitalise to aid emerging scholars in their research, indicating Glenny's large degree of agency in this field. Since Glenny simultaneously occupied two roles (scholar and translator), he was able to develop such networks with other scholars, providing a ready-made audience for his translation work, in the form of his own students and colleagues. Thus, this constitutes a large part of his identity as a Bulgakov translator, suggesting that his agency in these roles is entangled, with both taking centre stage in his own theatre of translation.

The third significant mode of interaction between the translator and the scholar, as demonstrated in correspondence with scholars, is the dissemination of the translator's work on academic courses led by scholars. Ginsburg highlights her satisfaction that Kern, whom she had previously mentored as a translator, went on to use her own translation of *Beg* in his own academic career: "I am delighted that you used *Flight [Beg]* on your course" (1972). Similarly, in a letter to Ginsburg, Magidoff mentions that he deliberately highlights Ginsburg's translations to his students and intends to continue doing so (1969). This increased the chances of Ginsburg's translations continuing to sell and, perhaps more crucially for Ginsburg, it meant that her name and, therefore, her identity as a Bulgakov translator remained visible in academic circles long after the initial marketing for her translations.

As for Glenny, there is insufficient evidence to determine how his texts were used by scholars in their teaching. However, there is evidence of scholars

requesting information about Glenny's upcoming translations of Bulgakov. For example, the prominent Bulgakov scholar, A. Colin Wright (1938-2023), wrote to Glenny asking "[c]an you let me know approximately when your translation of various Bulgakov plays will be out, so I can order it?" (1972). This is not atypical behaviour from scholars, who often seek to support others within their network, especially those who are perceived to deliver good quality work. In terms of translator agency, the significance of the actions of scholars is in the validation of the work of the (Bulgakov) translator and, thereby, validation of the translator as a practitioner. This contributes to the consolidation of the translator's status, helping to shape their identity as an individual translator, effectively setting them apart from other (Bulgakov) translators (cf. Zhang, 2021; 2023).

Ultimately, the relationship between the translator and scholars, in Ginsburg's case, can be reduced to one of mutual convenience (as was the case in her relationship with Bulgakova); the scholar relies upon the translator to translate the material for teaching and research purposes, while the translator simultaneously relies on the scholar as an intermediary between the translator and university presses, to help source material for translation, letters of recommendation as a marker of prestige, and the dissemination of their translated material on academic courses. This ensures the enduring relevance of their work (and, by extension, that of Bulgakov). Thus, Ginsburg can be identified as performing the role of the collaborator in this process. While critical in her overall performance as a Bulgakov translator, this role is not publicly visible, remaining in the green room of the theatre of translation.

In Glenny's case, as a scholar and translator, he used his own extensive networks to achieve his respective aims in his roles as scholar and translator across the first and second performative steps of pitching and writing. Therefore, he can be identified as a scholar-translator in this regard – these roles are entangled, so it is impossible to determine his individual agency in each role. Furthermore, these are the roles for which he was, and remains, most publicly visible, securing their place centre stage in his theatre of translation. Having considered the impact of the interactions between the translator and various other figures in the theatre of translation, it is pertinent to examine the significance of the relationship between translators and theatre

practitioners in determining Glenny and Ginsburg's roles as translators of Bulgakov's work for Anglophone British and American stages.

3.3.6 Translators and theatre practitioners

There is little evidence suggesting that either Glenny or Ginsburg were directly involved in rehearsals of their translations in theatre, i.e., the third performative step. However, there are documented accounts of their experiences in dealing with theatre practitioners across the second performative step of writing, which appear to have been both positive and negative for the translator.

The more positive interactions between Glenny, Ginsburg and the related theatres appear to stem from the translator granting the theatre approval to stage their translation and supporting them in some capacity. For instance, Jeffrey Steefel of Project III Theatre Company wrote to Ginsburg to express gratitude for her attendance of a performance of the company's 1987 production of *Bliss* at the Ohio Theater in New York, based on Ginsburg's translation, and for granting them permission to use the text (Steefel, 1987). The review for this production in the *NYT* refers to Ginsburg as "the play's accomplished translator", which is notable, given the fact that translators are largely forgotten by theatre critics. This has been lamented by the occasional literal translator and one-time Bulgakov translator, Helen Rappaport (2007, p.75). Ginsburg's equal billing with Bulgakov in the production programme, as seen in Figure 3.5, ahead of the director, further indicates Ginsburg's greater status in the theatre of translation; most translators are typically uncredited or relegated to the end of the list of credits for the creative team.



Figure 3.5 – Production programme for Project III Ensemble Theatre's 1987 production of *bliss*, from Mirra Ginsburg's translation of *Blazhenstvo*

Furthermore, referring to a 1978 staged adaptation of her translation of *Mol'ér* on Off-Broadway, Ginsburg wrote to Seaver:

It would be nice if the Abrahams production is indeed brought to Broadway next season. [...] I wonder what was done in 'adapting' it. I don't have the initial reviews, but they were apparently excellent. (1978)

Since Ginsburg expresses uncertainty about what the adaptation process meant in regard to her translation of *Mol'ér*, it can safely be assumed that she had no involvement in this process. While Ginsburg had no involvement with the theatre in adapting the work, the fact that the production was later brought to Broadway, the central hub of theatrical activity in the US, in 1981, is significant in itself. It is a marker of the prestige of Ginsburg's translation, as being worthy of a place on such a visible stage. In allowing New York-based theatre companies to stage her translations, Ginsburg was, again, entering an arrangement of mutual benefit to both parties.

Turning to Glenny, the balance of power was tipped in his favour in Richard Crane and Faynia Williams' 1977 staged production of *Satan's Ball* (based on *Master i Margarita*) at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival with the University of Bradford Drama Group. First on the list of acknowledgements in the script is Michael Glenny, indicating his importance in the production (the nature of his involvement is, however, unknown). Indeed, in a letter dated 29 September 1977, Williams addressed Glenny on first-name terms, discussing the production:

We have a final script which is different from the first script. There are 2 bodies fighting over the American rights at the moment, so you may yet see it. I long to meet & talk to you [...] Trevor Griffiths has asked me to direct Cherry Orchard (his version) which should be fun. Fancy playing Gayer again for me?. (1977)

This indicates a degree of familiarity, suggesting that Glenny had previously acted in a play directed by Williams, though the name of the production remains unclear. In this sense, Glenny is best described as a theatre collaborator, in that there is evidence to support the assertion that he collaborated with theatre practitioners, though it was not possible to determine

the extent of this collaboration. Additionally, the production was awarded a Fringe First Award, which is awarded to outstanding new plays and productions at Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Both of these factors contribute to bolstering the status of Glenny and his work as a translator, thereby increasing his influence in the theatre of translation.

Both Glenny and Ginsburg also experienced difficulties when entrusting their work to members of the theatre. Such an unsuccessful venture was Ginsburg's attempted collaboration with director, Daniel Kadin in adapting her translation of *Sobach'e serdtse* for the New York stage. The CRBML holds three copies of this attempted collaboration, which all contain numerous handwritten comments from Ginsburg, largely criticising Kadin's own writing style and lack of understanding of Bulgakov's style. One draft reads: "Translated by Mirra Ginsburg and adapted for the stage by Daniel Kadin" (Kadin, 1997a), and another draft makes no mention of the translator or adaptor, simply reading "adapted from the eponymous novel by Mikhail Bulgakov" (Kadin, 1997b). The latter likely originates from when Ginsburg withdrew her support for the production. She then accused Grove Press of acting on her behalf to falsely enable Kadin to continue using her translation, in direct contravention of the contract between Grove and Ginsburg. As outlined in Section 3.3.4 (Lane Root, 1978), according to Clause 1, Ginsburg was to approve any requests before agreements could be made.

In a letter to Morgan Entrekin, Eric Price, and Mary Flower at Grove Press, Ginsburg clarified the nature of her collaboration with Kadin and her stance on the matter:

I had helped Kadin for a short time, until I was convinced that the quality of his work was impossible, and I told him it was not acceptable. Some time [sic] later, he called and asked me for a note to the woman whose theater [sic] he expected to use, telling her I had worked with him on the play. I refused. (1997)

From this letter, Ginsburg apparently took issue not with her own credit in the production, but rather in being visibly attached to an adaptation with which she fundamentally disagreed. Furthermore, Ginsburg was displeased with Kadin's attempts to use the prestige associated with her name to bolster his own career. Indeed, even after their collaboration had come to an end, Kadin

maintained Ginsburg's name on the promotional material for the production, which can be seen in Figure 3.6 (Kadin, 1997c):



Figure 3.6 – Promotional postcard for Burning Bright Productions' 1997 production of *Heart of a Dog*, from Ginsburg's translation of *Sobach'e serdtse*

In this situation, Ginsburg attempted to exert her authority to revoke Kadin's rights as director and adaptor of her translation, though the actions of the publisher limited her ability to do so, whether legally or in error. Indeed, Figure 3.6 states that the translation was acquired "courtesy of Grove Press", implying that Ginsburg had no say in Kadin's use of the text. This failed collaboration is at the cost of Ginsburg's agency as she was unable to prevent the production from going ahead and was only able to remove her credit for a production of which she did not approve. That is not to say that all Ginsburg's dealings with theatre practitioners were negative; Section 5.4.7 presents a case study of a production of the same TT, which appears to have been a more positive experience for both Ginsburg and her adaptor, Robert Astle.

Glenny experienced a similar frustration, as revealed in a letter when sending his translated playscript of *Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh* to Peter Farago, Associate Director of the Royal Lyceum Theatre Company of Edinburgh, at Farago's request. Here, Glenny highlights a rare displeasure at another interpretation of his work:

It was performed for a week in 1972 at the Shaw Theatre in London, produced by Norman Benedetti with the graduating class of the Rose Bruford School, of which he is the principal. Unfortunately, he ruined it, in my view, by inserting massive gobbets of various Molière plays into the text, which was beyond the scope of his student actors and made the play far too long. (Glenny, 1974b)

Consequently, although the translator may have influence in terms of who is granted permission to translate their texts, it appears that, at least in the late twentieth-century, once the figure of the theatre practitioner enters the scene in the theatre of translation, the power dynamics favour that practitioner. The introduction of this figure demonstrably has either a largely positive or detrimental impact upon the agency of the translator, in terms of their power and status, depending on the motivations and skillset of the members of the theatre with whom they interact in the theatre of translation. This typically results in one of three scenarios: either the theatre attempts to collaborate directly with the translator, they eschew any translator involvement in the creative process of theatre, or the translator remains loosely connected to the production in one way or another. All scenarios result in a loss of agency to some extent, whether lost through a lack of involvement, a lack of clarity surrounding their role, or in creative differences often related to the sharing of power with theatre practitioners.

In the example of Ginsburg's involvement with Kadin, she can be identified as a theatre collaborator, since she collaborated directly with Kadin to adapt her own work for the stage. These scenarios contribute to the charting of Glenny and Ginsburg's individual roles across the three performative steps of pitching, writing and rehearsal, and the mapping of their respective overall identities in the theatre of translation.

3.4 Summary of Glenny's and Ginsburg's roles across performative steps

The primary difference between these two figures is their respective performances of the role of theatre collaborator during the writing step of the creative process of theatre. As was demonstrated in Section 3.3.6, it was not possible to establish the extent of Glenny's in the second performative step. Specifically, whether or not he was able to directly or indirectly influence the creative process, which hindered the attempt of the present study to establish his individual agency. That being said, the details from Williams' letter to Glenny and his acknowledgement in the production programme indicate that there was some degree of involvement on Glenny's part, though it was not

possible to establish whether this was direct or indirect. This limits the extent to which it is possible to determine his individual agency in this step.

However, Ginsburg did perform in this second step, as demonstrated by her failed attempt to collaborate with Kadin on his 1997 production of *Heart of a Dog*. While her involvement in this step initially implies her agency in terms of her ability to influence decision-making processes, the fact that she left the project before the staging of the production mitigates this agency. Thus, it appears that neither Glenny nor Ginsburg were involved in the third performative step of rehearsal, with their activities in the creative process being limited to the first and second performative steps, albeit to different degrees, resulting in different levels of status and, consequently, agency.

This intensive performance, with Glenny and Ginsburg each embodying seven roles is indicative of the recently noted trend of multi-roling among theatre translators. Zhang avers that “contemporary contexts have witnessed the growing presence of literary translators taking on hybrid identities and playing multifaceted roles alongside that of ‘the translator’” (2023, p.124). Indeed, there is evidence of a growing tendency towards the translator taking on multiple roles in the theatre of translation, especially in the translation of theatre. However, this chapter has demonstrated that instances of the literary translator taking on a multiplicity of roles can be traced back to Glenny and Ginsburg’s actions fifty years ago. Therefore, while this may occur in a contemporary context, it must be recognised that this is not a purely contemporary phenomenon, and it is only now that theory is starting to reflect long-established practices. This is significant, as the power dynamic in research often privileges theory over practice.

Attention must also be drawn to the fact that “[e]ach translation project functions as a web, with different agents interacting with each other, aiming to bring the translated text to market” (Zhang, 2019, p.187). This has proven to be the case in Glenny and Ginsburg’s multiple interactions with other agents as translators, where a web of multiple agents have worked together, in different combinations, to fulfil the translation project. The other prominent cast members in the theatre of translation, as demonstrably applied to Glenny and Ginsburg, has included, at different times: the holder of the ST rights, other translators, the publisher, the scholar and the theatre.

According to Hanna, factors such as “close relations with publishers and editors of translation series or theatre directors [...] can be employed to maximize [the translator’s] profits in the field of literary or drama translation” (2016, p.43). As demonstrated in the cases of Glenny and Ginsburg, these profits may not always be financial in nature; it could come in the form of recognition for their work as translators or assisting the translator with obtaining STs. These non-financial profits may be just as valuable to the translator in their careers, by endowing them with the necessary power to influence their own professional trajectories. Both the case studies of Glenny and Ginsburg reveal the importance of establishing lifelong connections with other translators, scholars, publishers and directors, among other agents, in maintaining successful careers as translators of Bulgakov in the theatre of translation. It is precisely through such connections that they were able to develop and maintain their agency in the theatre of translation.

Moreover, in developing excellent reputations as Bulgakov translators, they have, as Sela-Sheffy puts it:

accumulated enough symbolic capital, which often translates into further prestigious career-opportunities, such as literary critics and editors, and establish their status as public figures that have a say in literary taste in general, and as policy makers in the market of translated literature in particular. This capital evidently also advances their power to bargain for the terms and price of their work. (2008, p.620)

While the theoretical framework of this research is not based on the Bourdieusian concept of capital (cf. 1977), the above quotation is useful for understanding how a status, developed over years of repeated actions, empowers translators to garner greater recognition for their work. This then allows them to take on additional roles, which bolster their position, and is especially true of Glenny and Ginsburg, who were able to capitalise, as it were, on their prestige as translators to take on other roles. From 1975-1977, Glenny became a visiting lecturer at the Southern Illinois University, translating Sergei Eisenstein’s dramatic theory in collaboration with film and theatre specialist Herbert Marshall (1906-1991). Ginsburg, meanwhile, found success as an author of children’s fiction and editor of several fictional works, also serving on several prize juries and boards for various translation organisations.

Both translators found other roles where they were able to exercise their agency and extend their sphere of influence, in turn affecting how they are blocked in the theatre of translation. In theatre, blocking refers to the movement and positioning of actors on stage. This blocking has been determined by the evidence which has been uncovered pertaining to Glenny and Ginsburg's actions and various roles they played in bringing Bulgakov to the world stage, as part of the theatre of translation. As such, it is now possible to map their respective roles visually in the theatre of translation.

3.5 Mapping Glenny's and Ginsburg's roles in the theatre of translation

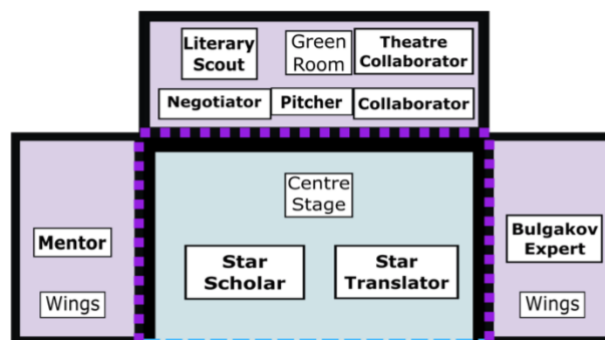


Figure 3.7 – Glenny's roles in the theatre of translation

In his thirty-year career, Glenny occupied multiple fluid roles in his quest to bring Bulgakov to Anglophone audiences. Initially, in the 1960s, his primary role was acting as a literary scout in sourcing Bulgakov's STs, so that he might use one of his most publicly visible roles, that of star translator, to achieve his goal of bringing Bulgakov's work to Anglophone audiences. Despite providing the foundation for the translations for which he was well-known, the work he carried out in the entangled roles of pitcher, literary scout, and negotiator remains relatively neglected in scholarship and are not publicly visible.

Similarly, Glenny's work as a theatre collaborator and (indirect) collaborator with Bulgakov remain unexplored in scholarship. Admittedly, as discussed in Section 3.3.6, his limited collaborations with theatre practitioners, and the fact that his collaboration with Bulgakov was intellectual and indirect, through engagement with the ST, may explain this lack of scholarly attention. However, it must be mentioned in the context of Glenny's overall career

trajectory, which was shaped by his interactions with other agents in the theatre of translation, so these roles are located in the green room (see Figure 3.7), as roles which are not publicly visible, yet significant in his overall performance.

Uncovering his roles in the wings required more extensive research. For example, his role as a mentor was gleaned by reading Lesley Milne's preface to the volume on which she directly collaborated with Glenny, *Bulgakov: Six Plays*. Similarly, Glenny's status as a Bulgakov expert may be gleaned from the large number of Bulgakov's works he was able to translate; he translated 9 works in total, both plays and prose: *Master i Margarita*, *Sobach'e serdtse*, *Beg*, *Teatral'nij roman* (A *Theatrical Novel*, also translated as *Black Snow*), *Zapiski junogo vracha*, *Zojkina kvartira*, *Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh*, and *Adam i Eva*. All of these translations resulted in staged productions (Klimas, 2025), which is a significant marker of his status, in itself. Within these works, his detailed introductions also indicate this expertise.

Ultimately, it is Glenny's two roles as a star scholar and star translator which constitute the most prolific part of his translatorial identity, as demonstrated by their blocking on centre stage in Figure 3.7. As such, it is these two roles which can be used to best define his career and I propose categorising Glenny as a star scholar-translator. Many scholars are also translators, myself included, but these scholar-translators do not often enjoy a large amount of visibility or recognition for their work. Glenny is an exception to this rule, as he is a well-known figure, who receives equal billing for his work in both of his roles as a scholar and translator, the boundaries between which are notably porous, though he is not a celebrity in the same regard as Michael Frayn or David Hare. However, he can be regarded as a celebrated figure, in that his work was critically acclaimed, particularly his 1967 translation of *Master i Margarita*, and was a well-respected figure, both in his roles as translator and scholar. Consequently, I posit that Glenny is best-defined as a star scholar-translator.

Like Glenny, Ginsburg's career was characterised by the vast number of roles she undertook in different periods of her career. Her early career in the 1960s bore similarities to that of Glenny, in that that period was dominated by her determination to obtain Bulgakov's work for translation and publication before Glenny, which is reflected in the multiple roles mapped in the theatre of

translation in Figure 3.8, presenting her roles as dynamic, with fluid boundaries, rather than fixed, with rigid boundaries between them.

Unlike Glenny, Ginsburg's activities as a mentor to aspiring translators are not traceable except in her private correspondence, which is why her role as mentor is confined to the green room, as a role which is hidden from public view (see Figure 3.8). This role was, however, visible to a limited number of other agents with whom she directly collaborated on this less visible task, i.e., the mentee translators. Her role as theatre collaborator is also somewhat limited and was generally unsuccessful, especially in the case of her failed attempt at collaboration with Kadin in staging her translation of *Sobach'e serdtse*. Again, this may account for the lack of scholarship on this topic, justifying the placement of this role in the green room.

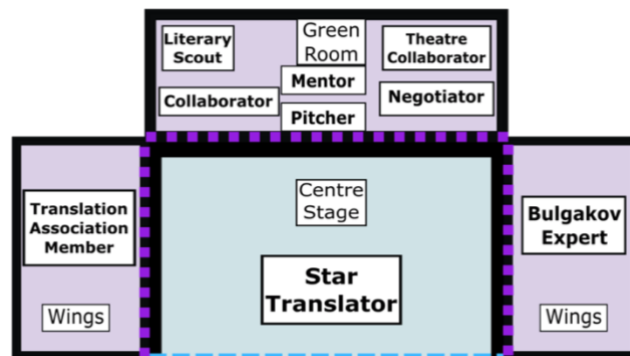


Figure 3.8 – Ginsburg's roles in the theatre of translation

At that time, she also functioned as a pitcher, literary scout and negotiator (again, these roles were entangled) in the first performative step of pitching. The key difference between Glenny and Ginsburg is that Ginsburg was not a scholar. However, Ginsburg had access to a scholarly network, which she did frequently draw upon in the pursuit of STs and in gaining validation from these scholars. This validation was revealed through favourable reviews, scholars using her translations as course material in their teaching, and inviting her to partake in some aspects of teaching Russian-to-English translation skills. Although Ginsburg was not a scholar, her associations with members of the scholarly community afforded. Her prestige by association, which Zhang argues makes a translator “a legitimate member among them” (2021, p.135). Moreover, like Glenny, the green room houses her role as indirect collaborator

with Bulgakov as the ST author, as a role which is publicly invisible, existing only through intellectual engagement with the ST.

Since Ginsburg only occupied one 'professional' position in the theatre of translation (that of the star translator), her status, and therefore agency, is also contingent in large part upon her receipt of grants and other awards for her work. Most significantly, her receipt of a grant from the National Translation Grant for *Master i Margarita* in 1967 acted as an endorsement of Ginsburg's work on a national scale. As a member of translation associations, she may have influenced nominations for such prestigious grants and awards. However, these remain visible to only those agents also influencing nominations as members of translation associations, hence why they are located in the wings.

Also located in the wings, Ginsburg's role as a Bulgakov expert is a secondary factor in her agency, as it does not constitute the largest factor in determining her status. Therefore, it does not play a large role in her acquisition of individual agency, though it is another metaphorical string to her translatorial bow. All of these factors come together to determine the extent to which she was able to exert influence over her activities as translator and how other agents in the theatre of translation, in turn, exerted influence over Ginsburg.

In terms of assigning Ginsburg an overall identity, the most appropriate category for her is star translator, owing to her status as an award-winning translator taking centre stage in the theatre of translation. She is a star rather than a celebrity translator for the same reasons as Glenny, though the grants and awards she won contributed to her elevated status as a translator, justifying a higher status than that of translator. Her star status afforded her the agency to influence spheres such as publishing, theatre and academia, though she worked as a freelance translator. This status as star translator facilitated her later roles as author and editor of various volumes. These roles have not been accounted for in the theatre of translation, as they were attributed to her after she had cemented her status as a star translator. They do, however, warrant further exploration in subsequent research.

3.6 Conclusions

The case studies examined in this chapter invite us to reconsider the role of the translator in the theatre of translation, in light of the multiple roles they are shown to play in the process of bringing Bulgakov's work to the world stage. Reconsidering the agents involved in the theatre of translation as a cast whose interactions constitute the overall performance of translation has revealed a more holistic picture of how these agents influence and are influenced by other agents. Furthermore, it invites us the question to which it is possible to trace the manifestations of individual agency through individual acts and to account for fluctuating degrees of agency across different stages of the creative process, both relating to the translator and the other agents in the theatre of translation.

The evidence gathered indicates that Glenny's and Ginsburg's respective statuses and individual agency as a star scholar-translator and star translator endowed them with greater authority and the opportunity to negotiate their own projects, fees and terms. However, these case studies also demonstrated instances where their agency depended upon the actions and motivations of others, involving sustained collaboration with a number of agents, addressing the first research focus outlined in this chapter. Publishers and ST rights holders were in the more powerful position; publishers were privileged in the power dynamic with the translators, owing to their ability to commission or reject a translator's project proposal, typically motivated by the perceived profitability of these translations as revealed in Section 3.3.4. Meanwhile, ST rights holders, such as Bulgakova, were empowered to decide who could translate the STs, though her role as a co-author of *Master i Margarita* demonstrably complicated the question of authorship and agency (see Section 3.3.2). This was also had parallels with the question of translatorship, in relation to translators and adaptors, the implications of which will be explored further in Chapters 4-5.

Moreover, the context of interactions with theatre practitioners demonstrated a considerable mitigation of agency on the parts of both Glenny and Ginsburg, whose star status as scholar-translator and translator, respectively, did not equate to the necessary power to make final decisions in

staged productions of their TTs. These are examples of external factors affecting the ability of translators to collaborate with other agents. In this regard, the role of theatre collaborator afforded them less agency than the roles for which they are primarily known. This indicates that agency, like identity, is not a fixed entity, and varies across the different roles occupied by Glenny and Ginsburg across the three performative steps of pitching, writing, and rehearsal, as depicted in Figures 3.5 and 3.6.

These two translators exceeded the typical expectations imposed upon the translator by existing norms and conventions in the late twentieth-century, i.e., that they would remain invisible figures, backstage. They did so by leveraging their status and connections to secure more favourable working conditions and examples in both of their careers prove the value of maintaining lifelong contacts with the main actors in the theatre of translation. As such, human relationships must be considered in the study of relationships between the translator and other agents in the theatre of translation.

Considering the second research focus of how Glenny and Ginsburg (re)constructed their identities as Bulgakov translators over time, a more accurate categorisation of their respective roles has allowed me to better account for the full scope of their work, actions, agency and personal motivations behind their actions in the theatre of translation. Essentially, Glenny and Ginsburg were competitors, auditioning for the same role, so to speak, and their competing interests came to define the Anglophone market for translations of Bulgakov's work in the 1960s and 1970s. This is significant not only for studying Glenny and Ginsburg, but also in terms of assessing the work of subsequent Bulgakov translators and adaptors. According to Elena Baibikov, translators have "adopted [other translators'] behaviour as a role model for creating [their] own professional identity" (2011, p.176). Among the first to translate his work, Glenny and Ginsburg set the expectations for Bulgakov translator behaviour, creating a social script for subsequent translators.

The social script established by Glenny and Ginsburg, like the complex issues of translatorial identity and agency, is not fixed and has been subject to change over the years, with both translators playing multiple roles to meet the demands of each performative step. Examining the social script in this regard

exposes how they reconstructed their identities as Bulgakov translators over time. Furthermore, it serves as a starting point for translators in their goal of bringing Bulgakov to British and American audiences. The script and how it has evolved, will be at the centre of case studies of staged productions of Bulgakov's original plays in Chapter 4 and plays adapted from his novels in Chapter 5. The case study of Michael Lessac assesses a production that is based on the translations of both Glenny and Ginsburg, the implications of which will be discussed in greater detail in Section 4.3.3.

Chapter 4: Performing translation: Reimagining the roles of four translators and adaptors of Bulgakov's original plays

Having set the scene for investigating the roles of translators and adaptors, and, more specifically, their agency in the context of bringing Bulgakov's work to Anglophone British and American audiences in Chapter 3, it is now time to expand the discussion to include case studies of translators involved in given productions. While Glenny and Ginsburg arguably established the script for the everyday performance of Bulgakov translators, this chapter critically assesses how individual translators and adaptors of Bulgakov's original plays rewrote this script to meet the needs of their respective stage productions.

The case studies of Glenny and Ginsburg in Chapter 3 revealed that their star status as translators was primarily attained through their work as *literary*, rather than *theatre* translators. Meanwhile, the remaining case studies presented in this thesis pertain specifically to those translators and adaptors whose interactions with Bulgakov and other agents primarily occurred in a theatrical context. While theatre translation has emerged as a branch of literary translation, it is a specialist category with its own norms and characteristics, largely owing to its plurisemiotic nature (cf. Neelsen, 2021). Thus, it follows that translator/adaptor visibility and agency as manifested in theatre translation cannot be equated to the visibility displayed in literary translation contexts, and the emergence of this distinct specialist category has implications for this study of translator/adaptor agency in theatre.

As was laid out in Section 2.1.1, the case studies in this and the subsequent chapter were narrowed down to four main subjects by consulting the compiled bibliography of productions. By examining case studies of two specific works in greater detail (each comprising of one British and one American example), this allows for a more comprehensive analysis of the (inter)actions of translators and adaptors with other agents in the theatre of translation. Specifically, it addresses RQ1, by examining how these collaborations were enacted and factors affecting these collaborations, both positive and negative. This analysis centres on how the translators/adaptors perform their overall roles, based on their experiences.

Turning to RQ1, it also considers how these performances (re)construct their identities as Bulgakov translators/adaptors across performative steps, thereby casting them in certain roles. The inclusion of case studies where the boundaries between translation and adaptation are blurred (see Sections 4.2.7, 4.3.3, and 4.3.7) addresses the often-overlooked fact that the two processes exist as part of a continuum (Horsley, 2023, p.43). As Maya E. Roth points out, “[t]here is no theatre without some act of translation and adaptation – whether by directors, actors, or a more formal translator” (2008, p.25). By the same token, the plurisemiotic nature of theatre translation means that the TT is written with the expectation that it will be adapted for performance. That process involves some degree of collaboration between translators and adaptors, whether direct or indirect (in the same vein as Section 3.3.1).

However, as the case studies in this chapter highlight, adaptors may or may not act on the suggestions of the translator, which has implications for translator agency, as much as the performance of multiple roles. Reconsidering the labour of translators and adaptors in this vein justifies the assignment of hyphenated roles (cf. De Vere Brody, 2008) to account for the blurred boundaries between these interdependent roles.

Finally, in reference to RQ3, it explores how the terminology ascribed to individual translators and adaptors affects their actions and (re)constructed identities, which are viewed through the lenses of visibility and recognition. Attention then turns to how this terminology does or does not correspond to the label assigned to them by other agents in the theatre of translation, and how this allows for a performative reimagination of their agency as translators/adaptors of Bulgakov’s original plays.

4.1 Introducing the ‘cast’

This chapter examines the translators/adaptors of two of Bulgakov’s twelve original plays in greater detail. Initial quantitative data narrowed down the corpus to these two plays, while subsequent qualitative research conducted identified specific productions of these plays with enough information to produce a meaningful analysis (see Section 2.1.1). The case studies in this

chapter examine productions of *Dni Turbinykh* and *Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh* staged in both regional theatres and the famous theatrical hubs of London and New York. Including regional theatres in the analysis addresses the over-representation of London and New York-based productions in existing scholarship, which was identified in the initial literature review (see Section v). This creates a more holistic picture of theatre practice across the two countries, while resolving the inherent metropolitan bias in scholarship (Reid, 2024).

The two productions of *Dni Turbinykh* explored here were staged seventy-six years apart; the first production originated from a translation by Eugene Lyons, staged as *In the Days of the Turbins* in New Haven, Connecticut in 1934, which later transferred to Broadway in 1935. The second, from a translation by Charlotte Pyke and adapted by Andrew Upton, was staged as *The White Guard* in London in 2010. *The White Guard* is a popular alternative to the literal translation of the title (*Days of the Turbins*) (see Klimas, 2025) as this is the literally-translated title of the original novel (*Belaja gvardija*) which Bulgakov himself adapted for the Soviet stage as *Dni Turbinykh*.

The implications of this inverted model of ST → Adaptation → Translation, which runs counter to the traditional model of ST → Translation → Adaptation, is examined in greater detail in Section 5.3.7. Although there were British productions (1934; 1938) staged during the same period as that of Lyons, there was scant information pertaining to their translator, Freda Bloch, whose role was eclipsed by that of the celebrity playwright, Rodney Ackland (1908-1991), which led to the alternative selection of Pyke. The selection of these two productions also enable comparison not just by geographical location, but how the respective actions of Lyons and Pyke, which construct their identity as Bulgakov translators have changed over time, in line with the aim set out in RQ1. It also facilitates a comparative discussion of the myriad factors affecting their translatorial labour, in response to RQ1.

Meanwhile, the British and American versions of *Mol'er* came about in a similar period; Helen Rappaport's² literal translation, adapted by Dusty Hughes in 1982, staged not just in London, but firstly in the regional locations

² Note that I will be referring to Charlotte Pyke as 'actor' and Helen Rappaport as 'actress', owing to the information about their lexical preferences, despite the terminological inconsistency.

of Stratford-upon-Avon and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Meanwhile, Michael Lessac's first version, staged in New York in 1978, as compared with his second version, co-authored with David Morgan, staged in the regional location of Stamford, Connecticut in 1981. These case studies are notable in the sense that both TTs resulted in further productions; Rappaport's TT was staged in Mold, Wales in 1992, and the aforementioned co-authored adaptation of Lessac's first TT, in 1981. This has implications for considering the difference between the experiences of Bulgakov translators and adaptors working in metropolitan and regional theatres. Therefore, comparative analysis is conducted both nationally and internationally, yielding more meaningful conclusions about translator agency across multiple categories.

This chapter also compares cast members with Glenny and Ginsburg, who were established as key Bulgakov translators from the 1960s to the 1990s in Chapter 3, to chart changes made to the 'social' script of Bulgakov translators through their performative actions as translators/adaptors in the theatre of translation. This is particularly significant in considering how these translators (re)construct and reinforce their identities through the performance of repeated, ritualistic behaviours. This notion of identity has implications for the discussion of multi-roling in relation to a key question in the context of visibility: for which role(s) do Bulgakov translators/adaptors working on his original plays *want* to be recognised? Considering this allows an evaluation of how different roles result in the granting of different degrees of agency. It also facilitates the discussion of other core concepts relating to translator agency, including power, status and prestige, and how these vary among the cast members (Lyons, Pyke, Lessac, and Rappaport) and their respective networks of contacts.

This exploration begins by providing some crucial background to the original productions of the Russian-language playscript and Bulgakov's involvement in these productions, before introducing the four productions of the two plays, their respective translators, and those translators' personal networks of contacts, examining the different factors contributing to the degree of agency that they experienced in the performance of their roles. Finally, taking these four case studies into consideration, the role(s) of the translators are plotted visually in the theatre of translation and analysed, before

introducing the reimagined ‘cast’ of the translators studied, having recast them in roles which more accurately capture the essence of the role(s) they perform in the theatre of translation. Bearing these significant factors and their impact on the performance of translators and adaptors in mind, we now turn our attention to one of Bulgakov’s most famous plays: *Dni Turbinykh*.

4.2 *Dni Turbinykh*

Prior to any discussion of the role of the translators in British and American Anglophone staged productions of *Dni Turbinykh*, it is first necessary to acknowledge the conception of the script by “the novelist-playwright”, which encompassed both of these roles, so as to determine how this impacted the behaviour of its translators. Having first written the text as a novel and published it in the literary journal *Rossija (Russia)* under the title *Belaja gvardija* (1925), Bulgakov, himself a man of the theatre, adapted his own novel for the stage in 1926, under the new, censor-approved title, *Dni Turbinykh*. Bulgakov’s previous theatrical experience aided him in this process of self-adaptation.

The way in which Bulgakov’s roles as novelist and playwright blurred into one overall role this process bears similarities to the experience of the blurring of the roles of Michael Lessac, which will be examined in Section 4.3.3. This theme is also explored in the opening sections of Chapter 5. The earlier version of the script was rejected by the censors and the subsequent version, which was granted approval by the censor, is, as Milne argues, “a historical document showing the limits of the ideologically permissible in late 1926” (1998, xvii). This version was eventually withdrawn from theatrical repertoires in 1929, because of its perceived support for the White (monarchist) faction of the Russian Civil War. It was only revived in 1932 at the personal behest of Stalin, who favoured the play and saw it fifteen times (Popovich, 1995, p.58).

In a 1991 Soviet television documentary, *Vospominanija o Mikhajle Bulgakove (Memories of Mikhail Bulgakov)*, Mark Prudkin (1898-1994), who played the role of Leonid Shervinskij in both the 1926 and 1932 productions, revealed the multiplicity of roles played by Bulgakov in the rehearsal process. Namely, the roles of playwright-adaptor, Kyiv expert, and music expert (1991),

meaning that Bulgakov himself performed multiple roles in bringing his novel to the Soviet stage. This sets the scene for a discussion of the multiplicity of roles played by translators and adaptors in staging Bulgakov's plays in Britain and the US.

Although not the rationale behind the choice of this ST, the play is particularly interesting to analyse from a Translation Studies perspective, since the play is itself an adaptation of a novel, which means that translators/adaptors are translating/adapting an adaptation of a novel, rather than the usual practice of celebrity playwright-adaptors being commissioned to adapt a translation of a play (see the discussion of the "traditional two-tier theatre translation model" in Section v). This inevitably has implications for the labour involved in bringing this work to British and American stages, which will be discussed further in Sections 4.2.3 and 4.2.7.

Dni Turbinykh has been staged four times in Britain (in London, in 1934, 1938, 1979, and 2010), most notably the RSC's 1979 production at the Aldwych Theatre, translated by Michael Glenny, and the NT's 2010 production at the Lyttelton Theatre (which is examined in this Section 4.2.7) (Klimas, 2025). To date, the play has been staged twice in the US, both of which productions were based on the translation by Eugene Lyons; firstly, at the Yale University Theatre in New Haven, Connecticut (1934) and secondly, at the Majestic Theatre in New York (1935). As the only translation to have resulted in Anglophone, or, indeed, any, American productions of *Dni Turbinykh*, the first case study focuses on the translation by Eugene Lyons.

4.2.1 Eugene Lyons

Eugene Lyons (1898-1985) was primarily known as a journalist and writer. His personal background bears many similarities to that of Mirra Ginsburg: born in Belarus, then part of the Russian Empire, to a Russian-speaking Jewish family, he emigrated to New York in 1907. He gained American citizenship and, unlike Ginsburg, he enrolled at the College of the City of New York, later transferring to Columbia University. He enjoyed an illustrious career as an author of many non-fiction volumes. In 1932, he was commissioned to translate *Dni Turbinykh*, which was arguably secured through his reputation for his role as a writer, for

which he was most visible to Soviet and American communities during his lifetime. In 1934, he did also publish *Six Soviet Plays*, which he edited and translated (as with Glenny's involvement in *Bulgakov: Six Plays*), including *Dni Turbinykh*. However, despite these experiences with translation, he never became a full-time professional translator.

Lyons worked as a correspondent at the TASS news agency in the early 1920s, before becoming the United Press Correspondent in Moscow (from 1928-1934). In the latter role, he discussed Soviet topics for American audiences and was invited to interview Stalin in 1930. Such positions and activities conferred a great deal of status and prestige (and, therefore, agency) upon Lyons in his professional life.

Since he is the only translator examined in this work who lived in the USSR during Bulgakov's lifetime, this dramatically impacted the extent to which Lyons was able to exert his influence in several respects: firstly, in terms of forming networks with significant figures in the Soviet literary sphere; secondly, in his physical proximity to the work he wished to translate (thereby bypassing the often convoluted channels through which translators such as Glenny and Ginsburg acquired Bulgakov's STs, as discussed in 3.3.2) and, most importantly, in his unique ability to form a personal connection with Bulgakov himself, as an American citizen. In light of these connections, it is now necessary to consider the network of contacts Lyons developed in the course of his career, to determine its relevance to the performative actions constituting his translatorial behaviour in the theatre of translation.

4.2.2 Lyons' network of contacts

Lyons' network of contacts in the theatre of translation (see Figure 4.1) is unique in comparison to the other case studies, presented across Chapters 3-5. There are some agents who are familiar, having featured in Glenny and Ginsburg's contact networks (see Section 3.2), namely publishers, theatre practitioners, and drama students with whom he collaborated in the theatre, as opposed to interacting in a teaching capacity, like Glenny and Ginsburg, thus granting both parties equal power in this case. These are connections which

Lyons was able to establish through his involvement in theatrical productions, both at universities and professional theatres.



Figure 4.1 – Lyons' network of contacts

Of course, given that Lyons' translatorial work occurred some thirty years before that of Glenny and Ginsburg, they did not provide the 'blueprint' for his translatorial behaviour. By the same token, his behaviour arguably did not influence theirs, as a result of the significant time gap and the lack of contact between Lyons and Glenny or Ginsburg. However, it is fruitful to examine the similarities and differences between the networks of these three translators. The first noticeable difference is Lyons' connection with Bulgakov. While Glenny and Ginsburg were only able to have indirect contact with Bulgakov, through various intermediaries (ST rights holders), such as his family members and close associates, Lyons was able to have first-hand contact with Bulgakov. This primary contact will be examined in greater detail in Section 4.2.3.

Lyons also had direct contact with the Soviet government, through the interview he was invited to conduct with Stalin and in his direct negotiations with both the Soviet government and Bulgakov to bring *Dni Turbinykh* to the American stage. Additionally, Lyons was a reputable journalist, which enabled him to establish close relations with other journalists. The significance of the multiple roles Lyons performed (collaborator, literary scout, negotiator, translator, and theatre collaborator) will be examined in the course of this case study. The importance of the introduction of these additional figures to the theatre of translation, as experienced by Lyons, and their interactions, forms a core part of the study of his agency in the wider theatre of translation.

4.2.3 Lyons' interactions in the theatre of translation: *In the Days of the Turbins* (1934)

The case of Eugene Lyons as a translator of Bulgakov's dramaturgy is particularly remarkable as he is the only translator examined who not only attended the original performance of the play in the USSR, but he was also able to establish personal contact with Bulgakov (and was the only individual examined in this thesis who was able to do so). On one hand, this arguably placed Lyons in a privileged position compared to other Bulgakov translators as he was able to deal directly with Bulgakov. However, it can also be viewed as shifting power from one 'master' to another (from the publisher to the ST author), who possesses the greatest power in most cases examined, as copyright law tends to favour ST authors (Venuti, 1998, p.47) and, like publishers, ST authors are empowered to decide who translates their texts. This has parallels with the power of the ST rights holders in deciding whether or not Glenny and Ginsburg could translate the Bulgakov works that they held (see Section 3.3.2).

In this case, direct contact had positive consequences; Bulgakov granted Lyons "full and exclusive" rights to translate and dramatize *Belaja gvardija* "anywhere in the world, except in the territory of the USSR", on a temporary basis, valid for one year, as agreed on 30 January 1934 (Mishurovskaja, 2017, p.96). The contract stipulated that Lyons was granted

[the rights to] the text of the story *Belaja gvardija* [...] including the rights to translate into English, to publish this translation (in print), to dramatize it, to stage it as a film [...] with the exception of the USSR. (p.96)

This is a particularly significant event, historically speaking, as it was the first occasion when such a contract was granted to an American journalist, indicating a period of relatively positive Soviet-American relations, at least on a cultural level. This was not the only dealing Lyons had with Bulgakov, in a business sense. In an entry in Elena Bulgakova's diary on 15 January 1934, she outlined how, having secured the rights for *Belaja gvardija*, Lyons then attempted to exploit both his personal connection with Bulgakov and his own

position as literary scout to secure the rights to Bulgakov's *Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh*:

Then we had dinner with Lyons, his wife and Zhukhovitskij. Zhukhovitskij tried to persuade M.A. [Bulgakov] to sign a contract for *Mol'er*, but M.A. refused as he already has a contract with Fischer³.
(Bulgakova, 1990, p.52)

This bears similarities to Ginsburg's repeated requests for further material to translate, directed to Elena Bulgakova in the late 1960s, nearly thirty years after her husband's death. Therefore, it indicates a degree of mutual motivation between Lyons and Ginsburg, who both attempted to use their existing connections with the Bulgakovs to secure rights to other Bulgakov works, with varying degrees of success. These personal connections resulting in the acquisition of at least one Bulgakov work for translation purposes set Lyons and Ginsburg apart from other Bulgakov translators in their roles as literary scouts; they were the only two translators to gain personal approval from Bulgakov and/or his wife, as the holder of the rights to his works after 1940.

The agreement that Lyons could translate and stage *Dni Turbinykh* was confirmed in a letter from Bulgakova to S.L. Bertenson, another American who was interested in staging the play in English, dated 29 January 1934:

I can confirm that Mr Eugene Lyons does indeed have the rights to the play *Dni Turbinykh*, since M.A. [Bulgakov] concluded a contract with him to stage this play abroad. (Bulgakova, 1990, p.52)

The "magnitude of this undertaking" was picked up on by the *Yale Daily New* (YDN), which ran the headline "Days of the Turbins Will Attract Notables" and sub-heading "Yale Dramat Score Scoop Over Broadway, Hollywood", on account of the fact that "it landed this play in competition with New York Producers and Film Companies" (1934a). This article referred to how the production had "assumed an aspect of importance seldom rivalled by a college theatrical enterprise" (1934a). Even nowadays, it is rare for a student

³ S. Fischer Verlag GmbH is a German publishing house, famous for its literary publications, particularly of Germanophone modern classics by authors such as Thomas Mann and Franz Kafka, as well as its theatre rights department, which has operated since 1904.

production to outshine New York productions and Hollywood, yet this was the case with the Yale Dramat, with the presence of celebrity audience members further increasing the symbolic value of the production. It is an even rarer occurrence for a student production to stage an Anglophone premiere of a foreign play. At that time, Lyons was the only person granted the rights to the play abroad, affording him a great deal of agency, with the sole ability to translate and stage the Anglophone and, indeed, the Western premiere of *Dni Turbinykh*.

As shown in Figure 4.2, Lyons is credited in the same section as Bulgakov and the director of the production at Yale's University Theatre, Halsted Welles (1906-1990). The programme also dedicates an entire page to Lyons' commentary on the reception of the play in its country of origin, "The Two Opening Nights of 'In The Days of the Turbins' in Russia" (*In the Days of the Turbins* programme, 1934, p.9). Here, Lyons discusses how "[t]he initial performance has become almost legendary in theatrical circles here [the USSR]", highlighting the domestic prestige of the play. In turn, this confers prestige upon Lyons' translation and Welles' production. Overall, these factors have increased Lyons' public visibility in relation to the production as a whole.

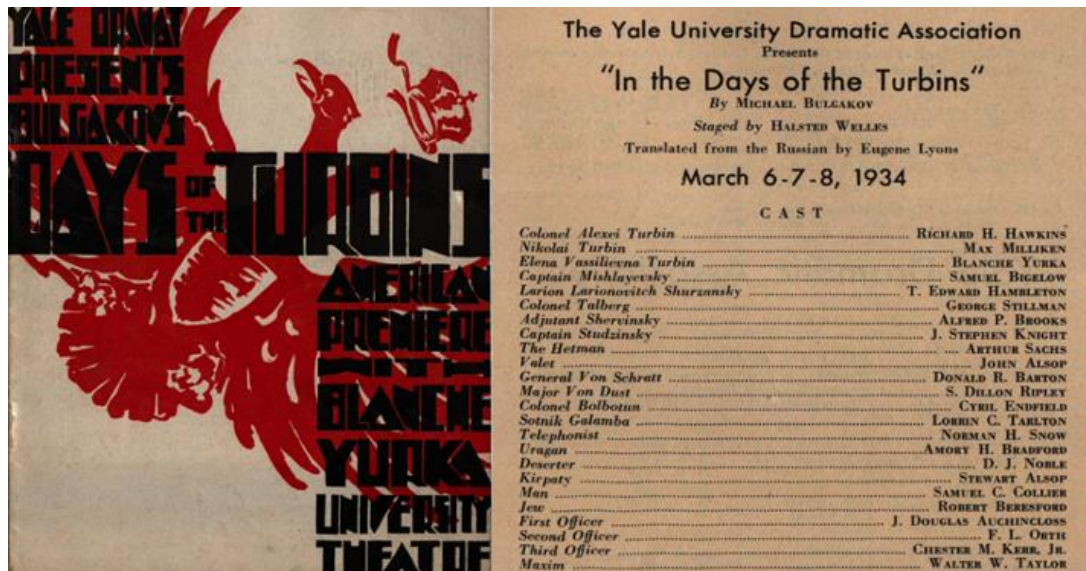


Figure 4.2 – Production programme for the Yale University Dramatic Association's 1934 production of *In the Days of the Turbins*, from Lyons' translation of *Dni Turbinykh*

This notion of prestige follows in other articles: on 13 February 1934, the *YDN* first reported that Dramat would stage the play, with the headline "Dramat Will

Present Recent Russian Show in Winter Performance”, with the sub-headings “Bulgakov’s ‘Days of the Turbins’ Secured Through Negotiations with Russian Authorities” and “Famous Actress Will Play Important Feminine Role in American Premier [sic] Directed by Halsted Welles”. This article emphasises the process of obtaining the script and the fact that this was the first production of the play in the US, boasting a famous female lead, the Broadway and film star, Blanche Yurka. Lyons’ influence in this process and as a creator of networks cannot be overstated, as Bulgakova’s diary notes several meetings with Yurka, Welles, and other cast members as visitors in Moscow, following the March 1934 production run (cf. Bulgakova, 1990). These acquaintances can all be attributed directly to Lyons, through his work as a literary scout, sourcing the text, and establishing a personal connection with the Bulgakovs.

The image of prestige associated with this production is further highlighted in the body of the article from 13 February:

The Dramat considers it a great privilege to present this play for the first time in English. Since November the Association authorities have been working through various channels to secure the option which has been sought after by the movies and several New York producers. Negotiations, however, were completed last Saturday, and the production is now underway. (1934b)

This information also provides valuable details about the timeline of the production. Given that negotiations for the rights to translate and dramatize the play began in November and were granted by Bulgakov on 30 January, this means that the initial negotiation process took two months to complete. According to the *YDN*, rights to the play were only granted to Lyons on the Saturday before, which would have been 10 February, and the production ran from 6-8 March of the same year. Therefore, this indicates that the entire translation and rehearsal process took place across little more than a one-month period – significantly less time than it took for Lyons to negotiate terms with Bulgakov and the Soviet government. For any production, this is an extremely rapid turnaround time, even for an experienced translator, which Lyons does not appear to have been; the evidence shows that he negotiated indirectly with Bulgakov through Zhukhovitskij as an intermediary. While such

turnaround times are extremely rapid, they are, however, not unheard of, in theatre. In Lyons' case, the need to expedite the translation was likely due to the short period for which he was granted rights to translate and stage the play.

Additionally, in the article from 13 February, Lyons is referred to by name, in his capacity as translator:

The piece has been translated by Eugene Lyons, United Press Correspondent in Moscow, who, through his retention of Bulgakov's attitudes toward the material of the drama, has kept its universal qualities. (YDN, 1934b)

Another YDN article from 6 March also names Lyons and his role as translator:

Speaking of *In the Days of the Turbins*, Eugene Lyons, former United Press correspondent in Moscow, and translator of the drama, says that it is the greatest play ever to come out of Soviet Russia. (1934c)

In this instance of multi-roling, it is his press credentials that legitimise his role as a translator, since that is the role for which he is publicly known; he is known for being a professional writer rather than an expert on Russian language and culture, or a Bulgakov expert specifically, which featured in the theatre of translation for both Glenny and Ginsburg (see Section 3.5). While it can be interpreted that Lyons had a platform to perform the role of translator thanks to his work and connections as a journalist, the praise he received as a translator is noteworthy in its own right, especially in connection with such a prestigious and eagerly-anticipated production.

Lyons' crucial role in bringing this play to Anglophone American audiences (with this production and subsequent publication of the script) and thereby Western audiences more generally, cannot be overstated. His actions as a literary scout (and, therefore, negotiator), collaborator (both with Bulgakov and the Soviet government), and translator, which were enabled through his status and connections as a journalist working in the USSR, allowed Anglophone American audiences to access this Soviet play.

However, his roles as negotiator and collaborator with Bulgakov took place behind the scenes, away from public view, which is reflected in their mapping in the theatre of translation. These roles correspond to his activities

in the first performative step of pitching, where he demonstrated a large amount of agency in his ability to influence both Bulgakov and the Soviet government to grant him the rights to translate and stage the play in the US. The data obtained indicates, unsurprisingly, that Lyons' translatorial performance continued across the second performative step of writing, as the role for which he is credited in the production programme and newspaper articles. At this stage, there is no evidence to imply collaboration with any theatre practitioners in this task. Indeed, Lyons' collaboration with other cast members in the theatre of translation appear to have taken place more at the stage of negotiation with Soviet cultural agents rather than interactions with theatre practitioners producing the play.

It is not possible to ascertain the extent to which Lyons was involved in rehearsals or the role he played in this process. As such, he is not ascribed a role across the third performative step of rehearsal, though he is labelled as a theatre collaborator across the first and second performative steps, since he secured the rights to the play which allowed Yale Dramat to stage it, and he was recognised for his role as translator. Lyons' performance of these individual roles as part of his overall role in the creative process is charted across the performative steps of pitching, writing, and rehearsal in Figure 4.3.

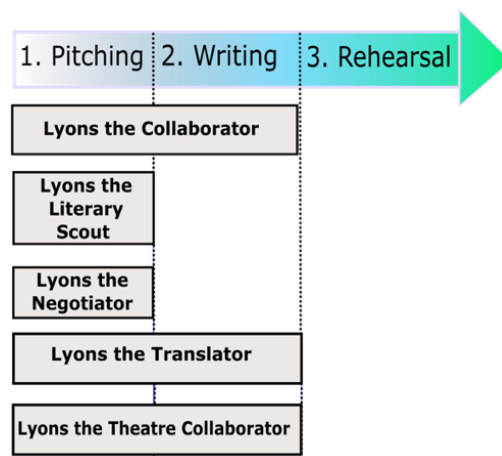


Figure 4.3 – Lyons' roles across performative steps

Interestingly, the evidence suggests that this production and Lyons' subsequent 1935 Broadway transfer of the production (at the Majestic Theatre) remain, to date, the only (translated and otherwise) staged productions of *Dni Turbinykh* in the US. Not only does this point to Lyons' significance in obtaining

the work as a literary scout and prestige in securing a coveted Broadway transfer for the production, it is also the only American Anglophone translation of the play (as opposed to the novel) which I have been able to source. Therefore, not only as the first, but also the only translator whose translation resulted in a staged production of the play, Lyons is in the unique (in the context of this research) position of having no competitors, even though his translation was produced ninety years ago. This forms an important part of the construction of his identity as a translator of Bulgakov and, as such, he remains a significant agent in the theatre of translation and his status as a Bulgakov translator afforded him a large degree of agency in this role.

4.2.4 Mapping Lyons' roles in the theatre of translation

Having examined the experiences and roles of Lyons in bringing *Dni Turbinykh* to the American and British stages, respectively, it is now possible to map his overall performance in the theatre of translation, leading to the assignment of an overall role that best encapsulates the essence of his translatorial labour.

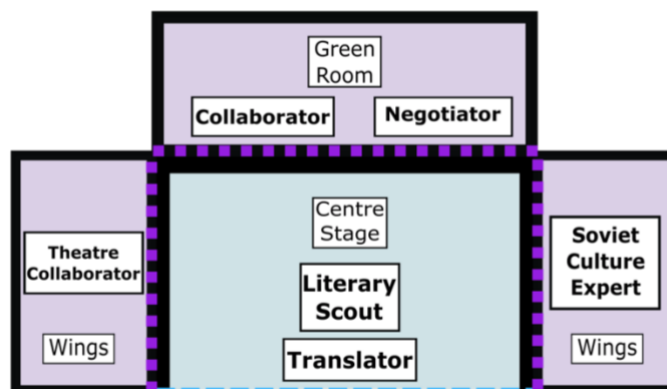


Figure 4.4 – Lyons' roles in the theatre of translation

The period of Lyons' theatre translation career is comparatively limited when considering the longevity of Glenny and Ginsburg's careers. That being said, there appears to be more variety and in-person connections in Lyons' interactions in the theatre of translation in 1934. Of course, it must be noted that there were more options for interactions with Soviet agents available to Lyons in the pre-Cold War period than Glenny, Ginsburg, Lessac, and Rappaport who were limited by the imposition of the Iron Curtain across the

Eastern Bloc. Nor were interactions with Soviet cultural agents available to Pyke, whose translations were performed after the 1991 collapse of the USSR.

As the space for roles which are not publicly visible, but significant to the theatre production process, the green room is the location where Lyons' roles of collaborator and negotiator are situated (see Figure 4.4); as a collaborator, only Lyons was able to establish both direct contact with Bulgakov in the acquisition of the ST and indirect contact in his intellectual engagement with the ST. Meanwhile, his negotiations with both Bulgakov and the Soviet government, which were crucial both in his acquisition of the ST and in determining his legal ability to translate and dramatize the ST, were only established through the consultation of contracts and diary entries of those involved. In the wings are Lyons' positions as theatre collaborator and Soviet culture expert. While these roles are not made explicit in biographical information on Lyons, some further research does expose his involvement in these activities and they are worthy of further exploration. These roles contributed to his overall performance, allowing him to take on what were arguably his two most significant roles in the theatre of translation.

The two roles which were especially prominent in his goal of bringing Bulgakov's *Dni Turbinykh* to the American stage, and thus feature centre stage, were those of literary scout and translator. Firstly, his role as literary scout (and negotiator) (similar to 'title-hunter' in Buzelin, 2007, p.154), as it has been repeatedly noted by numerous sources that Lyons was competing with multiple American agents to gain exclusive translation and performance rights to the play and his success was a big 'scoop' over competing agents in Broadway and Hollywood. This also indicates a strong rapport with two significant agents: Bulgakov, as ST author-playwright, and the Soviet government, in securing exclusive rights, albeit temporarily, as the first American to be granted such a contract.

Secondly, his role of translator is frequently referred to in newspaper articles and this role is clearly visible in the theatrical programme for the production, with an entire page dedicated to Lyons' discussion of the reception of the play in the USSR. In light of these findings, Lyons is arguably best described as a literary scout-translator, since the boundary between the two roles is porous, and the hyphenation reveals the equal significance of both

roles in his overall performance. As has been demonstrated, considerable emphasis from various sources has placed value on his roles as literary scout and translator in bringing Bulgakov to the American stage and he received praise for both, and it is now prudent to now compare the role of the translator in a British production from fifteen years ago.

4.2.5 Charlotte Pyke

Charlotte Pyke (1977-) is a British actor and Russian theatre translator, who has previously taught on Chekhov as part of the Foundation Course at The Oxford School of Drama (Oxford School of Drama, 2023). Unlike Lyons, whose contact with Russian language and culture was through childhood exposure and his later life and work in the USSR, Pyke experienced different points of contact with Russian language and culture; she studied Russian and English at the University of Manchester, where she “began her theatre career in the excellent drama society” (Stanton Davidson Associates, 2024). In contrast to Lyons, Glenny and Ginsburg, Pyke also has specific theatrical training; she trained as an actor at the St Petersburg Theatre Arts Academy (now known as the Russian State Institute of Performing Arts) and the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA). Not only does Pyke have experience of performing onstage, but she also has experience of performing onstage in Russian, making her a particularly interesting subject of study in the context of theatre translatorship. In the context of Russophone plays, Pyke has also performed as an actor in the NT’s adaptations of *Philistines* (2007) and *Burnt by the Sun* (2009).

According to Pyke’s biography on Nick Hern:

She has translated several Russian plays, including *The Seagull* (as *Seagull*) [by Chekhov] for the Arcola, *The Government Inspector* [Gogol], *Philistines* [Gorky] and *The White Guard* for the National Theatre; *Enemies* [Gorky], *The Suicide* [Erdman] and *The Bath-House* [Mayakovsky] for Presence Theatre Company. (2023)

This reveals that Pyke is an experienced Russian-to-English theatre translator, especially in productions of Soviet drama of the late 1920s and early 1930s,

the period in which Bulgakov wrote the majority of his dramatic works. Her connections with highly respected London theatre establishments, including the Arcola Theatre, Almeida Theatre, and the NT, imply that she has a strong reputation as a translator in the British theatre industry. Nick Hern is a well-known and highly-regarded publisher in the field of theatre, so her translations being published by such a prestigious publishing house affords Pyke symbolic capital by association. All of these roles have allowed her to develop a wide-ranging network of contacts, which will be explored in the following section.

4.2.6 Pyke's network of contacts

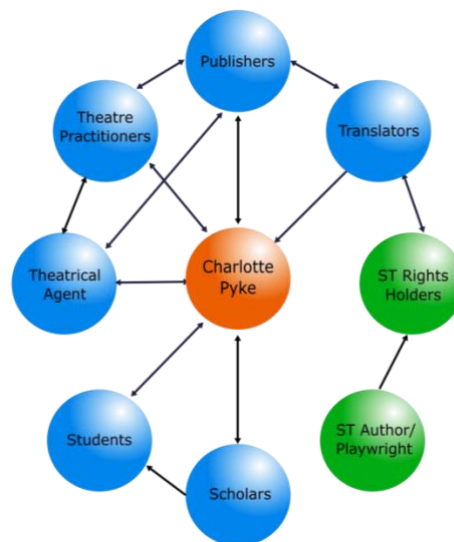


Figure 4.5 – Pyke's network of contacts

In comparison with Lyons' network of contacts, the contacts associated with Pyke are further removed from the ST playwright, as is evidenced by the introduction of Pyke's indirect contacts, in green (see Figure 4.5). However, this is not surprising, given the fact that Bulgakov died in 1940, so she did not have the same opportunity to liaise with him directly as Lyons. Therefore, relative to Lyons and even Glenny and Ginsburg, Pyke's ability to establish primary contact with certain actors is comparatively limited by both her temporal and geographical situation, owing to the passing of some agents such as the ST playwright and ST rights holders, and the dissolution of the USSR.

It follows that her access to primary texts for translation occurred through indirect sources, such as through other translators or a publisher, compared to Lyons, who acquired the ST from Bulgakov, and Glenny and Ginsburg, who obtained STs from ST rights holders. That being said, Pyke did have access to the Russian ST so, to some extent, she must have undertaken some level of negotiation with the current ST holder, whether an archive or a publisher, either directly or under the auspices of the NT. Since the nature of this negotiation, i.e., whether it was direct or indirect, remains unclear, the ST rights holder is represented as an indirect contact in Figure 4.5.

Furthermore, Pyke is personally involved in both the academic sphere, as a tutor on courses at an acting school and her frequent collaboration with theatres, both as a translator and as an actor. This equates to frequent interaction between herself and theatre practitioners other scholars, as well as the students they teach. Additionally, Pyke is represented by a theatrical agency, adding an additional, indirect layer to her communications with other agents. These interactions with various agents will be investigated, as they play out in the theatre of translation, revealing the degree of Pyke's agency in the context of the NT's 2010 production of *The White Guard*. Specifically, attention is drawn to the status and subsequent agency (or lack thereof) attributed to Pyke through her roles of collaborator, theatre collaborator, Russophone culture expert, actor, and translator.

4.2.7 Pyke's interactions in the theatre of translation: *The White Guard* (2010)

Pyke was commissioned as the literal translator for the NT's 2010 production of *The White Guard*, with Andrew Upton (1966-) as adaptor and Howard Davies (1945-2016) as director. This particular team had previously worked together on the NT's 2007 production of *Philistines*, by Soviet author-playwright, Maxim Gorky, reprising their respective roles from *Philistines*. Commissioning Pyke a second time acted as a seal of approval from Davies as he clearly felt that the quality of her work and the general experience of working with Pyke was worth pursuing again. Davies had also won an award for his direction of the 1998 production of *Flight* (adapted from Bulgakov's *Beg*)

on the NT's largest stage, the Olivier Theatre (referenced on p.1 of this thesis). Working on the same project as Davies arguably bolstered Pyke's own profile as a translator by association, as part of a transfer of cultural prestige. Thus, this collaboration contributed to the construction of her translatorial identity.

However, this prestige by association does not automatically afford Pyke the privilege of the status of 'Author'. According to the NT Archive record for this performance ('PERF7326'), the 'Author' is listed as 'Bulgakov, Mikhail' and 'Author Two' is 'Upton, Andrew (New Version)' (*The White Guard*, NT, 2024). In other works, the metadata inputted by the NT reveals that the translator is not encoded as author, which has implications for Pyke's agency, meaning that she is not visible to users of the database as an author in her own right. This specific example of Pyke, as literal translator, not receiving recognition has been highlighted by Katalin Trencsényi (2015, p.53). This implies that the NT does not regard Pyke, as a literal translator, as being an 'Author'. It must be noted that the role of 'Author' is conferred by different types of authority, of which the archive is one type. Other types of authority involved in determining who is credited for authorship will be examined later in this section.

Pyke is, however, credited in the section 'Creative Roles', though she features towards the end of the list, as 'Pyke; Charlotte' 'Literal Translator' (*The White Guard*, NT, 2024). Following the link on the code associated with Pyke's role ('ROLE145104') leads to a personal record for Pyke as 'Literal Translator', classifying her role as 'Production – Creative' (*Pyke; Charlotte*, NT, 2024). By listing her role as 'Creative' across both records, this indicates that Pyke had some degree of creative input in the production, as perceived by the NT, though the programme neglects to mention her, as seen in Figure 4.6. The fact that Pyke is credited on the performance record sub-section on the NT Archive website, but not in the programme infers the status of the role she has been assigned: the lowly status of literal translator.

Brodie notes that, at the NT, the literal translator receives a flat fee for their work and "receives a credit in the programme for the performed play and two complimentary tickets for press night" (2018b, p.342). According to Laera, the fee offered to a literal translator in the UK is "usually around £1,000, which includes a copyright buyout" (2020). It is noteworthy, then, that Pyke does not

receive a credit in the programme, though it is possible that the contract she signed for the 2010 production did not contain such a stipulation.

However, there is now a growing movement to name #TranslatorsOnTheCover (Society of Authors, 2024). This raises the question of what constitutes a cover in a theatrical context, which is worthy of further research. Thus, this practice may since have changed, though this refers specifically to literary translators, and, to date, there has been no such movement to credit theatre translators (see the first section of the Introduction).

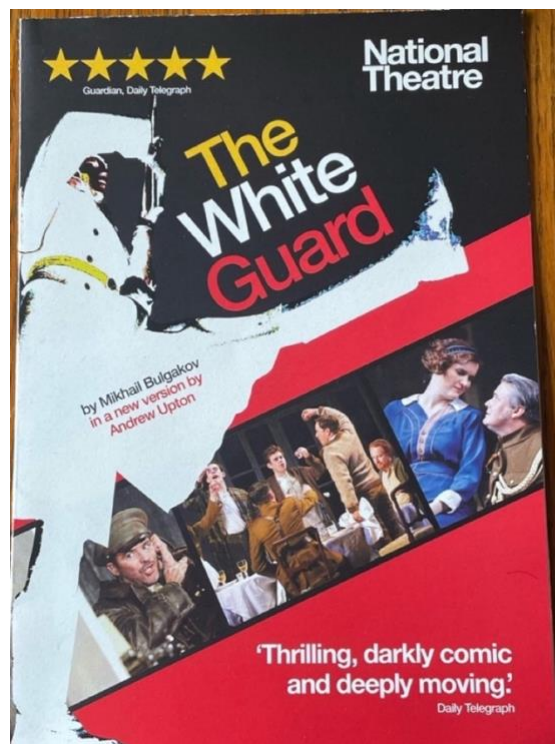


Figure 4.6 – Production programme for the National Theatre’s 2010 production of *The White Guard*, from Pyke’s translation of *Dni Turbinykh*

Since it was not possible to interview Pyke, it was not possible to ascertain whether she felt that she should have been credited in the promotional material. However, it is possible that Pyke wants to be more visible for her role as an actor. This is supported by her talent profile, which advertises her acting talent, with no mention of her role as a translator (e-Talenta, no date). The lack of credit in the promotional material for *The White Guard* also reflects a conceptual split in the translation process: firstly, there is an interlingual transfer of what the play is about and, secondly, the ‘true craft’ of producing the text for performance. In this regard, translation is broken into two roles.

In the absence of primary data from Pyke herself, it was meaningful to gather information from Howard Davies, who commissioned her as translator. In a podcast where theatre critic Carole Woddis interviewed Davies about the 2010 production, Davies revealed that “[t]he text that we worked on was a literal translation of what was available, in other words the official version of Bulgakov’s text” (*TheatreVoice*, 2010). This suggests that the literal translation formed the basis for the interpretation of the play, together with the novel. Considering how theatre practitioners perceive translation, it is interesting that Davies perceives the translation as “the official version of Bulgakov’s text”, and not as an interpretation of the ST by the translator, selecting her own words to render the ST in English. Despite the crucial role of her translation in the production, Pyke is not mentioned by name, or by her role of literal translator, with her role reduced to the impersonal process of ‘literal translation’.

Furthermore, Davies discussed how ‘we’, i.e., himself and Upton, decided “where we wanted to place Bulgakov’s vote” and the difficulties they experienced with the ending of the play:

We were worried by the last act [...] Bulgakov seemed to be, the original literal translation seemed to be, probably under censorship pressures, fudging it, so it took us a long time to try and find the right tone, the right voice, the right resolution to the play that would allow people to be engaged [...] getting the end of the play right was really tricky, and lots of emails between Australia, where he [Upton] lives, and here were exchanged, where I would say no, that doesn’t feel quite right and I couldn’t really express what it was that I wanted, but I would state it in dramaturgical terms and he would have the problem of going away and trying to translate what I was getting at. (*TheatreVoice*, 2010)

Thus, the key creative decisions were made exclusively by the team of Upton and Davies, rather than together in consultation with the expert in Russian language and culture. While the acts of literal translation and adaptation both took place in the second performative step (writing), this appears not to have been a collaborative process, instead adopting the traditional two-tier model of ‘literal’ translation then adaptation. This indicates that Davies and Upton prioritised the transfer implicit in the ‘translation’ of Davies’ message as director to the audience, via the adapted script, rather than the process of translation itself, further necessitating analysis through performative steps.

There is also a strong emphasis on Upton's voice, although Davies does recognise the voice of the translator as being distinct from that of Bulgakov, even though Pyke remains unnamed. This is despite their interpretation of Bulgakov's voice being mediated through Pyke's own voice, contradicting Davies' prior assertion that the literal translation is "the official version of Bulgakov's text" (*TheatreVoice*, 2010). This implies a misunderstanding of translation on Davies' part. From the translator's viewpoint, Pyke revealed that she "considers that the original author is undermined if the literal translator is not credited because there is otherwise 'no recognition of the transition' between the range of writers in the translation process" (Brodie, 2018b, p.145). Indeed, Davies' equation of Pyke's TT with Bulgakov's ST, not recognising 'the transition' undermines both Pyke and Bulgakov, as per Pyke's own view.

In the podcast, Woddis contributes to the lack of translator visibility by commenting that the play as performed "is adapted/translated, or in a version by Andrew Upton" (*TheatreVoice*, 2010). This confusion of terminology is common among theatre critics, with many adaptors often mistakenly being labelled as translators, and it also extends to theatre practitioners. One survey participant involved in this production revealed that "the translator [Upton] was with us for a lot of rehearsals, helping to solve any problems that might come up with the staging". As previously established, Upton was the adaptor of this work, not the translator, so it is interesting that the participant thought that Upton had translated the play, and felt that the translator played a significant role in the third performative step of rehearsal. This has implications for defining translation in this context, in terms of who is able to define theatre translation, with theatrical actors seemingly empowered to determine such definitions. This participant did not mention Pyke, indicating that she was not personally involved in the rehearsal process. This raises the issue of the lack of clear distinction between these roles, as well as between a translation, adaptation, and version, from the perspective of critics and practitioners.

Unclear distinctions are symptomatic of "[t]he fuzzy line between translation and adaptation" (Horsley, 2023, p.48) which continues to divide scholars. The lack of clear distinction between these roles, as far as theatre critics and practitioners are concerned, further highlights the need to discuss

the theatre translation and adaptation processes as two separate activities in the second and third performative steps of writing and rehearsal.

In an attempt to clarify the distinction between these two activities, I will now conduct a comparative analysis of the suggestions made in Pyke's literal translation draft and accompanying notes and Upton's first draft, in terms of which suggestions Upton accepted, altered or omitted. This allows the present case study to better account for the often-confusing boundaries between these roles, by considering the fluidity of these roles across the performative steps. While later drafts of Upton's work were available, this section has demonstrated how the later versions were purely the product of the working relationship between Upton and Davies, with no involvement from Pyke. Therefore, the two drafts examined chart the only (albeit apparently indirect) contact between Pyke as translator and Upton as adaptor.

Pyke's comments in footnotes	Accepted by Upton	Altered by Upton	Omitted by Upton
Linguistic clarifications	20	9	15
Contextual information	15	17	13
Differences between ST versions	2	5	4
Structural clarifications	2	0	0
Issues specific to Bulgakov's style	0	1	2
Total (/105 footnotes)	39	32	34

Table 1 – Comparison of Pyke's 'literal' draft and Upton's first draft of *The White Guard*

From Table 1, it is apparent that the majority of suggestions made by Pyke were either linguistic clarifications or contextual information provided to inform Upton's specific word choices. For the most part, Upton accepted Pyke's comments providing linguistic clarifications. Such clarifications accepted by Upton include the strong associations with certain expletives which might not

be apparent in the translation or words with dual meanings, which could result in different translations.

However, the contextual information provided, for example pertaining to culture-bound concepts or specific elements of Russo-Ukrainian history, were mostly taken on board, but altered in some way in Upton's draft. Pyke's suggestions which were omitted by Upton more often than not related to the second, revised version of the ST and were mostly referred to in her separate explanatory notes document and issues relating to Bulgakov's style or structural clarifications in the case of the rhythm of songs or the form of poems. Pyke typically favours such footnotes, since "they [directors] don't want bias or your own cultural interpretation, so I use extensive notes" (Brodie, 2012, p.150). This implies that Pyke is visible to the director and adaptor, yet fades into the background for the actors and audience, in turn suggesting that her collaborative work in theatre primarily occurs in the second performative step, with Pyke having no involvement in the third performative step. As such, Pyke's roles are mapped across all sections of the theatre of translation, in the next section. It appears that Pyke does not position herself as an author, but as more of a Russian consultant. Some specific examples are outlined in Table 2.

Act/Scene	Pyke ('literal')	Upton ('new version')
Act 1, Scene 1	Bloody hell! (Footnote: Or some equivalent expletive: literally 'Mother of Satan')	Mother of fucking Satan.
Act 2, Scene 1	Ten versts beyond Slobodka.	About a mile away just outside Slobodka.
Act 3, Scene 1	(Footnote: These words are from a song by Vertinsky. Bulgakov said that it was important for the cadets to be singing totally inappropriate songs)	Omitted.

Table 2 – Specific examples comparing Pyke's 'literal' translation and Upton's 'new version'

In Table 2, the example in Act 1, Scene 1 shows that Upton accepted Pyke's suggestion of an equivalent expletive to that of the original Russian in the footnotes. The second example, from Act 2, Scene 1 indicates that the sense of distance remains the same in Upton's version, although Upton replaces the culture-bound term '*verst*' ("a Russian unit of distance equal to 0.6629 miles",

Merriam-Webster, 2024) with 'mile' to make it more relatable to a British audience. Finally, the footnote outlined in Act 3, Scene 1 emphasises the significance Bulgakov himself placed on the cadets singing an inappropriate song, which Upton removed altogether from his version.

Such examples highlight the typical working practice of literal translators in terms of (indirect) collaboration with their adaptors at the NT, subscribing to the traditional two-tier model of theatre translation. Katalin Trencsényi notes that the NT's practice of "working from a literal translation process" is "not happening out of necessity, but is part of the theatre's artistic policy" (2015, p.53). Thus, it can be inferred that the literal translator has a lowly status at the NT, relative to that of the celebrity playwright-adaptor, resulting in a mitigation of the translator's agency in the creative process of theatre.

The rationale for NT productions applying the two-tier model of translation, as described by then-Literary Manager at the NT, Sebastian Born, was "to create a play that would work for production here. That the actors will feel they can speak the dialogue, and that there isn't a sense that what we are presenting is an alien artefact" (cited in Trencsényi, 2015, p.53). This implies that is a question of both performability and the particular needs of the NT.

However, Pyke has been known to draw upon her experience of acting onstage during her theatrical training in St Petersburg to ensure that the work she is producing is performable; "I ask whether it flows, I say it out loud" (Pyke, cited in Brodie, 2012, p.153). This adds an extra dimension to the nature of her work in the theatre of translation, as she demonstrates a multi-roling approach, whereby she directly employs her professional acting experience to enhance her performance as a theatre translator; in a two-step approach, Pyke performs her role as translator and then tests the performability of her translations by performing the role of actor, for which she has had extensive training. In this sense, Pyke's performance as a theatre translator directly relates to her previous experiences in other theatrical roles.

From the evidence gathered, the extent of Pyke's agency in the creative process of the NT's 2010 production of *The White Guard* appears to have been relatively limited, despite the fact that she was credited for a 'creative' role. In this sense, her role appears to have been more in line with the mechanical process of interlingual transfer rather than the creative aspects of

performance, despite her experience as an actor informing her translation. While many of her suggestions were adopted (some having been actioned directly and others taken into account as part of a different outcome), at least in Upton's first draft, before the later collaborative drafting process between Upton and Davies, many traces of Pyke's literal translation are not transferred to Upton's version. This version was published by Faber & Faber in 2010, reading: "Mikhail Bulgakov, *The White Guard*, in a version by Andrew Upton", with no mention of Pyke, either on the cover or within the publication (Upton and Bulgakov, 2010). This case study supports Brodie's finding that Pyke has previously experienced (although not necessarily in all cases) "severely limited contact with the users of their [her] translations" (2012, p.150).

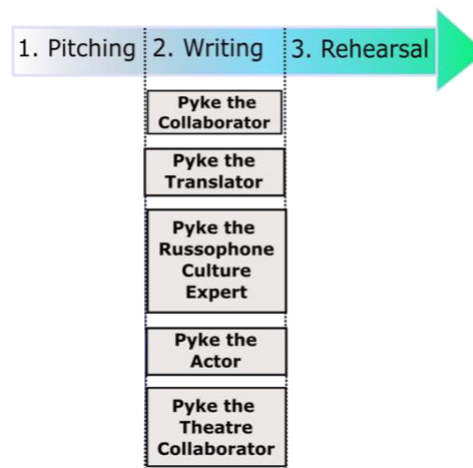


Figure 4.7 – Pyke's roles across performative steps

Overall, it seems that while Pyke's literal translation served more as a foundation for Davies and Upton to build upon, rather than the concrete structure of the version presented to audiences at the Lyttelton. Since Pyke was commissioned for the translation, it can be inferred that she wielded no influence during the first performative step of pitching, as per Figure 4.7. Firstly, Pyke can be determined to have played the implicit indirect role as a collaborator, in her indirect engagement with Bulgakov through the ST. Additionally, she may have been able to influence some initial decision-making processes in the second performative step of writing by providing explanatory footnotes for Upton's reference as an indirect theatre collaborator, employing her experience as an actor and knowledge as a Russophone culture expert.

However, the later drafting and rehearsal process was a collaboration between Davies and Upton (and the theatrical cast), thereby precluding the possibility of Pyke's involvement in further decision-making processes. The second performative step (writing) appears to have provided the only platform for Pyke to exercise her agency, while the third performative step (rehearsals) severely impeded her ability to act or exert influence during that step. Consequently, it can be determined that Pyke performed her most significant work as an actor and translator in her influence over Upton's first draft, based on her own performance suggestions, in the context of the overall production.

4.2.8 Mapping Pyke's roles in the theatre of translation

As is demonstrated in Figure 4.8, the multiple, fluid roles occupied by Pyke in the theatre of translation at the time of *The White Guard* (2010) are noticeably more limited than those played by Glenny, Ginsburg, or even Lyons, as a translator of the same play, albeit in the American context. Based on the charting of Pyke's roles in the production across the three performative steps (see Figure 4.7), it is clear that her involvement in the creative process was limited to the second performative step. Thus, the mapping of her individual roles in the theatre of translation are considered in this regard.

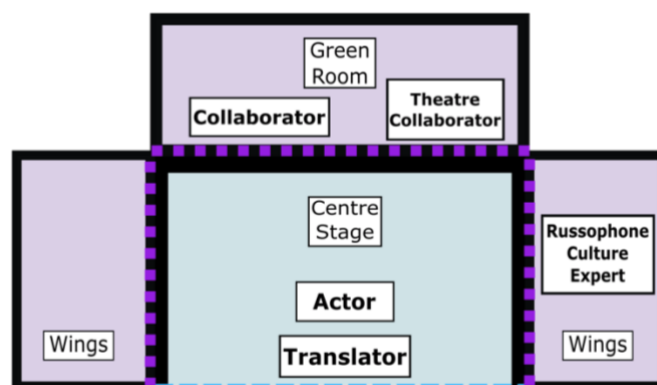


Figure 4.8 – Pyke's roles in the theatre of translation

Her roles of collaborator and theatre collaborator are located in the green room. Like Lyons, this is because of an implicit, indirect collaboration between Pyke and Bulgakov in the act of translation. Her role as theatre collaborator was also indirect, through indirect collaboration with the adaptor of her

translation, Upton, in her performance suggestions and explanation of culture-bound terms. Upton's power to either accept, alter or omit Pyke's suggestions, implies that her agency in this role was relatively limited. However, as was demonstrated, these actions occurred outside of public view, to the point where Upton was misidentified as the translator. Consequently, they are mapped in the green room of the theatre of translation.

Meanwhile, her role as Russophone culture expert remains in the wings. Although not overtly publicly visible, as it is overshadowed by her translation work, with which it is inextricably linked, it is this expertise, developed both through her degree (like Glenny) and her time spent training to be an actor in Russia, that has formed a fundamental part of her performance, even if Pyke does not highlight this role herself. Like Lyons, *Dni Turbinykh* is the only Bulgakov work that Pyke has translated and her role as a Bulgakov translator is often lost under the umbrella term of Russian theatre translator, which encompasses works by a broader range of ST authors.

Following an interview with Pyke, Brodie determined that the former can be categorised under the label of "actors who translate" (2012, p.147), which supports the findings outlined in this chapter. Consequently, Pyke can be labelled as an actor-translator (see Figure 4.8), with her work as an actor and her related theatrical training, both in London and St Petersburg, directly influencing her practice as a translator and thus taking centre stage. In essence, Pyke the actor exerts influence and, therefore, agency, over Pyke the translator, whose character is built on the foundations of Pyke's role as actor.

The evidence presented in this case study has also raised the question of the extent to which Pyke wishes to be visible as a theatre translator, or, specifically, as a Bulgakov translator, with most biographical information highlighting her role as an actor over that of translator. If, as has been established, the status developed as a translator allows translators to acquire agency, then it is interesting to consider that Pyke's prioritisation of her role as an actor limits her own agency as a translator. Regarding *The White Guard*, Pyke was already endowed with more agency than the average literal translator by having been commissioned a second time to work as part of the Davies/Upton production team. However, in this case, her agency was limited by her relative lack of contact with the team in the third performative step of

the production, upon completing the second performative step of delivering the literal translation.

Furthermore, Pyke's status and, consequently, her agency, was limited by her lack of credit in the programme or personal recognition by Davies for her work. This is in stark contrast to Lyons, who was both credited and afforded further visibility through a page of the programme dedicated entirely to his commentary on the reception of the play in its native USSR. Interestingly, while referencing his role as a translator, promotional material and newspaper reviews for the 1934 production of *Dni Turbinykh* did not cast Lyons solely as a translator, but positioned it alongside his role as a journalist living in the USSR. The entangled nature of these roles and types of agency means that it is arguably less meaningful to attempt to determine the significance of each individual role in the construction of his own identity. Taking Pyke's case into account, her talent profile on e-Talenta was found to make no reference to her role as a translator. While Lyons' and Pyke's situations are different in many ways, both raise the question of whether (Bulgakov) theatre translators gain legitimacy through their other roles, rather than their translatorial performance.

4.2.9 The role of the translator in staging *Dni Turbinykh* (1934-2010)

As demonstrated above, the case studies of Lyons and Pyke provide fertile terrains for research into translator agency in the transposition of Bulgakov's *Dni Turbinykh* from Russian page to British and American stages; firstly, these particular case studies are useful for charting the changing roles of the translator across the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. By piecing this together with evidence gathered in Chapter 3 about Glenny and Ginsburg's roles in the translation of Bulgakov's plays from the 1960s to 1990s, this allows for a historiographical account of the translation of Bulgakov's plays across a seventy-six-year period. Considering the evidence gathered across these three separate periods, it is possible to identify different markers, or characteristics, of translatorial identity in bringing *Dni Turbinykh* to Anglophone audiences.

Lyons' experience in the early 1930s implies that the role of the Bulgakov translator revolved around capitalising on existing – and establishing new – contacts to acquire STs and the right to translate them. This is not dissimilar to Glenny and Ginsburg, who, as examined in Section 3.3.2, found themselves prioritising the discovery and acquisition of texts for translation in the 1960s, and persuading publishers to commission translations of these works. It does seem, however, that Glenny and Ginsburg were constantly engaged in competition with one another, while Lyons was primarily competing with publishers to exert his influence over Bulgakov (for example, when Bulgakov declined his request for the rights to translate *Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh*, as S. Fischer Verlag already held the rights to translate the play, see Section 4.2.3).

Pyke's role in the twenty-first century markedly differed from those of Lyons, Glenny, and Ginsburg, as the play was already available in the public domain, so there was no need for her to enter negotiations in order to acquire the ST. Unlike Glenny and Ginsburg, Pyke did not have to persuade a publisher to commission the translation: Davies initiated the project and commissioned Pyke as translator, based on their previous collaboration on *Philistines*, in which Pyke performed both the roles of theatrical actor and translator. Thus, this reflects a shift in translatorial identity; initially, translators embodied the role of negotiator in their role as 'title-hunters', as Buzelin puts it (2007, p.154), attempting to establish the status of Bulgakov in the West (as has demonstrably been the case with Glenny and Ginsburg), with a large degree of agency in decision-making processes.

Pyke's case in 2010 suggests that the translator's status was bolstered by the director commissioning her to provide a 'literal' translation on a second production. However, her ability to make decisions and influence the production beyond the delivery of the literal translation and explanatory (foot)notes to aid the adaptor, was severely limited. In a sense, Pyke faded into the background once the translation was delivered, which is further proven by her lack of credit in the production programme (see Figure 4.6). This contrasts with Lyons, Glenny, and Ginsburg, who were all visibly credited in production programmes and promotional material (see Sections 3.3.6 and 4.2.3),

indicating the lowly status of the translator in more recent productions and a subsequent reduction in their agency in the creative process.

The two case studies also present differences between scales of production: the 1934 production was presented by a university dramatic group in a regional location in the US (New Haven, Connecticut), while the 2010 production was staged by a national theatre (in this case, the NT) in the metropolitan centre of London. This has wider implications for translator agency; a translator operating in a smaller, amateur context, such as Lyons, is not subjected to the same rigid structural boundaries as a translator performing their role in the context of a state-funded, established professional organisation. The former arguably allows greater possibilities for the personal creative involvement and translator visibility to theatre audiences. Therefore, the extent of the translator's role in the production depends on both the temporal *and* geographical setting, as well as the size and nature of the company producing the play. To contextualise these findings further, it is necessary to consider the role of the translator/adaptor in staging another Bulgakov play, *Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh*.

4.3 *Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh*

Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh is another of Bulgakov's plays with a complicated history, which proved equally complicated for its translators and adaptors. As with *Dni Turbinykh*, the play was subjected to strict censorship and was subsequently revised in a censor-approved version through the collaboration of Bulgakov (as playwright-producer, again multi-roling) and Stanislavsky (as director), the same collaboration as previously seen in the 1932 production of *Dni Turbinykh*. The fraught rehearsal and editing process, as it unfolded between the two, is documented by their theatrical contemporary, Nikolaj Gorchakov (1898-1958), and is part of the Glenny Collection at UCL. The revised version of the play was withdrawn from production in 1936 after a seven-night run, due to Bulgakov's unwillingness to remove the play's thinly-veiled critique of Stalin.

Mol' er/Kabala svjatosh has been staged six times in Britain, though in a wider range of geographical locations than the London-centric British productions of *Dni Turbinykh*: firstly, by the RSC at The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon (1982), The Gulbenkian Studio, Newcastle-upon-Tyne (1983), and The Pit, London (1983). These productions resulted from Dusty Hughes' adaptation of Helen Rappaport's translation. Subsequent productions were performed by the Gate Theatre company at the Gate at Latchmere, London (now Theatre 503) in 1983, and at the Clwyd Youth Theatre in Mold, Wales, which used the Rappaport/Hughes version, in 1992. Latterly, it was staged at the Finborough Theatre in London, in a premiere performance of Glenný's translation in 2009. It is Rappaport's translation which constitutes the British contingent of the following case study. The play has been staged twice in the US, and, as was the case with Eugene Lyons, both productions can be attributed to one man, Michael Lessac, working in two American states: the initial production run took place at Lessac's own Colonnades Theatre Lab in New York in 1978, with the second run appearing at the Hartman Theater in Stamford, Connecticut. As Lessac is the only person to stage *Mol' er/Kabala svjatosh* in an American context, this case study opens with an analysis of his role in bringing Bulgakov's play to American audiences.

4.3.1 Michael Lessac

Michael Lessac (1940-) is an American film, television and theatre director and screenwriter. Upon completing his PhD in developmental psychology, Lessac received "a two-year Ford Foundation Grant to work at the National Theatres of England, Italy, France, Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union" (*Global Arts Corps*, 2024). Therefore, he had experience of Slavic theatre, though it is not clear whether or not he acquired (or previously held) any significant Russian language skills. He is also the Artistic Director-Founder of Global Arts Corps, which defines itself as a "non-profit theatre and education foundation" (2024). Most interestingly for the purposes of this case study, Lessac was Artistic Director at Colonnades Theatre Lab in New York from 1974 to 1984. On the Global Arts Corps website, Lessac writes: "The theatre

[Colonnades] received numerous awards for its work over this period, most notably for its premier productions of international theatre including original adaptations of Bulgakov (*Molière in Spite of Himself*) [and others]” (2024). Therefore, this production contributed significantly to his theatrical career, which saw the Colonnades win Drama Desk and Drama Forum awards.

4.3.2 Lessac’s network of contacts

Lessac’s network of contacts (see Figure 4.9) is particularly limited compared to the other cast members examined in this chapter, a key difference between them being that Lessac was not a translator by profession, so he was not a part of that specialist professional group. Meanwhile, the other cast members all acted as translators.

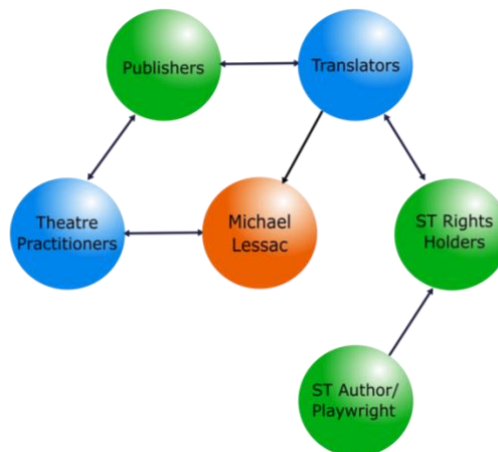


Figure 4.9 – Lessac’s network of contacts

In comparison to Lessac, Glenny, who also held a PhD, pursued a career in academia and had fewer direct dealings with the theatre. Lessac, meanwhile, opted for a theatrical career, with his academic training occupying a more peripheral position in his career development. Therefore, his position as a scholar was not significant in developing his network of contacts. Lessac’s dealings in an academic setting would occur purely through his educational foundation, Global Arts Corps, which engages directly with student groups.

Like Pyke, Lessac’s engagement with Bulgakov was indirect, being mediated through his interaction with translators who had, themselves,

primarily acquired the STs through indirect means, i.e., ST rights holders (as was the method employed by Lyons, Glenny, and Ginsburg). Lessac's interactions with publishers were also indirect, with the only publication of his *Molière* typescript coming through his collaboration with David Morgan, who essentially rewrote the piece for the second run of the production in 1981. Consequently, it is clear that the majority of Lessac's interactions in the theatre of translation took place in the context of the theatre itself – the setting in which he held the most agency. As such, we will now turn our attention to Lessac's interactions and agency as explored through his roles of Artistic Director, collaborator, negotiator, foreign theatre expert, adaptor, and director in the theatre of translation, in the context of his two productions of *Molière*.

4.3.3 Lessac's interactions in the theatre of translation: *Molière in Spite of Himself* (1978, 1981)

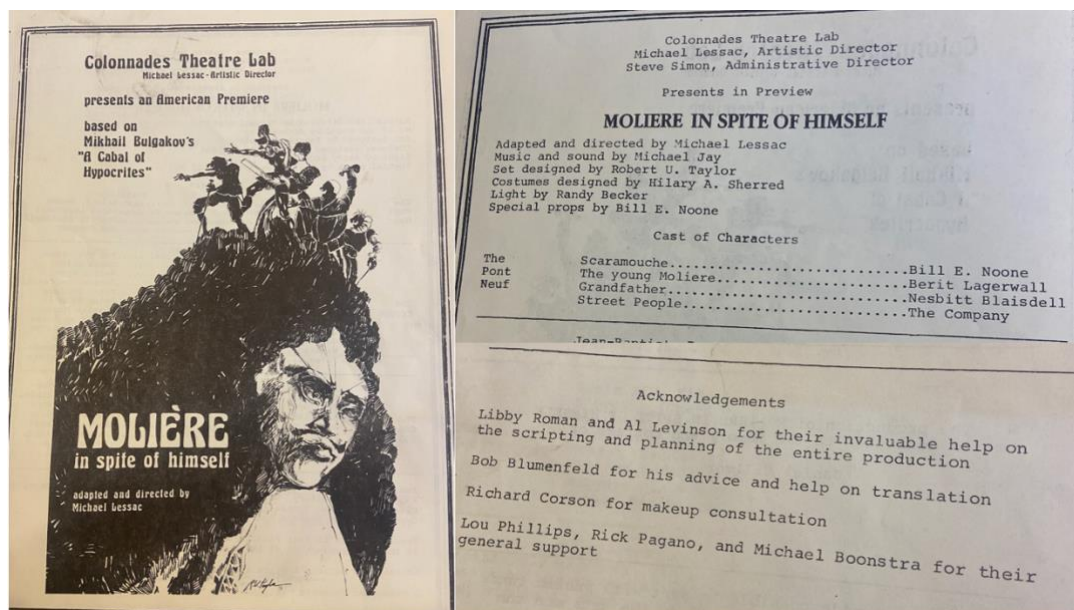


Figure 4.10 – Production programme for Colonnades Theatre Lab's 1978 production of *Molière in Spite of Himself*, from Ginsburg's and Glenny's translations of *Mol'er/kabala svjatosh*

As with Eugene Lyons, the other American examined in this chapter, Lessac's original 1978 production of *Molière in Spite of Himself* was billed as "an American Premiere", as the cover page of the programme reads (see Figure 4.10). The original production of *Molière* ran for 100 performances (Playbill, 2022) and took place on "an Off-Off Broadway basement stage", the 75-seat

Colonnades Theatre Lab in New York City's East Village. Off-Off Broadway is the lowest rung of the NYC theatre hierarchy, with Broadway at the top, Off-Broadway in the middle and Off-Off Broadway at the bottom. Ironically, the success of the production was its financial downfall, as Alvin Klein explained in the *NYT* "the theater [sic] – which was intended for experimentation, not success – went bankrupt as a result, according to its founder, Michael Lessac, who felt obliged to keep a sudden hit running at a weekly, unaffordable loss" (Klein, 1981). This is important contextual information when investigating the role of the translator in this production.

Figure 4.10 reveals no clear indication of any specific translator's work being used, nor is there any clear credit for a translator. It is also difficult to state with complete certainty who the translator was; for example, in the acknowledgements section of the programme for the 1978 production at the Colonnades Theatre Lab, NYC, it reads: "Bob Blumenfeld for his advice and help on translation" (NYPLPA, 1978). Robert Blumenfeld (1943-) is an actor and vocal coach who describes himself as a "smattering of Russian" (2023: 197). Blumenfeld does not explain what this 'smattering' means in practice, though, presumably, it refers to him having at least a basic understanding of the language, since he provided assistance on translation that Lessac deemed worthy of mention in the programme. The engagement of someone with only a 'smattering' of the source language for assistance with the translation process could have a negative impact on the quality of the translation

This implies that Lessac did not employ a theatre translator to render the text in English as a basis of the adaptation, though what exactly constitutes "advice and help on translation" and the extent to which he was involved is unclear. Lessac likely turned to Blumenfeld due to the aforementioned budget constraints of an Off-Off Broadway theatre company, which did not have the luxury of a Broadway budget or audience to generate significant revenue through ticket sales; this production was staged on Off-Off Broadway, which has been established as being the lowest rung in the New York theatre hierarchy and not able to command high production budgets.

Writing for the *NYT*, Mel Gussow referred to the 1978 production of the play "[a]s translated and adapted by Michael Lessac" (1981). It is not unheard of for theatre critics to mistakenly label theatrical adaptors as translators, as

noted in Section 4.2.7. However, it is also possible that Lessac may have translated and adapted the text himself, drawing upon previous translations to inform his own translation and subsequent adaptation. Klein asserted that “[f]or the Colonnades production, Mr Lessac himself loosely adapted the play from assorted translations of the Russian playwright Mikhail Bulgakov’s ‘A Cabal of Hypocrites’.” (1981). As indicated in Section 3.3.6, Ginsburg’s translation was the basis for the 1978 production of *Molière*, and Ginsburg wrote to Seaver: “I wonder what was done in ‘adapting’ it” (1978), suggesting a lack of involvement in the adaptation process. The information provided by Klein and Ginsburg, implies that Lessac’s role was more in line with the traditional role of adaptor – adapting existing translations for the needs of a modern audience.

The 1981 production at the 1,235-seat Hartman Theatre in Stamford, Connecticut was the result of a co-authorship between David Morgan and Michael Lessac. This production saw Morgan and Lessac receive equal billing for the adaptation of Lessac’s original loose adaptation of the play (Klein, 1981). Klein also noted that it was the hope of Lessac and the Hartman’s Artistic Director, Edwin Sherin that “new visibility would give the play a new life, new possibilities for survival” (1981).

In analysing the conception of this production, it is necessary to highlight that the Hartman is a regional theatre, not enjoying the same audience draw as similar-sized Broadway establishments. Therefore, the choice of the play was significant, resulting from collaboration between Lessac and Sherin, as director and Artistic Director respectively. As Sherin emphasised, this was “a play with levels of meaning appropriate to a regional theatre fighting for recognition and survival” (Klein, 1981). This indicates the choice of material was not only about recognising Bulgakov as a playwright, or Morgan and Lessac’s co-authored version, but also the recognition and, ultimately, success of a regional theatre. Therefore, a more powerful agent in the theatre hierarchy made the decision to stage this play: the Artistic Director.

However, Morgan and Lessac admitted that their version almost completely removed Bulgakov, which translators, as gatekeepers and preservers of the ST and culture, actively seek to avoid doing:

“Hardly any of Bulgakov’s original is left”, according to David Morgan, who is credited as the present version’s co-author, with Mr Lessac. Mr Morgan confessed that he did not really like Bulgakov’s play [...] “We came here with a script that we thought was exactly what we wanted and I’ve done nothing but rewrite and reshape it for the possibilities and demands the actors are bringing up. (Klein, 1981)

While Morgan does not attempt to hide the fact that he and Lessac dramatically altered the 1978 script for the 1981 production, it calls into question the extent to which Lessac had creative input, since the new version differed so vastly from his own 1978 version. If anything, the drastic changes made and the comments made by Morgan indicate that Lessac had a far diminished degree of agency in the project compared to Morgan. This had a direct (negative) impact upon the reception of the production.

Despite the critical acclaim garnered by the 1978 production, its 1981 successor was reviewed less favourably, which Gussow determines is a result of the loss of the original playwright’s voice in Morgan and Lessac’s version:

At the Hartman, the play is no longer credited to Bulgakov, but to Mr Lessac and David Morgan. In tiny print at the bottom of the title page of the program, we can read that the adaptation is ‘based in part’ on Bulgakov’s play and also draws upon a number of other sources. It is one thing to adapt a play, quite another to create an anthology. It would seem that, after his death, Bulgakov is being victimized by writers of lesser (or, if you will, Lessac) talent. (Gussow, 1981)

This raises the questions of at what point a translation ceases being a translation and becomes an adaptation, and the point at which an adaptation becomes a new play entirely, as well as whether a play that departs so far from the original can still be attributed to the ST author/playwright. Such questions have long been debated by translation scholars (cf. Mateo, 2002; Horsley, 2023) and theatre translators (cf., Miles, 2000; Komporalý, 2021). In spite of this, there is no agreement as to whether it is possible to satisfactorily draw a line between translation and adaptation in theatre, and whether or not it is actually productive to do so. The problem lies in what audiences expect from a Bulgakov play, although, as was established in Chapter 1, there is arguably greater creative licence on the part of Bulgakov translators and adaptors, since he is a non-canonical playwright.

It is challenging to plot Lessac's roles across the performative steps; although he had a relatively small network of contacts (see Figure 4.9), it is difficult to distinguish the boundaries between his roles:

[t]he double or even multiple identities [that a translator/adaptor may simultaneously perform] undoubtedly add to the complexity and hybridity of a translator's working practices, and their visibility may be blurred. (Ni and Yang, 2024, p.4)

This means that the use of performative steps to account for his performance across the entire creative process, from pitching to rehearsal, is not just helpful, but necessary for making sense of this complex issue of roles and identity. As the sole Artistic Director of the company he founded, he was empowered with the necessary agency to select playtexts for production during the pitching step, without having to 'pitch' the project to anyone, per se (note the absence of the role of "Lessac the Pitcher" in Figure 4.11).



Figure 4.11 – Lessac's roles across performative steps

Furthermore, we must consider whether the persona of Lessac the Artistic Director, who would be more concerned with ticket sales, especially since he was working to a tight budget, may have dominated these performative steps. To facilitate the project, it was also necessary for Lessac to negotiate with the necessary bodies to secure the rights to adapt and dramatize the text. Thus, this tipped the balance of power in the favour of Glenny and Ginsburg, on whose translations his production was based, and the relevant publishers and literary agents who negotiated with Lessac on their clients' behalf.

Lessac's role as a foreign theatre expert may have led him to Bulgakov's dramaturgy, since he spent a significant period of time in the USSR,

and, in 1978, Bulgakov's work had only been staged twice in the US, (as per Klimas, 2025) –the productions resulting from Eugene Lyons' translation. This role also impacted how he adapted the TTs and developed the adapted text in rehearsal, drawing upon his experiences of directing foreign plays abroad, whether consciously or unconsciously. As such, this role features across all performative steps and, while not a role for which he was officially credited, it did contribute significantly to his overall performance.

During the second performative step of writing, again, Lessac played the role of collaborator, during which he collaborated indirectly with Bulgakov, though he also engaged with Bulgakov through Glenny's and Ginsburg's translations of Bulgakov's ST, adding an extra layer of interpretation. This contrasts with Pyke, for example, who engaged indirectly with Bulgakov through the ST itself. During this step, it is impossible to ascertain when his role as adaptor ended and his role as director began, which has implications for Lessac's agency. Namely, it raises the question of whether Lessac as adaptor was directly involved in both the performative steps of writing and rehearsal, or if Lessac influenced the adaptation process as director, and was thus the figure endowed with greater agency in the third performative step. In a similar way to Lyons, the entanglement of Lessac's agency that is observed in his multi-roling across performative steps makes it difficult to track his individual agency for each role. To reflect this ambiguity, Figure 4.11 displays these roles as overlapping between the second and third performative steps.

That being said, through the status afforded to him by virtue of multi-roling, Lessac was granted a large degree of agency in the process, primarily in terms of decision-making, not having to share the role with others, at least in the 1978 production. On the other hand, his involvement as a co-adaptor in the 1981 production mitigated his agency as he had to share the decision-making power with Morgan, though as director, he arguably had the power to enforce his own decisions in the third performative step of rehearsal. Since Lessac's roles have been charted across the three performative steps, it is now possible to assign him an overall identity in the theatre of translation.

4.3.4 Mapping Lessac's roles in the theatre of translation

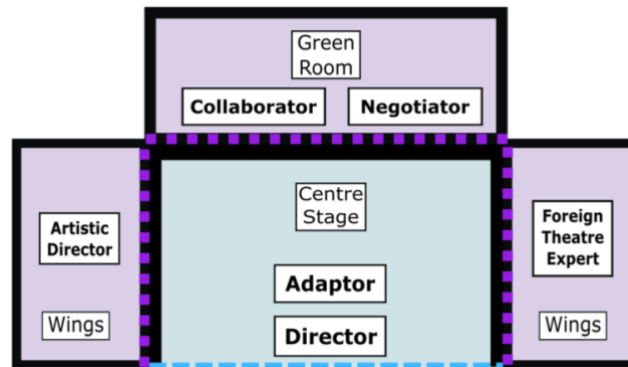


Figure 4.12 – Lessac's roles in the theatre of translation

Over the course of the two productions examined, Lessac maintained a small number of roles in staging Bulgakov for Anglophone American audiences. In theory, this should make Lessac easier to categorise.

In the theatre of translation (see Figure 4.12), Lessac's activities as a negotiator (during the first performative step) and collaborator (corresponding to the second performative step) appear in the green room. As a negotiator, his interactions with other parties to secure the rights to adapt and dramatize the relevant translations (of Glenny and Ginsburg) were not visible to the public. However, they influenced his overall performance in the context of the productions studied. Similarly, his indirect intellectual collaboration with Bulgakov (and, inadvertently, Glenny and Ginsburg) through the TTs consulted, was a mental collaboration, only visible to Lessac. Therefore, this places both his roles of negotiator and collaborator in the green room.

Moving to the wings, Lessac's role as Artistic Director was not his most prominent in this production, though it did empower him to exert his influence across all performative steps (from pitching the project to writing the adaptation, to directing the rehearsals). His agency is thus entangled with his role as a foreign theatre expert, which similarly influenced his actions during the pitching process, in choosing this relatively unknown foreign play by a lesser-known Soviet playwright. Both roles were referenced on Lessac's personal website, but neither are visible in the production programme. In light of this, they are located in the wings of the theatre of translation.

Finally, Figure 4.12 presents Lessac's roles of adaptor and director as taking centre stage. Again, these roles were shown to be entangled across the performative steps outlined in Section 4.3.3, therefore resulting in the entanglement of these two types of agency; Lessac the adaptor was directly involved in the performative steps of pitching, writing and rehearsal, as the adaptor proposing the project, executing the adaptation for the project. Meanwhile, Lessac the director crossed over with Lessac the adaptor, with both contributing to the end product.

Furthermore, these are the two roles for which Lessac was most visible to the public, corresponding to the credits which Lessac assigned to himself in the production programme (see Figure 4.10), over which he had ultimate control as both the production director and Artistic Director of the company. Therefore, it can be ascertained that adaptor and director are the two (overlapping) roles for which Lessac was most visible in the production process and, as such, justifying their position centre stage in the theatre of translation.

The best solution to resolve the complex issue of visibility and agency raised in this case study is to label Lessac according to the parameters within which we *can* locate him, as both the adaptor and director of this adaptation, even if the line between the two roles is blurred. Consequently, the overall label assigned to Lessac in the theatre of translation is that of director-adaptor, best capturing his labour in the creative process of theatre. The analysis now turns to the case study of Lessac's British counterpart, Helen Rappaport, and her role in translating *Mol'ér/Kabala svjatosh* for a British audience.

4.3.5 Helen Rappaport

Finally, we turn to Helen Rappaport (1947-). On her personal website, Rappaport refers to herself as "internationally bestselling author, media consultant & historian specialising in the period 1837-1918 in Britain and Russia" as well as an "occasional literal translator" (Rappaport, 2018). Born and raised in Britain, Rappaport studied Russian at Chatham Girls' Grammar School, before studying Russian Special Studies at the University of Leeds.

She then briefly became an actress, and started doing Russian-to-English literal translations for British theatre in the late 1970s, taking on a variety of other positions in the course of her career. Her first literal translation was for a 1977 production of Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* at the Nottingham Playhouse, commissioned by the prolific British dramatist Trevor Griffiths (1935-2024).

The other positions taken on by Rappaport include freelance writer, copyeditor, full-time writer, historian, and Russian/media consultant. In an interview with *New Asian Writing* (NAW), Rappaport noted that she continued to work as a Russian translator, freelance writer and editor during the 1980s, "all in between acting jobs" (2014). In the same interview, she is identified as a "British historian, author and former actress" (2014). In 2016, Rappaport received an honorary doctorate from the University of Leeds "for her services to history" (NAW, 2014). Brodie describes Rappaport as "[a] more visible translator than most" (2012, p.147) and the latter has written on the role of the translator in her chapter 'Chekhov in the Theatre: The Role of the Translator in New Versions' (2007).

Rappaport also wrote an article 'Lost in translation: The too-often unsung work of the literal translator' (2001), which, somewhat ironically, it has not been possible to source. Despite not every article being available, it is unusual for someone of her high profile as an author/historian/consultant to also write academically about her translation work. Rappaport's role as theatre translator has also been examined by other translators and scholars (e.g., Miles, 2000; Brodie, 2012, 2018b, 2022), with Brodie stating that Rappaport had been "named by several practitioners as a good example of an effective literal translator, suggesting that she is not underrated within the theatre profession even though she feels that may be the case with the public at large" (2012, p.161). Again, implies Rappaport's notably prominent status in the theatre industry, compared to the typical lowly status of theatre translators.

However, Rappaport is primarily known as a historian and trade history writer, having appeared in various television interviews about the British and Russian Royal Families and as an author of historical works including the bestsellers *Ekaterinburg: The Last Days of the Romanovs* (2008) and *Four Sisters: The Lost Lives of the Romanov Grand Duchesses* (2014). According

to Rappaport's website, the latter "brought enormous success in the USA [...] and it was in the NY Times non-fiction best sellers for 11 weeks" (Rappaport, 2018). Rappaport being most well-known for her work as a writer is similar to the case of Lyons, whose status as a writer granted him the status and agency to translate Bulgakov's work. The main difference is that Rappaport's career as a writer began many years after she started taking theatre translation commissions. Therefore, her agency as a Bulgakov translator cannot be attributed to her status as a writer, as was the case with Lyons. The significance of this varied biography will now be explored in the context of Rappaport's network of contacts, visualised in the following section.

4.3.6 Rappaport's network of contacts

The network of contacts attributed to Rappaport is wide-reaching (see Figure 4.13), owing to the multitude of roles which she has held throughout her fifty-year career, resulting in her acquisition of different types of agency across different roles. Indeed, as noted in the preceding section, Rappaport has maintained relations in a number of industries, with the two most significant for the purposes of this research being her work in the theatre industry, both as an actress and a translator, and her work as a Russian consultant.

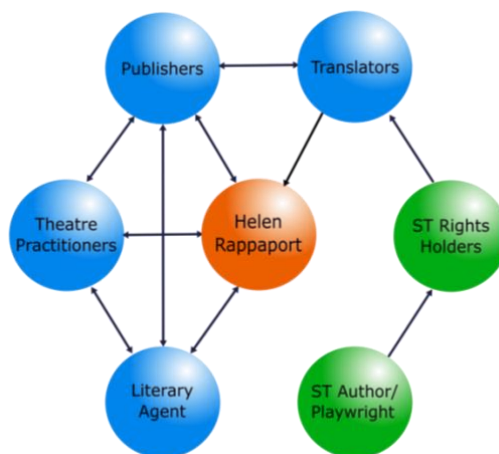


Figure 4.13 – Rappaport's network of contacts

Her position as a scholarly writer of several non-fiction works, for which she has often been interviewed on television, is arguably the role for which she is

currently most visible, but this career trajectory developed after her involvement in this Bulgakov production, thus it is not considered as part of this analysis. In an interview with Richard Hardie, Rappaport noted that her acting career was ultimately unsuccessful, “[b]ut I had luckily kept my interest in Russian and history alive and had taken various freelance writing and translation jobs to keep my hand in” (2013). Therefore, she maintained numerous connections, both direct and indirect (as seen in Figure 4.13) across various industries and was notable for her multi-roling. Rappaport also employs the services of a British agency, Peters, Fraser and Dunlop, and is represented in the US by St Martin’s Press, “for all St Martin’s Press editions of my books and broadcast media in the USA” (*Contact*, Rappaport, 2018).

This network of contacts bears most similarity to that of Pyke, as a translator with prior acting experience, although, rather than Pyke, who employs a theatrical agent, Rappaport’s agency of choice is a literary agency, indicating that Rappaport’s career is more literature-oriented, rather than theatrical. While she is a long-standing agent in both the theatre translation and scholarly writing spheres, more scholarly attention must be paid to her agency in the theatre agency. Therefore, this case study will now explore the nature of her interactions and agency in the RSC’s three productions of *Moliere*, from 1982-1983, as determined by her roles of collaborator, translator, (former) actress, Russophone culture expert, and theatre collaborator.

4.3.7 Rappaport’s interactions in the theatre of translation: *Moliere*, or *The Union of Hypocrites* (1982-1983)

As is visible in Figure 4.14, there is a direct contrast between the script, as published by Methuen, and the memorandum sent to Michael Glenny prior to publication: the memorandum reads “translated by Dusty Hughes”, yet the accompanying playscript reads “in a new version by Dusty Hughes from a literal translation by Helen Rappaport”. It is worth noting that it is a mark of cultural prestige to have a script published, especially by a world-renowned company such as the RSC and the famous theatre publisher Methuen. This, in turn, confers prestige upon Rappaport as a translator and her translation, especially since she receives equal billing with both Bulgakov as ST playwright

and Hughes (1947-) as adaptor. Thus, this also affords her the agency of a recognised degree of authorship. As was discussed in the case study of Pyke (see Section 4.2.7), this appears to break the translation down into two phases, in which the second is dominant. This is a direct example of what Rappaport herself has described as the phenomenon of the ‘disappearing translator’ (2007, p.75) in her discussion of the role of the literal translator in theatre.

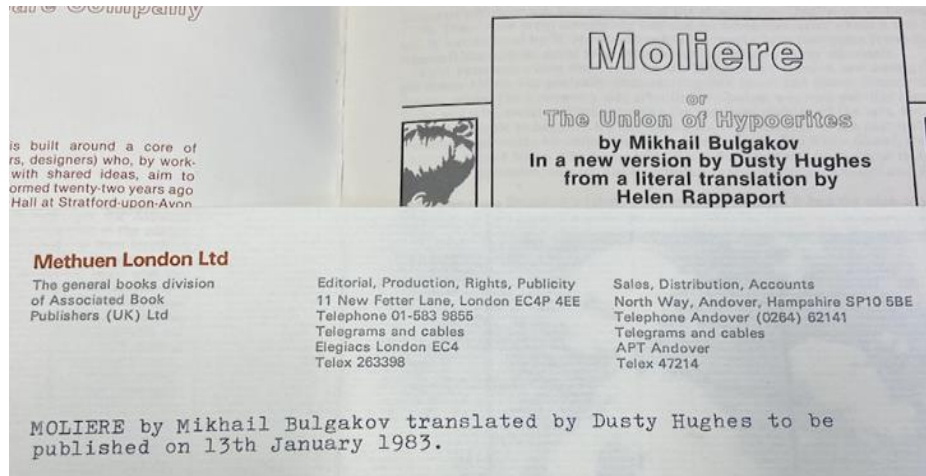


Figure 4.14 – Memorandum from Methuen and published playscript of *Moliere, or the Union of Hypocrites*

A preface by Hughes in the published playscript, titled “The Translation and Performance”, charts the nature of the collaboration between himself and Rappaport in the translation/adaptation process:

My main concern in preparing Bulgakov’s play for the Royal Shakespeare Company was to make the dialogue easy for the actors to speak: RSC actors are thoroughbreds and Bulgakov’s dialogue is more terse and more concentrated than usual. Helen Rappaport prepared a literal translation for me and I asked her to provide notes on the *sound* of the lines in the original and the extent to which it was colloquial in a modern sense, or reflected period speech and detail in recreating seventeenth century France. Otherwise, I have added almost nothing of my own other than quickening a few impenetrably Russian jokes and adding a lullaby to provide a richer and more ironic finale to the dying fall of the first court scene. (original emphasis, *Moliere*, 1983)

The specific focus on creating a work that can be performed by a specific theatre company bears similarity to the NT’s approach (see Section 4.2.7), implying that this is common practice in these state-subsidised theatres. It is

rare for an adaptor to provide details about the translation process, let alone naming the translator and charting their involvement, especially when it appears that the translator has had more creative input into the final text than the adaptor, by the adaptor's own admission.

The significance of Rappaport's involvement in the creative process is supported by the findings of the interview I conducted with the production's director, Bill Alexander (1948-). According to Alexander, "Dusty [Hughes] couldn't speak a word of Russian", which meant that he "worked closely with Helen", indicating that there was an intensive collaborative relationship between translator and adaptor in this production. Regarding his own working relationship with Rappaport, Alexander recalled "some back and forth" with her, indicating that she displayed some degree of influence over the director's decisions, though it is unclear as to whether Alexander was referring to the second or third performative step, or, indeed, both. However, as this served to influence Alexander's production, Rappaport is identified as a theatre collaborator across the second and third performative steps. This sets Rappaport apart from Lyons, Pyke and Lessac, and even Glenny and Ginsburg, as this casts Rappaport as a protagonist across the performative steps of writing and rehearsal in bringing the play from Russian page to British stage.

Rappaport can be regarded as a protagonist both directly, in the second performative step of writing, which saw direct contact between Hughes as adaptor and Rappaport as translator ("I asked her to provide notes") and indirectly, in the second performative step of production, as Hughes revealed "I have added almost nothing of my own", with Rappaport's literal translation remaining unchanged, for the most part, in the final version presented to audiences. This undoubtedly endows Rappaport with a greater degree of agency in the theatre of translation, compared to the other translating cast members.

The process outlined by Hughes is in line with Rappaport's own assessment of her work as a theatre translator, as she notes on her website:

My work as a literal translator is to provide a faithful, linguistically accurate translation, accompanied by detailed historical and stylistic

notes, which form the basis from which the playwrights concerned have created their own new versions. (*About Helen*, 2018)

This practice of supplying theatre practitioners with “detailed historical and stylistic notes” is again similar to Pyke’s practice, (see Section 4.2.7), indicating that British theatre translator practice at state-funded theatres (in these cases, the RSC and NT) did not change greatly over a nearly thirty-year period. Furthermore, her own perception of her role as providing “a faithful, linguistically accurate translation” feeds into the typical perception of the divide between translation and adaptation, which has been characterised as fidelity (translation) versus freedom and creativity (adaptation) (Tenbrink and Lawrence, 2021, p.6). This complicates the issue of her visibility as a theatre translator, particularly when taken together with her scholarly discussion of this issue (cf. Rappaport, 2007); in the chapter, Rappaport criticises the fact that theatre translators are not recognised for their work.

Yet, on her personal website, where her roles are made visible to the public, her role as a theatre translator features at the very bottom of her ‘About’ section and is not among the roles which she highlights at the top of the page: ‘Author, Historian, Consultant’. As this is her personal website, it can be inferred that this is how she *wants* to be visible (relating to the discussion of how Pyke wished to be visible), and the fact that Rappaport, herself, appears to attribute a lowly status to her translation work, relative to how she perceives the status of her other roles, grants her less agency as a translator and more agency for the roles of author, historian, and consultant. Therefore, there is an inherent tension between how Rappaport discusses translator visibility among a scholarly audience and how she presents her own visibility as a translator on her website, which appeals to a more general public audience.

Despite the significance of Rappaport’s involvement in the creative process as professed by Hughes, she is not credited on the RSC Performance Database record for this or any of the productions resulting from the translation. The records for the performances at The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon (RSC, 2024a), The Gulbenkian Studio, Newcastle-upon-Tyne (RSC, 2024b), and The Pit in London (RSC, 2024c) all mistakenly list Dusty Hughes as ‘Translator’ and do not mention Rappaport. In this regard, Pyke is

more publicly visibility than Rappaport, as she is listed as the literal translator for *The White Guard* (2010) on the NT Archive database (see Section 4.2.7). This points to another type of visibility which must be taken into account in studies of translator agency: visibility to database users, which could include theatre company staff, members of the general public and researchers.

Regarding the inconsistency of database search results when it comes to credit for theatre translators, a search for Rappaport's name on the RSC database reveals she is credited as a translator for her work on Chekhov's *Djadja Vanja* (*Uncle Vanya*), staged at the Young Vic Theatre, London. That being said, while she is listed as 'Translator' under the 'creative' roles section, David Lan, the play's adaptor, was also listed as 'Translator' in the same section, although he adapted, rather than translated the work (RSC, 2024d). The other entry for Rappaport, for Chekhov's *Three Sisters* at the Barbican Theatre in 1988, lists John Barton as 'Translator', though there is a footnote stating "English version by John Barton based on a literal translation by Helen Rappaport" (RSC, 2024e). This phenomenon is not unique to Rappaport; Michael Glenny provided the literal translation for the RSC's 1979 production of *The White Guard* at the Aldwych Theatre in London, and is not credited at all, despite his status as a star scholar-translator (2024f). It also mirrors the inconsistent crediting system experienced by Pyke at the NT, feeding into discussions of the wider issue of translator perception in theatre, specifically their relative lowly status compared to other agents performing in the theatre of translation.

As was the case with Lessac, Rappaport's translation did also lead to one further production of *Molière*, staged by the Clwyd Youth Theatre of Theatr Clwyd in Mold, Wales, in 1992. While there is no evidence to suggest that Rappaport was personally involved in this production (or, indeed, in the latter stages of the RSC production, when taking only creative credits into account), but her role is clearly outlined in the programme (see Figure 4.15), leading to greater recognition for her literal translation.

Consequently, it can be determined that Rappaport played a significant role in the act of bringing *Mol' er/Kabala svjatosh* to British audiences and exerted a large degree of agency in terms of Hughes, as adaptor, only making minor changes to her literal translation for the performance draft. This is bolstered by her equal billing with Hughes on the covering material of the programme for the 1992 production on the published RSC playscript. In this context, Rappaport has rewritten the script on the typical expectations of the theatre translator and sets her apart as a translator with greater visibility and status than the average theatre translator, especially in terms of the prestige associated with organisations such as the RSC and Methuen.

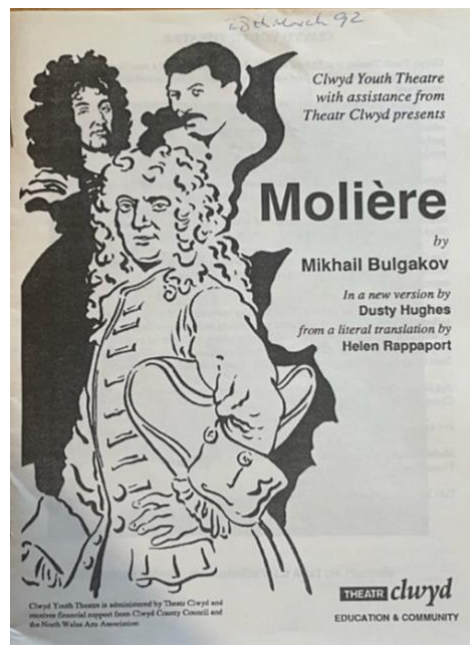


Figure 4.15 – Production programme for the Clwyd Youth Theatre's 1992 production of *Molière*, from Rappaport's 'literal' translation of *Mol' er/Kabala svjatosh*

On the other hand, Rappaport simultaneously has limited visibility to database users on the RSC Performance Database, having been uncredited in these records (like Glenny and Ginsburg). This contrasts with her credits in the published script and Theatr Clwyd's programme.

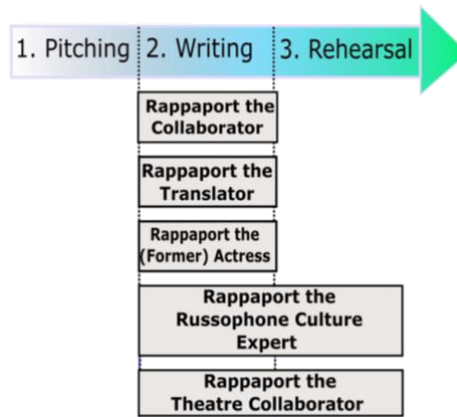


Figure 4.16 – Rappaport’s roles across performative steps

As was the case with Pyke, Figure 4.16 demonstrates that Rappaport had no involvement in the first performative step of pitching, as she was commissioned by the RSC to complete a literal translation which would then form the basis of the subsequent adaptation as part of the two-tier translation model (which Alexander indicated was the standard RSC working practice in the 1980s). In a manner similar to Pyke, Rappaport was most active across the second performative step. Mirroring the trend displayed among her fellow cast members in this chapter, Rappaport played the role of collaborator, indirectly collaborating with Bulgakov in the act of translation. It was also during the writing step that she performed the role of translator, as part of which she drew upon her experience as a (former) actress to consider the necessary performance aspect of this inherently plurisemiotic TT.

Rappaport’s actions as a Russophone culture expert and theatre collaborator were more explicit in the second performative step, feeding into her collaboration with Hughes during the adaptation process. However, moving into the third performative step of rehearsal, these roles were implicit and their inclusion in this section is based on the evidence gathered from Hughes and Alexander. This implied that there was some degree of collaboration with Rappaport during this step, or, to use Alexander’s words, “some back and forth”, with Hughes admitting that he “added almost nothing of [his] own”. This indicates that Rappaport exerted significant influence over rehearsals and the subsequent performance, through the indirect collaboration between actors and her TT. This analysis has provided sufficient evidence to assign a new label to Rappaport in the theatre of translation, as part of the reimagined cast.

4.3.8 Mapping Rappaport's roles in the theatre of translation

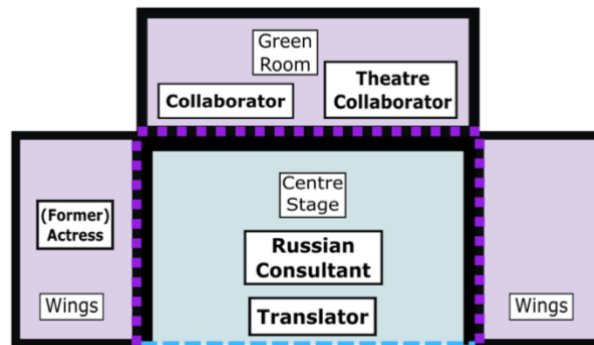


Figure 4.17 – Rappaport's roles in the theatre of translation

In the theatre of translation (see Figure 4.17), Rappaport's implicit roles of (indirect) collaborator (with Bulgakov) and theatre collaborator are relegated backstage. While both of these roles contributed significantly to her overall performance in the context of the RSC's productions of *Moliere*, since they are both implied rather than specifically referenced, they are not publicly visible. Thus, these two roles are situated in the green room.

Moving to the wings, we encounter her role of (former) actress. Her experience as a former actress made Rappaport well-placed to undertake theatrical writing. This acting experience, as described in the case of the actor-translator Pyke (see Section 4.2.7) enabled Rappaport to consider more fully the crucial issue of performability in her literal translations for the stage. Unlike Pyke, Rappaport is no longer a practising actress and received no formal training in this profession, which is why the latter is categorised according to a different label in the theatre of translation. Additionally, there was no acknowledgement of this role in the case of Rappaport by the theatre practitioners involved in this production. Therefore, while contributing to her overall performance, it was not a role for which she was immediately visible and, as such, it did not grant her a significant status and, thereby, did not result in a large degree of agency on Rappaport's part in the context of the production. This provides the rationale behind the decision to locate this role in the wings, as opposed to centre stage, where it featured for Pyke.

Finally, Rappaport's roles which take centre stage are those of Russian consultant and translator. As demonstrated in Section 4.3.7, Hughes' preface to the published playtext revealed how Rappaport's expertise in Russian language and culture and her skill as a translator enabled him to develop a vital understanding of the sound and flow of the original Russian. This preface also revealed that her literal translation remained practically unchanged in the version presented to audiences. Although credited as a literal translator in this production, it seems that Rappaport was able to transcend the limitations imposed by the traditional expectations of this role, by collaborating directly with both Hughes and Alexander. The resultant recognition of her significant influence in the creative process in the adaptor's preface to the published playscript is atypical, implying that she played a more significant role than is implied in the title of literal translator. This serves to challenge the notion that translator involvement ends once rehearsals begin.

Therefore, as her credited role in the published playscript (but, as has been noted, not on the RSC performance database), Rappaport's role as translator takes centre stage, together with her role as Russian consultant, as a crucial part of her overall performance. Taking this into consideration, and Rappaport's own perception of her roles, the fluid label of Russian consultant-translator most appropriately captures the full essence of Rappaport's dynamic role in bringing *Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh* to Anglophone British audiences.

It must be noted that the prominence of Rappaport's multiple roles in the theatre of translation contrasts with the roles highlighted by Rappaport herself, as discussed in Section 4.3.7. Today, Rappaport is more visible to the general public for her other roles, quite literally, as she regularly appears in television interviews and maintains her own personal website. The extent of this public visibility is a prime example of Zhang's concept of the translatorial construction of brand (cf. 2021, 2023). It is only in the context of the theatre of translation and in some limited contributions to scholarly works (such as Brodie, 2018a and Rappaport, 2007) that Rappaport's work as a translator takes centre stage. Therefore, in the context of her entire career, this is a relatively rare example of how she develops a high status for herself as a translator and thus acquires a large degree of agency by performing that role.

Meanwhile, in his 1978 production of *Molière*, her American counterpart Lessac maintained creative input across all performative steps through multi-roling. Embodying multiple roles reduced the need to collaborate with other agents, thus affording him greater agency across the three performative steps. As a director-adaptor, who was also Artistic Director of the company, Lessac had full creative control in bringing the play from page to stage, securing his role as a protagonist across all performative steps. This also allowed him to ensure that was credited for his own roles, in promotional material. By contrast, Rappaport was only involved in the second and third performative steps, though her recognition across these steps was inconsistent, with a credit in the published playscript, but not on the RSC performance database. As such, these two case studies construct vastly different characterisations of the role of the Bulgakov translator/adaptor in staging *Mol'ër/Kabala svjatosh* for Anglophone audiences.

4.3.9 The role of the translator/adaptor in staging *Mol'ër* (1978-1983)

The two case studies above have provided a useful comparative analysis of translator/adaptor behaviour in Anglophone staged productions of *Mol'ër* in a number of ways; firstly, while the comparative case studies of Lyons and Pyke concern two productions which were staged seventy-six years apart, the productions in which Lessac and Rappaport were involved took place in a relatively limited period (1978 and 1981, and 1982-1983 respectively). The case studies of Lyons and Pyke are undoubtedly useful in accounting for changes in translatorial behaviour over an extended period. However, by simultaneously considering a case study from similar time periods, this allows for meaningful conclusions about concurrent translator practice at opposite sides of the Atlantic. This can also be compared to the translatorial behaviour of Glenny and Ginsburg in the same period. Since the productions were staged within a few years of each other, geography was one of the main differences observed.

Lessac's 1978 production of *Molière* took place in New York, before being staged in a new version in Connecticut 1981, which is the direct opposite

of Lyons' career trajectory, with his 1934 production of *In the Days of the Turbins* first being staged in Connecticut, before transferring to Broadway in 1935. By first being staged in New York, this drew significant public attention to Lessac's version, but also from the perspective of a regional Artistic Director, with Sherin subsequently commissioning a redrafted version of the play in Stamford, Connecticut. Similarly, to Lyons, Rappaport's translation of *Mol'ér* was first staged in the regional centres of Stratford-upon-Avon and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, before transferring to The Pit, in London's Barbican Theatre. Unlike the 2010 production of *The White Guard*, the British production of *Molière* was brought to audiences outside of London, thus significantly widening Rappaport's sphere of influence as a translator, with the work for which she received equal billing, reaching a wider, national audience.

The scale of these productions and its implications for translator agency must also be considered. As discussed in Section 4.3.3, Lessac's 1978 experimental production was staged in an Off-Off Broadway venue seating 75 spectators, affording Lessac greater individual agency to influence the development of the production. Meanwhile, the 1981 production was a professional production at the 1,235-seat Hartman Theatre, commissioned by Sherin, who also commissioned Morgan as co-author of the new version with Lessac. The introduction of further cast members in this theatre of translation inevitably reduced the amount of individual agency afforded to Lessac, in both performative steps of writing and production.

Regarding the theatres staging Rappaport's translation which took place between 1982 and 1983, The Other Place (Stratford-upon-Avon) has a 200-seat capacity, The Gulbenkian Studio (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) has 697 seats and The Pit (London) is a 164-seat studio theatre. Whilst being relatively smaller venues compared to the 890-seat Lyttelton Theatre where Pyke's translation of *The White Guard* was staged, for example, which might imply greater opportunities for the translator to exercise their individual agency, these were professional productions, commissioned by the prestigious RSC. This means that, although Rappaport experienced an unusually high degree of agency in both performative steps of writing (directly) and production (indirectly), her agency was also limited by the norms of the RSC, i.e., in Rappaport's lack of recognition on their Performance Database. Thus, this

made Rappaport's involvement invisible to database users, in contrast to the equal billing she received with Bulgakov and Hughes in the published playtext, and these different types of visibility require further scholarly attention.

Regarding credits and authorship, theatre translator Patrick Miles asserts that "if someone adapts a translation by someone else of a text by a third party, then that adaptation (call it 'version' or 'treatment') has three authors" (2000: 362). This triad of authors (Bulgakov, Hughes, and Rappaport) are recognised in the published RSC/Methuen edition of the playtext, but not in Morgan and Lessac's 1981 version. The latter sees the play "no longer credited to Bulgakov" (Gussow, 1981), instead recognising Morgan and Lessac as co-authors. Furthermore, Lessac's 1978 version recognises Bulgakov as author and himself as adaptor, but the identity of the translator remains unknown, aside from the vague acknowledgement of Bob Blumenfeld's "advice and help on translation" (see Figure 4.10).

However, from Ginsburg's personal correspondence, it has been possible to uncover the fact that her translation influenced Lessac's 1978 adaptation, at least in part, together with other, unnamed translators' versions. Both Lessac and Morgan diverge from Miles' blueprint for determining authorship, by not crediting translating agents (or, sometimes, the ST playwright), thus confirming Miles' assertion that "[n]o one wants publicly to share his/her monopoly as creator. Everyone wants to believe he/she did it all" (2000: 362). However, while Lessac and Morgan confirm Miles' assertion, Hughes' open acknowledgement of Rappaport's creative role directly contradicts it, by sharing the credit for creative input, even going so far as to attribute the majority of creative involvement to Rappaport. Thus, Hughes draws attention to Rappaport's agency, but not at the expense of Bulgakov.

4.4 Conclusions

The findings of this chapter have yielded four, distinct categories of translators/adaptors: Eugene Lyons as a literary scout-translator, Charlotte Pyke as actor-translator, Michael Lessac as director-adaptor and Helen Rappaport as Russian consultant-translator. While these four individuals have

all been categorised differently, according to their specific social circumstances, there are some overlapping features between the translators. These overlaps were detected in their micro-histories, as represented by their respective networks of contacts, the charting of their individual roles as part of their overall performance across the three performative steps (pitching, writing, and rehearsal) and the plotting of these individual roles in the theatre of translation, resulting in the assignment of an overall label. Each of the three research questions posed at the beginning of this chapter (see Section ii) are now addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Firstly, to contextualise the findings of these case studies, it is noteworthy that each of the translators/adaptors examined in this chapter translated only one of Bulgakov's plays. This has implications for determining how individuals reconstruct their identity over time, given that they were each involved in a limited number of productions (no more than two each, at the most), thereby necessitating a comparison of individuals across multiple time periods, to answer this vital question. The nature of this multi-roling, as has been charted across the three performative steps, implies that the assignment of roles in the theatre of translation is not akin to the traditional assignment of roles in the theatre; in theatre, an actor is cast in one or more roles, though these roles are fixed and do not overlap. However, in the theatre of translation, the translator/adaptor cannot visualise and then embody a chosen role, because the roles are fluid and sometimes unexpected. Thus, identity in the theatre of translation is liable to change as translators/adaptors continually reconstruct their identity to meet the demands of each performative step.

Lyons emerged as an outlier among his fellow cast members, since his collaborations primarily took place during the first performative step. This step included the negotiations between Bulgakov himself and the Soviet government for the exclusive performance and translation rights to *Belaja gvardija*. Not only was he successful in this endeavour, but this also led to the American premiere of the production and Lyons' translation remains the only translation which resulted in productions in the US to date. Admittedly, Lyons was the only individual studied who was alive during Bulgakov's own lifetime. However, Lyons is notable as the only American to ever secure such a contract

with those two parties, raising his profile as a translator, though his agency was entangled with his roles as a writer and journalist.

The case study of his British counterpart, Pyke, indicated that the extent of her collaboration with Upton, as adaptor, was limited to indirect contact during the second performative step, by means of drafts, notes, and footnotes. Here, Pyke made suggestions in written form, which Upton was empowered to decide whether to accept, revise, or omit. In this regard, this limited collaboration can be attributed to the lowly status of the translator (as reflected in her lack of credit in promotional material and lack of involvement upon submission of the TT) and, therefore, a resultant lack of agency, in terms of her ability to act with intent during the third performative step.

It appears that the title of literal translator can have a detrimental impact upon the status of the translator and, thereby, their agency. As it has been established, 'literal translator' has connotations of a lack of involvement in creative decisions, which has been demonstrated to be true in Pyke's case, with Davies admitting that creative agency was primarily shared between himself and Upton. In this instance, Davies also used the term to refer to Pyke more generally, as opposed to referring to her by name, which served to dehumanise her as the performer of a role that is already known to be comparatively disenfranchised in theatre. It appears that Pyke made no attempt to change these conditions, and this lack of change further perpetuates the narrative of the lowly translator. Again, this case study revealed that the translator was not involved beyond the writing step. This finding confirms existing trends in theatre translator agency across a range of literature (among others: Perteghella, 2006; Brodie, 2018a).

At surface level, the experiences of Rappaport and Pyke appear to be strikingly similar: both are British, educated in Russian language and culture, have acting experience, and have performed their Bulgakov translations for state-funded theatres (the RSC and NT, respectively). However, the case study on Rappaport revealed that she actively collaborated with both Hughes, as adaptor, and Alexander, as director, resulting in a production that performed a relatively unaltered version of Rappaport's TT. In this respect, this confers upon Rappaport an elevated status in the context of the production, affording her greater agency in the process.

Although Lessac may appear to be the anomaly in this group, as an adaptor rather than a translator, translation and adaptation are often considered to exist on a continuum and all translations are adaptations in some sense (Ingham, 2012, p.189), the implications of which are discussed further in Section 5.1. In Lessac's case, it appears that the acknowledgement of both roles of adaptor and director affords him the necessary freedom to act with intent and construct his own identity as a director-adaptor of Bulgakov, highlighting these roles in the production credits. Thus, the embodiment of multiple roles in the theatre of translation empowered him to act with intent.

The common thread uniting all four case studies are their indirect collaborations with Bulgakov through engagement with either the ST or TT, mapped in the green room in the respective theatres of translation, forming the basis of all subsequent collaborations in the theatre of translation. There was more variation in terms of roles situated in the wings; in most cases, this is the area housing the cast members' roles as theatre practitioners. Interestingly, the one exception was Pyke, whose implicit role as a Russophone culture expert was plotted in this area, with her role as an actor instead taking centre stage, as a core part of her overall identity as an actor-translator.

Centre stage was typically found to be the location in the theatre of translation where the actors performed multiple roles which constituted their overall identities, resulting in the assignment of hyphenated roles. On one hand, these assigned hyphenated roles equate to the roles for which each actor is most visible to the public (as per the conceptualisation of 'centre stage' in the theatre of translation in this thesis). However, they also raise the question of how the translator/adaptor *wants* to be visible and how the status they attribute to each role they embody as part of their overall performance impacts the degree of agency they acquire as part of each role, which was especially apparent in the case studies of Pyke and Rappaport.

Moreover, a general observation resulting from this chapter is that the greater the number of roles a translator/adaptor plays in the course of their career, the larger their network of connections and, accordingly, the greater the degree of power they are enabled to exert and, therefore, the greater their agency. This is particularly applicable to the case of Helen Rappaport, who has seemingly cultivated a higher profile and associated status than her fellow cast

members in theatre of translation, as well as among the general public, rendering Rappaport a protagonist in comparison to the other cast members in more peripheral, supporting roles. Such a high profile can be directly attributed to the many roles she has played and the resultant skills she has employed in her work, which saw her exert extensive influence in both the performative steps of writing and production, in addition to the way in which she promotes her personal translatorial brand.

Therefore, the evidence gathered has raised three factors which must be considered in the study of theatre translator agency: firstly, the need to consider three performative steps (pitching, writing, and rehearsal) to account for individual translator agency across the two processes, which tend to vary dramatically. It has been established that there is not necessarily a positive correlation between the number of steps across which a specific role is played and the agency granted to the translator/adaptor through the status of that role. In the same vein, the roles performed across the largest number of performative steps are not necessarily the roles for which the translator/adaptor is most visible in the overall context of the production. Thus, the evidence suggests that although the performance of a larger number of roles results in greater power and, thus agency, the agency and visibility of each individual role played by a translator/adaptor is not necessarily contingent upon the number of performative steps across which each role is performed.

Secondly, the different types of visibility, in terms of translator visibility among specific communities, e.g., theatre practitioners and translators, as well as researchers, the general public, and database users. These groups have demonstrably experienced different levels of translator involvement in theatre (e.g., theatre audiences may find a translator's name in a programme, while a database user may not find the translator's name at all) and, as such, these different types of exposure (or lack thereof) must be examined further.

Finally, there is the need to compare the cast members in the theatre of translation in the context of their reimagined roles, i.e., who emerges as a protagonist, thanks to a certain label, and who remains a member of the peripheral supporting cast. These factors all have major implications for considerations of translator agency in theatre. This chapter has examined how translators of Bulgakov's original plays (re)constructed their identities through

repeated behaviours, the extent and nature of collaboration taking place in the case of each individual translator. It also probed the terminology applied to both the translators and their working processes. It is now necessary to turn our attention to the performative behaviour of adaptors in the process of staging Bulgakov's prose.

Chapter 5: Performing adaptation: The role of four adaptors in staging Bulgakov's prose

Chapter 4 has demonstrated how translators and adaptors perform the translation of Bulgakov's original plays. Moreover, it revealed how these figures have shifted between roles which are, to some extent, defined by others, resulting in the assignment of roles which capture the full extent of each translator/adaptor's labour in the overall creative process. We must now consider the experiences of four adaptors of Bulgakov's prose for the stage. Each case study highlights their individual performances in the adaptation of these works for theatrical production in the theatre of translation.

This thesis has established translation and adaptation as kindred spirits, and 'translation' includes many different forms of agency, justifying this chapter, which considers the roles of adaptors in a study of translators' roles. The chapter examines the potential reasons behind the adoption of the implicit, accepted model of: Novel in Russian → Russian-to-English Translation → Adaptation in English, as opposed to: Novel in Russian → Adaptation in Russian → Russian-to-English Translation. This analysis explores how the accepted model transforms into other models, in individual case studies, and their implications for the already complex issue of translator agency in theatre. This comparison enables an exploration of the theoretical implications of the terms translation, adaptation, and transformation, as outlined in Section 5.1.

It is especially relevant to examine staged adaptations of Bulgakov's prose as part of this study, since "[o]ne of the most striking features of the interest in Bulgakov, both in Russia and abroad, is the eagerness to adapt his prose works for the stage" (Milne, 1995, xiv), a fact which cannot be ignored. This statement was made thirty years ago, but the quantitative data supports this assertion; the bibliography of productions of Bulgakov's work compiled during this research reveals that, of Bulgakov's prose works, *Master i Margarita* has been staged 89 times in Britain and the US, and *Sobach'ie serdtse* – 28 times (Klimas, 2025). The significance of these figures is particularly apparent when compared to the number of productions of the plays referenced in Chapter 4: *Dni Turbinykh* has been staged 6 times and *Mol'er* – 9 times. Therefore, there is arguably greater interest in staging Bulgakov's prose

among theatre practitioners, especially *Master i Margarita* and *Sobach'ie serdtse*; these respectively constitute a combined 64% of all translated staged productions of Bulgakov's work in Britain and the US from 1934 to 2024, and 78% of the translated staged productions of his prose (see Klimas, 2025). This is despite the manifold challenges of adapting prose for the stage, particularly works which are already well-known in book form in the receiving culture (the implications of which are discussed in Section 5.3), so the adaptation of these works warrants further study.

Scholars have previously highlighted the inherent theatricality of Bulgakov's prose, most notably Julie Curtis (2017). This has also been discussed by the Soviet writer Konstantin Paustovskij (1892-1968) in his *Bulgakov-kievljanin (Bulgakov the Kyivan⁴ man)*:

When you spoke with Bulgakov, you were left with the impression that he had begun to 'act out' his prose. [...] This ability to transform and power of vision were the most characteristic features of Bulgakov. The power of vision of his fictional world was what led Bulgakov to dramaturgy, to the theatre. (1967, p.54)

This gives weight to the notion that Bulgakov's prose possesses 'dramatic qualities' (Curtis, 2017, p.68) and may explain the significant interest in staging his prose among theatre practitioners. Consequently, extending the present study to include the role of translators and adaptors of Bulgakov's prose provides fertile ground for research, justifying the inclusion of a chapter solely dedicated to the genre of plays adapted from prose. While this chapter sheds light on the currently under-researched role of adaptors in bringing Bulgakov's prose to Anglophone British and American audiences, it also has wider implications for Translation Studies, Adaptation Studies, and Theatre Studies. Specifically, this chapter emphasises how the roles of translator and adaptor are inextricably linked and are, themselves, humanised representations of the intersection between the processes of translation, adaptation, and dramaturgy. In light of this intersection, all figures involved in staging Bulgakov's prose are

⁴ This translation follows the Ukrainian spelling instead of the original Russian spelling, as has been common practice since 2018 (see the #KyivNotKiev campaign, Dickinson, 2019).

referred to as ‘adaptors’, to acknowledge the fact that they are adapting the format of the works from novel to staged performance.

By comparing the roles of the adaptors in this chapter to those of the cast members featured in Chapter 4, this allows for a more in-depth understanding of the translator’s role in theatre. In particular, this enables an in-depth analysis of the nature and extent of collaboration between adaptors of Bulgakov’s prose for the stage, the manner in which they (re)construct their identities as Bulgakov adaptors over time, and the impact of terminology used to define their role on their actions and identity. This then allows for direct comparison against the experiences of translators/adaptors of Bulgakov’s original plays outlined in Chapter 4, in turn allowing meaningful conclusions to be drawn about the roles of translators and adaptors in bringing Bulgakov’s work to Anglophone British and American audiences. Translators do not exist in a vacuum and, consequently, it is necessary to consider the roles of these adaptors relative to those of others, the cast members who meet at the intersection of translation, adaptation, and dramaturgy, as working processes.

5.1 The intersection between translation, adaptation, and transformation

While the three processes of translation, adaptation, and transformation may appear to be independent of one another, there is significant overlap between them, the significance of which for this study will now be explored. On a basic level, translation is understood as a process of interlingual transfer from one language to another, adaptation is the process of being altered in some way, usually to meet new needs, and transformation is a change in form to produce something new or to improve an existing form.

The notion that these three processes are related is nothing new; for instance, Laurence Raw (2012) unites these concepts in Translation Studies scholarship, whereby he views “adaptation as well as translation” as “acts of transformation” (2012, p.14). In this vein, Roth posits that “[i]t is important to emphasise that translation is in itself also always a transformation”, in the sense that language and culture inevitably change, or *adapt*, when considered in a different context, be it temporal or geographical (2008, p.24). David

Johnston supports this view, asserting that “every act of translation is an act of transformation” (1996, p.66) (this is explored further in Johnston, 2015). Building on this notion of transformation in a theatrical context, Barnette posits that adapting literature for the stage is “the transformation of an experience that is individual and imaginary (reading) into one that is collaborative and embodied (theatre)” (2018, p.25). This relates to the transformation from the imaginary, individual experience of reading an original play to the collaborative, embodied experience of performing that play. Thus, there is a parallel between staged adaptations of Bulgakov’s prose and his dramaturgy.

Indeed, both translation and adaptation imply “the presence of an ‘original’ text”, in relation to which the TT or adapted TT that the ST is transformed into is viewed as “somehow derivative or inauthentic” (Tsui, 2012, p.55). Cindy S.K. Tsui further highlights the crossover between core debates in these areas, which can be viewed as binary pairs, such as “fidelity vs. creativity; author vs. adapter [sic]/translator; and adaptation or translation practices as the interpretation, contextualization, and transformation of meaning” (2012, p.55). This presents a parallel with discussions of the degree of overlap between the supposedly dichotomous terms of *performance* and *performativity*, and *actor* and *agent*, (see Chapter 1), and the benefits of considering how they are connected. This thesis understands transformation as a means of reimagining the roles of translators and adaptors by considering how these roles exist as part of a continuum, where the two overlap. In turn, the analysis is able to transcend the boundaries imposed by the distinct categories of translation and adaptation rather than subscribing to them, while considering the implications of this fluidity for translator/adaptor agency.

Jenny Wong presents the collaborative process of ‘*transadaptation*’, whereby “[a]ctors, directors, and translators are adapters in the play [...and are] agents of translation [...] engaged in an act of adaptation” (2012, p.99). Viewing theatre production as a collaborative venture between various agents of translation implies that collaboration transforms translators into adaptors, while simultaneously transforming the other agents involved into agents who influence translation. This is useful in answering the first part of RQ1, in terms of the nature and extent to which collaboration occurs in bringing Bulgakov to Anglophone audiences. It also allows for a consideration of the “socio cultural

conditions [which] influence the operations of theatre companies, the choice of play and adapters, and the dynamics among various adapters” (2012, p.100), addressing the second part of RQ1, regarding the external factors affecting the types of collaboration presented in the case studies.

Susan Knutson’s understanding of Michel Garneau’s concept of ‘*tradaptation*’, as a process that

does permit cultural exchange, but shapes it, with intentionality and transparence [sic], so that those elements entering into the exchange are visibly and audibly the ones that artists have wished to bring onto the ‘stage’ (original emphasis, 2012, p.113)

is useful for accounting for the agency of the individual adaptors studied, in considering the degree to which they are able to act with intent in the capacity of a given role in the theatre of translation. Again, it also relates to the discussion of how these artists *want* to be visible onstage, which is just as applicable to analyses of adaptors of Bulgakov’s prose as translators/adaptors of his original plays. This relates to RQ3, in terms of how the language used to describe these figures impacts their performance in the theatre of translation.

To reflect the transformative qualities of this collaborative practice as an embodied role, the role of *tradaptor* is introduced to the vocabulary of this chapter. This accounts for cast members whose identity is particularly fluid, moving between the roles of translator and adaptor and, potentially, other roles in the theatre of translation. Such a conceptualisation is inspired by Bulgakov’s own experience of embodying multiple roles in his writing, since “for him [Bulgakov], prose and dramaturgy were like the right and left hand of a pianist” (1986, p.40), the implications of which were explored in Sections 1.4.1 and 4.2. This concept has inspired the analysis of how the cast members examined have drawn upon skills from different roles across their careers to perform the necessary roles, meeting various demands in the theatre of translation.

Furthermore, it is necessary to explore the subsequent impact of the intersection between translation, adaptation and dramaturgy on the agency of individuals performing each role in the theatre of translation, as part of a ‘dynamic and embodied continuum’ (Roth, 2008, p.25). It must be recognised that “[c]ontemporary literary adaptations are products of an intricate, hugely

complex institutional and industrial system”, not least in terms of the “status hierarchies between industry sectors and the individual agents within them” (Murray, 2011, pp.185-186). This need to consider the roles of individuals in the staging of prose is supported by Jane Barnette, who asserts that “the ubiquity of adaptation in theatre making does not diminish the need to uncover the dramaturgical labor behind adapted scripts”, arguing that, on the contrary, “this knowledge heightens the urgency of our focus” (2018, p.39). Therefore, the status and power of individual agents performing various roles within these structures forms a critical part of this investigation. These performances are conceptualised by means of the dynamic concept of performative steps.

The change of intended medium for reception that comes with staging prose requires an investigation of the similarities and differences in the performances of this cast of adaptors compared to the cast members in Chapter 4, thereby addressing RQ1. These similarities and differences are primarily considered in light of the distinction between the types of agency assigned to different roles and what each role entails in the context of the adaptors’ wider performances. The findings of this investigation are contextualised through individual micro-histories, including networks of contacts, and the charting of the cast members’ roles across the three performative steps of pitching, writing, and rehearsal, before mapping their roles in the theatre of translation. This then results in the assigning of a label that better reflects the nature and extent of their labour in the creative process, in turn allowing meaningful conclusions to be drawn about adaptor agency in Anglophone British and American staged productions of Bulgakov’s prose.

5.2 Introducing the cast

Given the cultural significance of *Master i Margarita* and *Sobach’e serdtse*, both as works of prose in their own right and as the basis of many theatrical productions, it was difficult to narrow the scope of this chapter down to four productions. The cast members in this chapter are, in the context of *Master i Margarita*, Edward Kemp and Mike Lion, who staged productions in Chichester (2004) and Seattle (2024), respectively, and, for *Sobach’e serdtse*, Richard

Spaul and Robert Astle, who adapted the work for productions in Edinburgh (1988) and Allentown, Pennsylvania (1994), respectively.

The works selected in this chapter serve to redress the imbalance of the International Federation for Theatre Research's Translation, Adaptation, and Dramaturgy working group, which has "few contributions from and about the United States" and instead tends to favour "theatre adaptations occurring overseas" (Barnette, 2018, p.20). The productions were chosen on the basis of the availability of information; as was explained in Section 2.2.3, Kemp, Spaul, and Astle participated in my survey, allowing me to accurately analyse and reflect on their experiences. Meanwhile, Lion indirectly answered my questions, as posed by Audrey Herold on an Instagram Live Question and Answers (Q&A) session, while all of the adaptors examined maintain websites, which provided a useful insight into their individual backgrounds and practices.

It is acknowledged that this is a relatively limited number of case studies, considering that there have been over 100 productions of these two works in Britain and the US, and it does not represent the experience of any female adaptors, which could lay the foundation for future studies. I also recognise the bias of my own position as a scholar-translator; it is not my intention to project the often-perpetuated narrative of translator involvement being a purely positive phenomenon onto these cast members, but instead to present a balanced analysis of the findings. To overcome these limitations, generalisations will be avoided, instead considering these four case studies as specific examples, revealing four, distinct approaches to adapting Bulgakov's prose for Anglophone British and American stages. Each section introduces the relevant work and its background, before examining the relevant case studies, exploring their roles in the context of the three performative steps. This then leads to the location of these characters in the theatre of translation and the subsequent conclusions which can be drawn from these analyses.

On a terminological note, as was the case in Chapter 4, the adaptors examined here are referred to as 'cast members' who form part of the theatre of translation. In this chapter, the cast members are all regarded as adaptors, since the inherent process in the staging of prose works requires an adaptation of the intended medium for reception; when Bulgakov first wrote *Master i Margarita* and *Sobach'e serdtse*, the two works of prose analysed in this

chapter, they were intended to be read as works of literature. Meanwhile, Bulgakov's original plays are received by the audience in the same medium anticipated by the playwright. This necessitates an additional layer of interpretation on the part of the adaptors as they bring Bulgakov's prose from page to stage. The following section introduces the novel for which Bulgakov is arguably most famous in an international context: *Master i Margarita*.

5.3 *Master i Margarita*

Bulgakov's final and, it is often argued, 'greatest novel' (Curtis, 2020, x), *Master i Margarita* was written over the course of a decade and not completed until after the writer's death in 1940. As discussed in Section 3.3.2, the authorship of this novel is complex, which has implications for its subsequent translation and adaptation. According to the diaries of Bulgakov's wife (Elena), Bulgakov dictated chapters to Elena, who would then type them (Losev, 2004, p.152). Additionally, a letter from Bulgakov to Elena on 2 June 1938 reveals that her sister, Ol'ga Sergeevna Bokshanskaja also typed Bulgakov's dictations: "We must give justice to Ol'ga, she works well. We write for many hours in a row [...] everything seems to be fine and then suddenly one of the evil geniuses comes out of the wings and enters onto our stage..." (Losev, 2004, p.341).

Bulgakov's use of theatrical metaphor to describe the process of creating the novel also supports Curtis' assertion that "Bulgakov's career can be summed up as having been 'a theatrical life'" (2017, p.8). Furthermore, the way in which he wrote together with Bokshanskaja appears to be akin to devised work in a theatrical sense as it is: "the process of collaboratively creating a new work without a pre-existing script wherein collaborators are also the performers" (Kennedy Center, 2024). In this regard, Bulgakov, Elena and Ol'ga can all be considered collaborative performers, devising the work in collaboration, with Elena additionally editing the final text (Curtis, 2017, pp.24-25) and should arguably be regarded as co-authors of the work. Therefore, even the production of the ST material was a collaborative process of *samizdat* (self-publishing), involving a small number of trusted collaborators in a period when it was common for neighbours to denounce one another.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, *Master i Margarita* is the most-frequently staged of all Bulgakov's works, with the number of staged productions of this work in Britain and the US surpassing the number of productions of other works by a large margin. To contextualise the implications of adapting this novel for the stage, it is worth acknowledging the challenges it poses for production, namely: the length of the novel, its novel-within-a-novel format, and the large number of characters (Unity Theatre, 2013). Although adapting this novel for the stage demonstrably presents a number of challenges for theatre practitioners, which are explored in more detail in the following two case studies, the productions have largely been well-received.

This work has been staged 89 times in Britain and the US from 1934 to 2024, with performances having taken place in such diverse locations as Aberystwyth, Chichester, and Plymouth in Britain, as well as Baltimore, Dallas, and Salem in the US, to name a few (Klimas, 2025). Therefore, this is a work which extends beyond the metropolitan theatre hubs of London and New York, reaching audiences in more regional locations compared to the case studies presented in Chapter 4. A particularly notable production is the two-season run by the British theatre company Complicité in 2012-13, which was seen by 30,000 theatregoers and was adapted by Edward Kemp, who is studied in the following section. In the American context, Seattle-based theater simple's 2019 'remix of Bulgakov' was well-received, having followed two successful runs in 1997 and 1998, which won the *Seattle Times* Footlight Award (theater simple, 2024). Another Seattle-based production, translated, adapted, and directed by Mike Lion for Dacha Theatre in 2024 will be examined as the second case study of this novel, as adapted for the stage. As such, the discussion now turns to Kemp.

5.3.1 Edward Kemp

Edward Kemp (1965-) is a British playwright and theatre director. Like Rappaport, who learned Russian at school, Kemp first learned Russian at the King's School in Worcester. However, while Rappaport continued her Russian studies at university, Kemp instead read English Language and Literature at Oxford (Kemp, 2024). Again, mirroring Rappaport, Kemp's website forms part

of his personal brand as a theatre practitioner. This website charts Kemp's personal journey, from youth theatre actor to university actor to director to associate director. Thus, he has had extensive experience of theatre practice.

In this research, it is noteworthy that Kemp has adapted his own work for the stage, reflecting the experience of Bulgakov, who, as has been established, was also known to adapt his own work for the stage. Kemp became the Chichester Festival Theatre (CFT)'s in-house Dramaturg (2003-2005), during which time he adapted and staged *The Master and Margarita* at the theatre (2004). Thus, Kemp's career trajectory prior to this production contributed to his ability to stage this production, as is examined in Section 5.3.3. The diverse range of roles performed throughout Kemp's career has seen him take on both practical and management positions in theatre, and this background is key to understanding his practice as an adaptor. To fully understand Kemp's performance as an adaptor of *Master i Margarita*, we must first consider the network of contacts he had established and the subsequent impact of this network on his performance in the theatre of translation.

5.3.2 Kemp's network of contacts

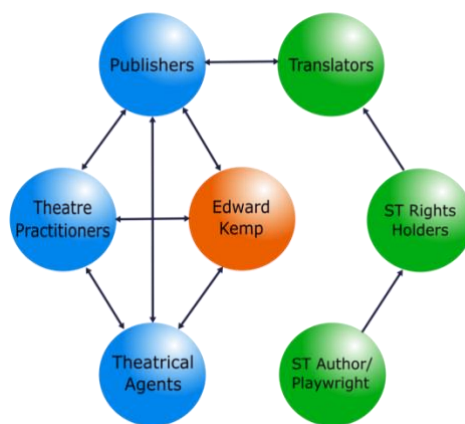


Figure 5.1 – Kemp's network of contacts

By the time that Kemp came to adapt *Master i Margarita* for the CFT in 2004, he had already accrued a great deal of experience in the theatrical world, which accounts for the vast number of contacts he had accumulated by this point. However, as the majority of these contacts are covered under the broader term

of theatre practitioners, at first glance, Kemp's network (see Figure 5.1) does not appear to be as extensive as might be expected. As such, Kemp's network of contacts, like his biography, bears the greatest similarity to that of Helen Rappaport (see Section 4.3.5), in that Kemp has direct contacts with his theatrical agents, publishers and theatres. These contacts are considered direct as Kemp negotiated with each of these agents on a personal basis.

The main difference between Kemp and Rappaport is that, as demonstrated in this case study, the contact between Kemp and translators is indirect, since he dealt exclusively with existing translations of the ST. This implies that he maintains no direct contact with ST rights holders, while there was no opportunity for direct contact with Bulgakov. As such, Kemp's connections with the ST author, ST rights holders, and translators are all presented as indirect contacts. These indirect contacts were facilitated through his direct contact with publishers, as the agents making the translated text available to Kemp, as seen in Figure 5.1. According to Kemp's personal website, he maintains separate representation for writing (Alan Brodie Representation Ltd) and directing (Penny Wesson Management). This distinguishes the interactions within his network from those of Pyke and Rappaport, who both employ one agent to cover all of their roles (a theatrical and literary agent, respectively); in employing two agents, each responsible for one aspect of his work, it is clear that Kemp aims to separate his work as a writer and director. Having established Kemp's network of contacts, we must now examine his interactions with these agents in the theatre of translation.

5.3.3 Kemp's interactions in the theatre of translation: *The Master and Margarita* (2004)



Figure 5.2 – Excerpt from the production programme for the Chichester Festival Theatre's 2004 production of *The Master and Margarita*, adapted by Edward Kemp

The production which serves as the backdrop for the investigation of Kemp's interactions in the theatre of translation is the 2004 production of *The Master and Margarita* at the CFT in southern England. As shown in Figure 5.2, Kemp receives equal billing with Bulgakov for his role as adaptor, though the translator receives no mention, indicating Kemp's high status in the context of the production in the role of adaptor, relative to that of the invisible translator. In line with discussions of agency in this thesis, Kemp's elevated status as an adaptor grants him agency in that role, albeit at the expense of the agency of the translator. In response to the survey question "What was the role of the translator in the production?", Kemp stated that "they had no direct involvement in the production – I was working from existing translations (in multiple languages)". This disrupts the traditional social script of the Anglophone adaptor, who creates an English-language adaptation from an English translation of the ST, since Kemp worked from English, French, and German translations of the ST.

Consequently, this further complicates the already complex issues of authorship and creative agency, as the adaptation produced by Kemp is therefore an amalgamation of his own voice as an adaptor and those of the multiple translators whose TTs contributed to the final adapted TT, each influenced by the different cultural backgrounds of each translator. As such, this demonstrates an example of especially entangled agencies among multiple actors. Kemp's statement that the translator "had no direct involvement in the production" explains the lack of credit to a specific translator, but it does not explain why the translators of these various versions are not credited in the acknowledgements section.

Ironically, the material which precludes the possibility of translator recognition in Figure 5.2 has been made publicly accessible as part of the CFT's "Pass It On" project, an initiative which aims to "ensur[e] that no voice goes unheard in the unfolding of this truly unique theatre's history" (2024b). Meanwhile, it appears that the CFT sought to amplify Kemp's voice as adaptor in the project. This is supported by the fact that the CFT also sold physical copies of the text, as published by Oberon Books during the production run, a practice which can also be observed in production runs at the RSC and NT. Not only can this be profitable for the theatre, but it also increases the visibility

of the adaptor by selling copies of the text with Kemp's name on the cover, promoting the role of Kemp as the published playwright. This speaks to Kemp's status in the overall context of the production and subsequent publication of the adapted playtext.

It is now pertinent to consider Kemp's involvement across the three performative steps of production, in terms of the various roles he embodied in the production process (see Figure 5.3).

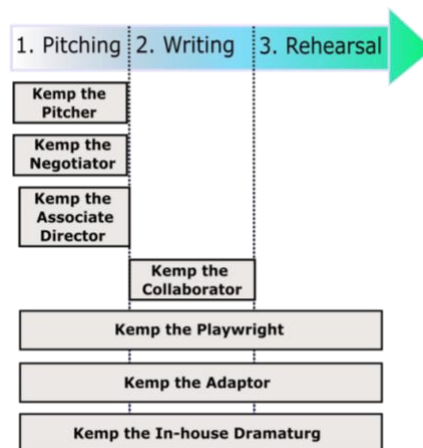


Figure 5.3 – Kemp's roles across performative steps

As Figure 5.3 demonstrates, Kemp was heavily involved in the first performative step of pitching. According to the survey findings, the impetus for the production came from Kemp himself:

I first used material from *The Master and Margarita* in a version of the *Medieval Mystery Plays* adapted for the RSC in 1997. This led to my proposing a full adaptation of the novel for the CFT in 2004.

Thus, Kemp was evidently afforded the freedom to choose Bulgakov's novel for production and introduces another aspect of his character: the pitcher. This freedom of choice can be interpreted as power in terms of decision-making in the first performative step of pitching the source material for adaptation, demonstrating Kemp's large degree of agency to influence decisions within the CFT. Helmut Wilke argues that the 'dominant relation' in "modern societies and organizations [...] is not hierarchy but interdependence", which depends on the "division of labor [sic] among specialists" (2013, p.212). In Kemp's case, this implies that the CFT relied upon him as in-house dramaturg to select an

ST that was feasible, both in terms of production costs and saleability to the public, while Kemp simultaneously relied on the CFT to approve the project, suggesting that his agency as adaptor during the performative step of pitching was both bolstered by and subject to the decisions of other powerful agents in the theatre of translation. As shown in the situation of Mike Lion, here the adaptor plays an active role in influencing the theatrical hierarchy to stage the play (as explored in Section 5.3.7).

Compared to Pyke, whose commission and subsequent actions were subject to the will of the director (see Section 4.2.7), resulting in her limited contribution to the production beyond delivering the translation, Kemp's position of adaptor, as an agent empowered to make decisions, in this production was a privileged one. Thus, Kemp's status as an adaptor was bolstered both by his existing role as in-house Dramaturg⁵ at the CFT, a position embedded in the higher stratum of the CFT hierarchy, and his previous roles as Associate Director and adaptor. As Trencsényi points out, "[t]he idea of adapting a novel [...] into a piece of theatre might well come from a dramaturg, who, in an ideal case, has a good knowledge of what adapts well, and what the pitfalls might be" (2015, p.48). Indeed, Kemp's experiences in these roles provided him with the relevant knowledge of which sort of works would be feasible to stage and what a company might look for in a production.

The extent of Kemp's status and power (and, therefore, ability to exert influence) as an adaptor of Bulgakov's novel is also apparent in further productions which resulted from the 2004 adaptation. To cite Kemp's own words from the survey,

[m]aterial from this version was then incorporated into a further stage version by Complicité in 2012. In between these two versions I was briefly involved in explorations to create a musical based on my Chichester script with Andrew Lloyd Webber.

Firstly, this identifies an additional role played by Kemp in the first performative step: Kemp the negotiator. It must be noted that, again, Kemp was in a privileged position in his ability to negotiate terms with Complicité – a world-

⁵ In **Figure 5.3**, Kemp's role of 'Dramaturg' is represented as 'Playwright' as this is the word Kemp used to identify himself in the survey

famous, award-winning company and attaching Kemp's name to a *Complicité* production undoubtedly bolstered his visibility and status as an adaptor. Similarly, his ability to negotiate with Andrew Lloyd Webber – another famous theatrical figure – indicates his large degree of agency, as an actor endowed with the ability to interact with leading 'protagonists' in the theatre industry.

That being said, not every negotiation was undertaken by Kemp personally, nor did every negotiation result in a production, as Kemp revealed:

In the first instance [1997], rights to the material were negotiated by the RSC, in the second [2004] by my agent, Alan Brodie Representation; in the third instance [2012], negotiations were undertaken by *Complicité*. The Really Useful Group [RUG] undertook negotiations in the case of the musical, but these ultimately were not realised.

In these negotiations, Kemp's performance is similar to those of Glenny and Ginsburg (see Section 3.3.6), in that, like those two translators, Kemp used his status and associated power to negotiate his terms for adaptation. There is, however, a key difference between Glenny and Ginsburg's situations and that of Kemp in the first two instances outlined above, in that theatre practitioners approached the former to secure the rights to adapt their existing translations. Meanwhile, Kemp approached theatres as a pitcher, proposing the project.

On the other hand, the examples in the cases of *Complicité* and RUG were instances where Kemp was approached in his capacities of adaptor and published playwright to stage new versions of this published playtext. Despite the fact that not every negotiation resulted in a production, Kemp's adaptation has experienced an extensive geographical reach: in Britain, his work has also been staged in Turners Hill (2010), Plymouth (2011), Cambridge (2015), and Nottingham (2015), in both professional and amateur productions. The adaptation has also been staged 3 times in the US: professionally in Chicago (2011) and Washington, D.C. (2019), and in a student production at Yale University, New Haven in 2014 (Klimas, 2025). The use of Kemp's adaptation in the US context further indicates Kemp's agency, in terms of his ability to extend his influence as an adaptor beyond British borders.

Moving to the second performative step (writing), it is worth considering the somewhat blurred boundaries between the multiple roles that Kemp plays

in theatre. The survey provided an insight into Kemp's self-perception of his roles in theatre:

I sit on a sliding scale from translator to playwright (hence my adoption of dramaturg as a title⁶) and I shift my position depending on the task. I tend to create works for a particular first production rather than in the abstract, so the conditions for that first production will tend to shape the script I create. If I am actively involved in future productions, I usually adjust the script to suit new production imperatives.

The way in which Kemp's role shifts "depending on the task" clearly indicates his multi-roling in theatre. Considering these multiple roles, it is interesting that, just as it has been argued that translation and adaptation exist on a continuum (e.g., Horsley, 2023, p.43 and Roth, 2008, p.25), Kemp perceives his own role as shifting between roles that exist as part of a 'sliding scale'. This scale slides from translator at one end and playwright at the other, as he performs what he considers to be the most appropriate role for the demands of that context.

The notion of a 'sliding scale' of translation and adaptation has clear links to skopos theory, or a functionalist approach to theatre translation; as Barnette highlights, "some adapters prefer to rewrite their adaptation for specific productions, thereby working closely alongside the rest of the production team with a specific understanding of the venue" (2018, p.38). In other words, Kemp 'self-adapts' his adapted TT to "suit different production concepts" (Barnette, 2018, p.69). This implies that there are additional levels of adaptation inherent in Kemp's practice, between his self-adaptation and his consultation of TTs across multiple languages in creating his adapted TT. Regarding RQ3, it appears that the terminology that Kemp uses to describe himself affects both his actions and identity, since he adopts different characteristics to meet different needs across one performance. This suggests that (Bulgakov) adaptor identity is multifaceted and cannot be reduced to one specific role.

Furthermore, the fact that Kemp identifies his role in the 2004 production as that of 'dramaturg' as an all-encompassing term is also

⁶ Interestingly, in his answers to open survey questions, Kemp referred to himself as dramaturg, yet in the choice of his self-assigned label, he labelled himself as a playwright-adaptor

noteworthy; as Aaltonen reveals, those who “work within the theatre, such as dramaturges or directors [...] exercise more power when they work as translators” (1997, p.92) and the same can be said of adaptors, especially Kemp. In this regard, Aaltonen argues, “they are closer to being creators than mediators” and “can, if they so wish, make adjustments or interpret the text according to need” (1997, p.92). These terminological implications contribute to the mapping of his overall performance in the theatre of translation. In this context, it demonstrates that, as with the first performative step, Kemp’s role as a playwright-dramaturg heavily influenced his actions in the second performative step. From a performative perspective, Kemp constructs and reconstructs his identity, constantly rewriting his own social script as an adaptor of Bulgakov’s prose for the stage.

Kemp’s position ‘in-between’ is also palpable in his response to the question of whether direct translator-theatre practitioner collaboration is useful: “not all translators understand the demands of the live theatre event, and equally not all theatre practitioners have as much interest as I do in the source material”. Here, Kemp locates himself in between the polar opposites of translators with no understanding of theatre and theatre practitioners with no interest in the ST, identifying as a figure uniting translation and theatre practice. Probing this issue of self-identity further, in his survey response, Kemp indicated that he felt his credit for the role of adaptor in the 2004 production adequately described his role. However, when given a choice of roles, he felt that ‘playwright-adaptor’ best described his labour in the production process.

According to Kemp’s own description of the sliding scale of his roles, this situates him significantly closer to the playwright end of the scale rather than that of translator. As Kemp explained in the survey:

Although I have some Russian and consulted the Russian [text] (and Russian speakers), my work was primarily in trying to find stage correlatives for the work on the page [...] I [...] class my work as dramaturgy, in that my task is to find a live theatrical event in the source material, not necessarily a faithful or exact translation, especially where the medium is changing.

Therefore, while Kemp primarily performs his work in the role of adaptor, some aspects of his experience as an intermediate-level speaker of Russian and the

fact that he consults existing translations in other languages he speaks, brings him closer to the source material and, thereby, the role of translator, in terms of linguistic transfer. Indeed, the manner in which he consults multiple existing translations mirrors the previously discussed practice of Pyke, as an actor-translator of Bulgakov's work (see Section 4.2.7) and Lessac as a director-adaptor (see Section 4.3.3). The consultation of existing translations typically forms part of the expectations of the dramaturg's work (Trencsényi, 2015, p.48).

However, Kemp's prioritisation of "find[ing] the live theatrical event in the source material" over providing "a faithful or exact translation" indicates that he primarily perceives himself as an adaptor, or, to use his own self-label – dramaturg. This directly contradicts how Rappaport views her role as a translator, in which she specifically seeks to provide a 'faithful' translation of the ST. However, this term is problematic, given the fact that every translation is a type of adaptation, meaning that some elements of the ST are inevitably lost in translation. Kemp circumvents the common criticism of translators for their lack of fidelity to the ST by making no such claim of fidelity, instead clarifying his prioritisation of the live theatrical event over fidelity. Again, this highlights his pragmatic, functionalist approach to adaptation for the stage. This goal of finding the live theatrical event also potentially accounts for his choice of ST, as Kemp notes in the published version of the adaptation that the novel's dialogue "cries out to be acted" (2004, p.9). Thus, *Master i Margarita* can be categorised as a text that multi-roles, simultaneously a literary and dramatic work, defying conventional boundaries between genre-specific text types.

Thus, it has been ascertained that Kemp played a critical role in the decisions made in the first and second performative steps. Kemp's involvement in the final performative step of rehearsal is evidenced in his introduction to the published playtext:

We've hoped to remain true to the spirit of the novel, if not the letter, and tried as much as possible to stretch ourselves and the possibilities of the stage to match Bulgakov's vision rather than reducing it to our easy grasp. In this I have been blessed in Steven Pimlott with a director who is most certainly a 'producer of talent' [...] I must also thank a

tireless and inventive cast who have gone further than I ever expected to populate both the streets of Moscow and the corridors of hell.

(Kemp, 2004, pp.8-9)

The use of the pronoun 'we' and possessive pronoun 'our' indicates that the process of staging this novel was a shared task and the above quotation identifies the sharing of this labour with the director Steven Pimlott (1953-2007). However, it does not clarify the extent of their collaboration. Therefore, while Kemp maintained some level of involvement in the rehearsal step, in his interactions with Pimlott, it was the director, who had the greatest agency during this step, as the figure empowered to make decisions.

From the examination of these performative steps, based on evidence gathered, it is apparent that Kemp's role in the theatre of translation is dynamic and that he often multi-roles, according to the demands of each individual performance. In the theatre of translation, at different points in the context of this production, Kemp performed not just the role of adaptor, but also those of (published) playwright, pitcher, Associate Director and in-house dramaturg. While he was primarily hired as an adaptor, his role as published playwright was also significant in the negotiations with Complicité and RUG, while the other aforementioned roles all played an indirect, yet significant, role in Kemp's overall performance as adaptor and published playwright.

5.3.4 Mapping Kemp's roles in the theatre of translation

Kemp plays a number of fluid roles in the theatre of translation, thus bolstering his status, resulting in his acquisition of the necessary agency to make decisions across the three performative steps of pitching, writing, and rehearsal. Behind the scenes, underpinning all of these stages are Kemp's roles of collaborator, negotiator and Associate Director. While these roles contributed towards his understanding of the demands of a production and a theatre company's priorities in selecting a work for performance (Associate Director) and his ability to persuade companies to stage a certain work (negotiator), these roles do not account for the degree of sway he held in the theatre of translation. Meanwhile, his indirect collaboration with Bulgakov

through the TTs in English, French, and German underpins his entire performance. Consequently, these two roles remain in the green room, as seen in Figure 5.4.

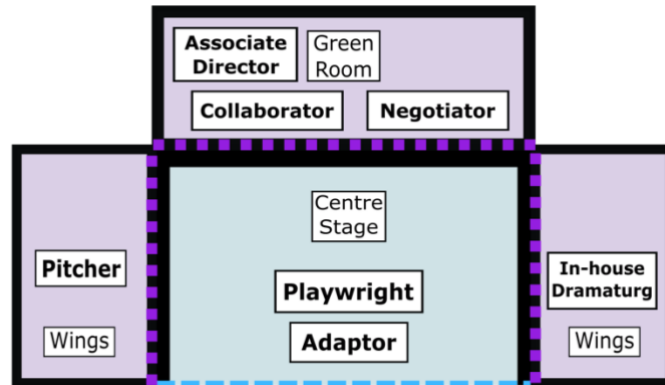


Figure 5.4 – Kemp's roles in the theatre of translation

In the roles of pitcher and in-house dramaturg, Kemp was able to exert a large amount of influence in this process, persuading the CFT to adapt *Master i Margarita*. These roles are situated in the wings, since his role as an established playwright (supported by his comparatively less visible role of in-house dramaturg) empowered Kemp to pitch this work. Additionally, Kemp's influence as pitcher was limited to the first performative step, while his dual roles of playwright and adaptor were the roles for which he was most publicly visible in CFT's 2004 production of *The Master and Margarita*. It was in these roles that he was most empowered to exert his influence in decision-making processes across the performative steps of writing and rehearsal. Thus, Kemp's roles as playwright and adaptor take centre stage in Figure 5.4. Furthermore, the publication of his adapted TT, which was sold during the production run, further demonstrates his ability to influence others through his performance, while raising his profile as an adaptor.

In light of these findings and Kemp's own choice of role in the survey, Kemp's role in this production is best described as playwright-adaptor. To situate Kemp's experience in the broader context of Anglophone staged adaptations of *Master i Margarita*, it is now prudent to consider the roles played by Mike Lion in his 2024 production of the same novel in the American context.

5.3.5 Mike Lion

There is limited available material on Mike Lion's background prior to his work in theatre. Born to Russian parents in Moscow (year unknown), he was raised in the Russian capital until the age of 6, when he moved with his parents to the US (Dacha, 2024a), bearing similarity to the experiences of Eugene Lyons and Mirra Ginsburg. Unlike Lyons and Ginsburg, Lion attended a specialist arts high school, before studying Theatre at Hampshire College in Massachusetts, indicating that he received theatrical training from a young age. According to Lion, he is bilingual, which motivates him to "do multilingual work, or do adaptations of Russian literature" (Dacha, 2024a). In 2016, together with Kate Drummond, Lion co-founded Dacha Theatre (DT), "a Seattle-based theater company [...] that specializes in devised, immersive and playful work" (Dacha, 2024b).

Lion's online presence has developed his personal brand as a multi-roler in the theatre industry: on his X account, his biography reads "director, actor, translator" (Lion, 2024a), whereas his personal website highlights his role as a theatre director underneath his name, with his biography stating "Mike is a director, actor, translator, and clown" (Lion, 2024b). His inclusion of 'theatre director' directly under his name on the homepage of his personal website implies that this is the role that he wants to make most publicly visible. On the DT website, Lion's biography indicates the dual roles of Artistic Director and Founder of the company. Secondly, it highlights a number of productions where he has multi-rolled: as 'Creator/Director', 'Director/Dice Keeper', 'Director/Translator' and 'Director/Writer' (Dacha, 2024c).

Lion's self-identification as a multi-roler demonstrates that there is scope to identify him as performing a hyphenated role. However, it is also challenging to determine where the boundaries lie between each role and whether there are any boundaries or if they blur into one merged role. The DT website emphasises how Lion is "working to blur the line between audience and performers" (Dacha, 2024c). In the same way, Lion blurs the line between the multiple roles he plays at DT, which will be explored in Section 5.3.7. To examine Lion's multi-roling performance in DT's 2024 production of *The Master and Margarita*, Lion's network of contacts must first be established.

5.3.6 Lion's network of contacts

The network of contacts established for Lion (see Figure 5.5) is limited in comparison with those of the cast members previously examined in this thesis. This can be attributed to two factors: firstly, Lion is still at a relatively early stage of his career, in comparison to the other cast members examined across this thesis, who have been practising for many years; secondly, Lion's training and subsequent career have all been limited to the theatre industry (whereas other figures have undertaken, for example, scholarly or professional translation roles, such as Glenny and Pyke). Therefore, his direct contacts are generally other theatre practitioners. In this regard, Lion's network of contacts is most similar that of Lessac (see Section 4.3.2), whose career has primarily been theatrical and like Lion, founded his own company.

Lion can be regarded as having direct contact with at least one other translator, in *The Master and Margarita* (2024), which will be explored more fully in the next section.

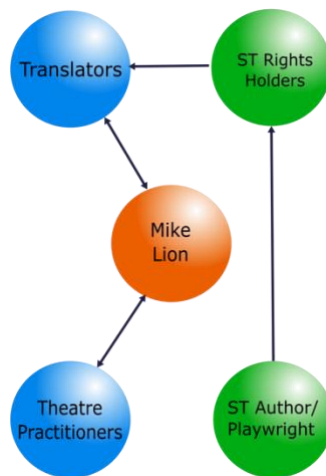


Figure 5.5 – Lion's network of contacts

Lion finds himself in the same distant, indirect position relative to the ST author as Pyke, Lessac, Rappaport and Kemp, in terms of their degree of separation (as opposed to Glenny and Ginsburg, who maintained direct contact with the ST rights holders, thus bringing them one degree closer to Bulgakov). Therefore, Lion's contact with the ST and, consequently, Bulgakov comes, in the first instance, from existing translations of the work. Like Lessac, Lion's

interactions in the theatre of translation predominantly took place in a theatrical context, as the setting in which he possessed the agency to act and influence decision-making processes, in the roles of Artistic Director, collaborator, director and tradaptor. Lion's performance will now be analysed in the context of *The Master and Margarita* (2024).

5.3.7 Lion's interactions in the theatre of translation: *The Master and Margarita* (2024)

DT's 2024 production of *The Master and Margarita* took place at 12th Avenue Arts, a cultural centre in Seattle, Washington and was staged from 22 March until 13 April. This is the most recent staged adaptation of *Master i Margarita* examined in this work, meaning that there is a plethora of material available to analyse Lion's performance in multiple roles across this production run.



Figure 5.6 – Promotional poster for Dacha Theatre's 2024 production of *The Master and Margarita*, directed and adapted by Mike Lion

In DT's promotional poster for the production (see Figure 5.6), Lion is clearly visible to the theatregoing public in his roles as director and adaptor, featuring more prominently in the poster than Bulgakov, as his name and roles are

capitalised and feature in larger font. It is arguably his status as director that affords him this prominent role, with adaptor appearing to be more of a secondary role in this context. Therefore, his status as director can be seen as elevating his status as an adaptor, by advertising them together. It is notable that, compared to the other promotional material examined in this thesis, Figure 5.6 features a photograph of Lion. Typically, material circulated to promote a play might feature the names of practitioners, but not their photographs. Lion's atypical, overt visibility as a director and adaptor may be attributed to his role as Artistic Director in the overall hierarchy of DT, which afforded him greater creative control in the process, thereby granting him greater agency in this context.

Regarding Lion's visibility, attention must also be paid to his visibility on social media, to users engaging with DT's Instagram account, myself included, as seen in Figure 5.7.



Figure 5.7 – Promotional post on the DT Instagram account for a 'Shop Talk' between Audrey Herold and Lion on 7 March 2024

As was discussed in Section 2.2.5, social media has afforded theatre practitioners greater opportunities to engage with the theatregoing public prior to staged productions, as a form of marketing, and DT provides the only example of this type of visibility in the present thesis. This serves to performatively construct the translator/adaptor's identity in the public, digital space, providing the opportunity to challenge existing conceptions of their role in theatre. It also marks a significant shift in translator/adaptor engagement with the public in comparison to Kemp's 2004 production, which did not employ social media as a means of marketing and public engagement. However, that production took place at a time when social media was far less prominent, and its ability to increase public engagement with translation/adaptation had yet to be explored. As a researcher, DT's use of social media has allowed me to engage directly with DT and gain an insight into the company's approach to staging *Master i Margarita*, so it was a mutually beneficial activity.

Figure 5.7 is a promotional post from 6 March 2024 on Instagram advertising an informal 'chat' between Audrey Herold, DT's PR and Marketing Manager, and Lion, who is labelled as "Translator, Adapter & Director" of the production. As part of this 'Shop Talk' series of discussions with onstage and backstage agents involved in the production, Instagram users were invited to "[j]oin [DT] as we chat with the man behind the show". This approach to advertisement employs theatre practitioner Amy Lebo's suggestion of using "The Creative Team, Cast and Crew as Marketing Tools" by publicising interviews and images of these cast members involved in the theatre of translation (Goldfinger and Horsley, 2023, p.121). The use of social media has demonstrably improved the visibility of the production, by highlighting the individual contributions and agency of agents involved in the creative process.

The lack of consistency between Lion's credits on the promotional post on Instagram, which identifies Lion as "Director and Adaptor" (see Figure 5.7) and the promotional poster on DT's website, where he is credited as "Translator, Adapter [sic] & Director" (see Figure 5.6), is particularly notable. This difference could result from a difference in the goals of these mediums; the promotional poster may seek to attract the theatregoing public, who are more likely to be familiar with the recognised theatrical roles of adaptor and director than that of translator. Thus, the poster appeals to the roles with which

its intended audience is most familiar. However, DT's Instagram account is arguably visible to a wider audience than that of the promotional poster, including users who are interested in the themes of translation and adaptation, and the status of *Master i Margarita* as a great work of Russophone literature, so this could account for the inclusion of Lion's role as translator.

Lion's role as a translator is arguably foregrounded to Instagram users as it is listed before that of adaptor and director. Again, this raises the question of how Lion, himself, *wants* to be visible, and whether or not this aligns with how DT wants him to be visible. Another subtle difference between the two is the spelling of role: in Figure 5.6, Lion is credited as 'adaptor' and in Figure 5.7 as 'adapter'. Such inconsistency may be a result of human error, or an oversight from DT, and, though it may seem like a minor issue, it is symptomatic of the lack of consistent terminology to describe the roles of figures involved in the theatre of translation.

Figure 5.7 also reveals how DT have employed hashtags to convey the key themes associated with the production, in line with Lebo's advice to "create a social media blitz" (Goldfinger and Horsley, 2023, p.121). Among the hashtags listed in the caption of Figure 5.7, the hashtags #Translation and #Adaptation are particularly relevant to this study. On Instagram, hashtags function as a method of highlighting a particular theme, affording it greater visibility. Consequently, it can be asserted that DT intentionally sought to make these terms visible, through the use of hashtags, supporting the notion that DT deliberately chose to Lion's role as translator in the post's image. Such a choice contradicts the typical view of the theatre translator, as a figure who is deliberately hidden by theatres in promotional material. Here, the translator appears to be more of a selling point. However, in this instance, the translator is also one of the company's Artistic Directors, affording the translator an unusual degree of agency to promote this role, by virtue of the decision-making power associated with the role of Artistic Director in the theatrical hierarchy.

The Q&A session was also useful in revealing Lion's involvement across the three implicit performative steps of theatre production, as visualised in Figure 5.8. Using my own Instagram account, I directly engaged with DT, by commenting on the post with my questions: "what [was] your experience [...] like translating and adapting this notoriously challenging novel for the

American stage? Were there any particular challenges you faced? Anything unexpected? Can you explain what you meant by tra-daption? [the term used by Lion to describe the process of bringing *Master i Margarita* to the Seattle stage on DT's website]" and "How did you manage taking on the roles of translator, adaptor and director simultaneously?", which were indirectly addressed in the course of the discussion. DT's likely aim in hosting a live question and answer session was to advertise the production and to generate discussion, thereby allowing it to enter the public consciousness.

In light of this evidence, Lion's roles in the theatre of translation have been charted across the three performative steps of pitching, writing, and rehearsal, as seen in Figure 5.8.

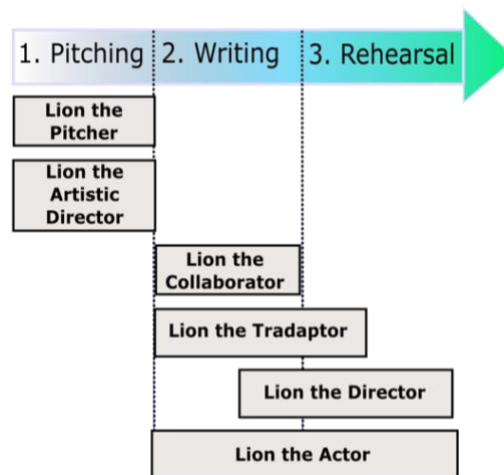


Figure 5.8 – Lion's roles across performative steps

In terms of the first performative step, like Kemp, Lion had to pitch the project to the company:

Dacha has an ever-evolving pitching process [...] we listen to pitches solicited by the company and we listen to artists outside of the company [...] if you want to helm a project, you write up why you are interested in it, why you think it's a good fit for Dacha, what are the themes of the show, what are some ideas about the image research and then bring this to the Dacha team [...] and we whittle down the pitches until we have our list of shows. Because I'm a staff member, sometimes we separate our pitch, separate our roles. This is me as a pitcher, this is the staff discussing what pitch is going to fit well within the context of the season we're creating. (Dacha, 2024a)

Lion's account of the pitching process provides a rare and valuable insight into how a theatre company chooses its repertoire, though it would be inaccurate to claim the above account is representative of the process in all companies. Of particular interest here is Lion's claim that he separates his role as a staff member (here referring to his position of Artistic Director) and pitcher, which is an explicit recognition of his own multi-roling, on Lion's part. In this regard, Lion is simultaneously an insider and outsider during the pitching step, which complicates the matter of his agency. Lion hints that he considers his goals as a pitcher when proposing a project and as an Artistic Director when selecting pitches for production during the first performative step. This raises the question of whether it is really possible for Lion to distinguish between these two roles, since he would inevitably be biased in favour of his own pitch, as he would have created the pitch with his goals as Artistic Director in mind. This would have also been influenced by his internal knowledge of DT's priorities and requirements. Consequently, there is a blurred boundary between Lion's roles as pitcher and Artistic Director and his pitch appears to have been more of a formality, like Kemp's pitch to the CFT, which was almost certain to succeed, based on his then-role of in-house Dramaturg at the theatre. Furthermore, it implies that Lion's agency for these roles is entangled, making it difficult to track individual agency.

The first performative step revealed a significant blurring of boundaries between these aspects of Lion's character (the pitcher and the Artistic Director), which only becomes more complicated in the course of the second performative step, in a process that Lion calls 'tradaptation' (cf. Knutson, 2012). In the discussion, Lion provides a detailed account of what the process of *tradaptation* entailed in practice, in the context of the 2024 production:

We had a great collaborator, Eric Mead, who's a playwright in New York. Eric did a first draft adaptation (he does not speak Russian), where he just used some existing translations and [...] just went through trying to translate everything that was in the book into the script and I did my part which involved going back through and re-translating by going and comparing it with the Russian and doing my own translation and kind of adapting at the same time. (Dacha, 2024a)

One similarity is immediately noticeable between Mead and Kemp: the consultation of existing translations. However, in the context of the wider process, this approach is somewhat unusual, as it is a reversal of the traditional two-tier translation approach employed in British and American theatres; rather than following the accepted model of Novel in Russian → Russian-to-English Translation → Adaptation in English, the model applied here was: Adaptation in English (which is implicitly based on an existing translation) → Retranslation and Adaptation in English. This reflects the messy circularity of translation. It is also significant as it is the first and only instance of such practice uncovered in the context of staged productions of Bulgakov's prose, or, indeed, his original plays. In a broader sense, this suggests a wider terminological issue, i.e., that the existing terminology used to discuss the translation/adaptation process does not adequately account for the reversed approach employed here and thus is worth highlighting for its inversion of the traditionally-accepted model.

Additional insight is provided into how Lion perceives translation, with him also stating "it kind of goes hand in hand with adapting a little bit", which gives weight to Kemp's notion of the role of the translator and the playwright existing on a 'sliding scale'. Expanding on the process of *tradaptation* and what he means by this, Lion explained:

[in] certain places I would try to translate and be very accurate to the original text, certain places I would be like let's try I call it 'tradaptation', [...], which is a mix of accurate translation and my own invention and approximation of what I think American, well, English-speaking [...] audiences will find understandable and relevant and that kind of all combined together gets a script. [...] I wrote a scene that's not in the book that's just like this announcer character describing the history of Apartment 50 [...], and I used the paragraph in the book, I used letters from Bulgakov himself [...], I used this quote from Lenin [...] about this directive and [...] all that together gave us this scene. [...] That's a window into what tradaptation kind of entails. (Dacha, 2024a)

This provides a valuable insight into the complexities of translator agency in theatre, demonstrating that these figures are not passive conduits for the ST in a mechanical process of interlingual transfer. Instead, the simultaneous embodiment of both roles of translator and adaptor casts them as active agents, whose performance in the act of 'tradaptation' results in an adapted

TT that displays both fidelity to the ST and relevance to Anglophone audiences. Recognising the extent of their performance, across multiple roles, challenges the notion of translator invisibility, highlighting their significant contribution to the creative process of theatre.

It must be noted that on DT's website, Lion refers to this process as *tradaption*, while in the above quotation he refers to *tradaptation*, so there is already a terminological discrepancy to contend with here, although as with the case of *adaptor* versus *adapter*, this may simply be a result of human error or oversight on the company's part. Terminological discrepancies aside, from Lion's description, this process, which will henceforth be referred to as *tradaptation*, can be regarded as encompassing two core actions: a simultaneous process of translation and adaptation, where the 'tradaptor' (to extrapolate a noun from Lion's term) seeks to maintain a balance between translation and adaptation, while utilising further contextual details to inform the created text. These actions, as performed by the *tradaptor*, are a composite of the actions performed by the translator and adaptor, respectively, though they are also underpinned by Lion's extensive theatrical knowledge.

To elucidate the process, Lion provided a timeline for the creation of the performance draft:

The first draft that Eric did was done in early November and from early November I worked on a new draft and we had a little reading in December with some Dacha folks [...] and then I did a lot more work [...], and then came back into rehearsal with a script, and rehearsals started end of January. (Dacha, 2024a)

Not only does this reiterate the collaborative nature of the process, between Lion as *tradaptor* and Mead as adaptor, and Lion as *tradaptor*, actor, and director (with Lion's experience as an actor influencing both the writing of the *tradaptation* and his direction of actors in the *tradaptation*), it also provides a timeline for the second performative step of the writing process, though it does blur into the third performative step of rehearsal. Having taken Lion's activities in the second performative step into account, it is now necessary to assess how, the blurring of roles persists in the third performative step.

Finally, Lion revealed the competing, and often contradictory, motivations of his roles of (tr)adaptor and director in the third performative step:

I found myself saying here's Mike the adaptor, who wants to be as faithful to the book as possible and going over to Mike the director, and Mike the director is like what? Well, you wrote that they're in ballrooms that are decorated like the American Embassy [...] How do you want me to do that on our budget in a studio theatre? And the adaptor's like I don't know, you have fun. So, like Ivan in the book who has a conversation with himself about what happened with the Devil, Mike the director and Mike the adaptor have conversations with themselves about what they're doing with it. (Dacha, 2024a)

This inherent tension relates to the traditional tension of fidelity versus creativity. Interestingly, in terms of the motives for each role, it appears that "Mike the adaptor" attempts to follow a model of fidelity, in contrast with the typical creative connotations of that role, while as "Mike the director", he is more concerned with the practical aspects of the production, such as the pragmatic implications of staging scenes and costs. Perhaps this focus on fidelity is a result of the fact that his role as adaptor is, in his own words, blurred with his role as translator. This tension between roles is similar to the competing interests of his roles as pitcher and Artistic Director during the first performative step, resulting in Lion's comparison of his simultaneous, yet seemingly opposing positions to the novel's character, Ivan, who mentally "splits in two". Again, such overlap reveals the need for the visual model of performative steps, with fluid boundaries, due to the difficulty in establishing where Lion's role as tradaptor ended and became his role as director.

Above all, this section has established the fluidity of Lion's roles, and has identified several roles performed by Lion in the theatre of translation: Lion the pitcher, the Artistic Director, the tradaptor, the director, the translator and the collaborator. Despite the fact that Lion has a limited network of contacts relative to his fellow cast members in this chapter (see Section 5.2.5), this is compensated by the sheer number of roles he embodies in the course of the production, in the theatre of translation. This is similar to Lessac, who also embodied the roles of Artistic Director, pitcher, director, adaptor, and collaborator, thus revealing similarities in practice across genres. Lion's

concentrated network of contacts, ironically, bestows greater agency upon him, as he occupies roles at each level of the theatre hierarchy at DT.

5.3.8 Mapping Lion's roles in the theatre of translation

Among the cast members studied in this chapter, Mike Lion can be identified as the figure who performed the largest number of roles in the theatre of translation (see Figure 5.9) across all three performative steps, with arguably the greatest degree of fluidity between them.

In the green room, we find Lion's roles of actor and collaborator. It has been established in the previous case studies that these translators and adaptors across both genres acted in implicit collaboration with Bulgakov, through engagement with his ST, so this bears similarity to Kemp. His role as actor, remains in the green room, since his performance of this role inevitably influenced his subsequent practice in his other roles (at least, subconsciously). However, he was not credited as an actor in this production, as he did not portray a character from the novel onstage, which resulted in a lack of status and, therefore, agency for this role. The impact of these roles in Lion's overall performance can be considered as implicit rather than clearly embodied.

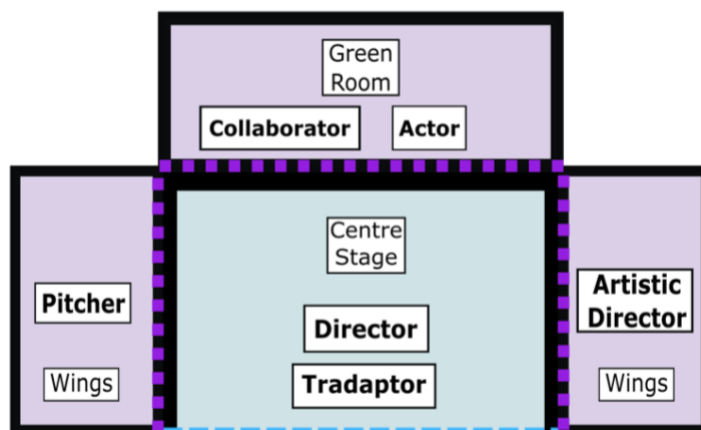


Figure 5.9 – Lion's roles in the theatre of translation

Like Kemp, Lion's role as pitcher in the first performative step was somewhat significant, in that his performance in this capacity was instrumental in persuading DT to stage the work, though his simultaneous role as Artistic

Director at DT was arguably more significant, as it endowed him with the power to choose his own proposal for the work as part of the DT repertoire in that theatrical season. Since these roles were primarily confined to the first performative step, which is not immediately visible to the public, these roles are situated in the wings.

Turning to centre stage, it is Lion's roles of director and tradaptor (the latter of which was devised from Lion's description of the process of tradaptation that he undertook in this production) which most clearly demonstrated his power in the production. Given that both of these roles were performed collaboratively (as director, he collaborated with the cast and as tradaptor, he collaborated with Eric Mead), though with Lion retaining ultimate creative control, and, thereby, a large degree of agency, these were the most powerful positions occupied by Lion in the theatre of translation. As such, these two roles are best placed centre stage.

In DT's Instagram Live Questions and Answers session, Lion identified himself as 'director/adaptor/translator', adding "I am the director and I also did a lot of the translation and adaptation" (Dacha, 2024a). This self-label is consistent with the evidence gathered in Section 5.3.7, as represented in Figure 5.7 and, thus, Lion can be regarded as director-tradaptor in the context of this performance in the theatre of translation.

5.3.9 The role of the adaptor in staging *Master i Margarita* (2004-2024)

The cases studies of Kemp and Lion have yielded significant insights into the performative construction of adaptor identity, subsequently influencing their agency in staging what is arguably Bulgakov's 'greatest' novel, *Master i Margarita*. While these productions were staged 20 years apart, on different continents, there were found to be a number of parallels between them; firstly, in a move away from the other case studies examined, both of these case studies focused on productions in regional locations; Kemp's 2004 production was staged in Chichester, at "the major publicly funded theatre resource in the South East of England" (UK Government Charity Commission, 2024). Similarly, Lion's 2024 production was staged in Seattle, at a not-for-profit arts

venue, implying that funding was not a core focus of these productions. These are the first case studies presented in this thesis to depart completely from London and New York, which is significant in the attempt to draw scholarly attention to translation/adaptation practices in regional theatres.

Taking the performative practices of these adaptors into account, it is noteworthy that both adapted the traditional two-tier model of theatre translation to meet the needs of their respective productions. As has been established, the traditional model consists of one translation between one language pair, resulting in an adaptation. However, Kemp's adaptation was based on both an existing Russian-to-English translation of *Master i Margarita* and Russian-to-French and Russian-to-German translations of the ST. This added an extra layer of complexity to his performance during the second performative step of writing, incorporating multiple voices from multiple cultures, besides the SL and TL cultures.

Lion's performance was demonstrably more complex, commissioning a New York playwright to collaborate on an adaptation of an existing TT, which Lion then 'tradapted' himself through a simultaneous performance of editing the adaptation and retranslating the ST to produce the final script for performance. This transformed translation model, which moves from third party translation to collaborative adaptation to 'tradaptation' positions the end result as being a mix of translation and adaptation, rather than distancing the product from the translation process. Both case studies suggest that existing models of translation/adaptation are outdated and does not account for the complexity of processes that do occur. Thus, it is arguably more relevant to consider how the established script for the performance of translation/adaptation has been rewritten through these practices.

In terms of the scales of these productions, it is worth considering their performance venues; CFT is a professional theatre with a 1300-seat capacity, "with high attendances from a wide geographic and demographic spread", according to the UK Government Charity Commission (2024). Meanwhile, 12th Avenue Arts is a multi-purpose complex which includes two black-box theatres, funded "using traditional not-for-profit fundraising techniques" (Mijatov, 2020: 9). It is unclear which of the two stages was used for DT's 2024 production – according to Pamela Mijatov, one has 80 seats and the other – 150 (p.9),

though the production was clearly staged on a much smaller scale than the 2004 CFT production. This implies that CFT would seek to stage a production with greater mass appeal, to fill such a large venue, while DT could prioritise creativity due to its comparatively limited production scale.

Considering the respective roles of Kemp and Lion at CFT and DT, it is clear that both were able to leverage their status and resultant agency for their existing roles (Kemp as in-house Dramaturg, Associate Director, and published playwright, and Lion as Artistic Director and director) to gain greater agency in their translation/adaptation performance. Their embodiment of multiple roles may have limited their networks of contacts, but it did afford them greater creative agency in their overall performances, by empowering them both to act with intent. This was achieved through the constant performative reconstruction of their identities steps to meet the needs of each performative step. It also reveals their greater agency in the creative process of theatre compared to Pyke, whose agency was limited by the dominant two-tier model of theatre translation employed by the NT. Having analysed the (inter)actions of both Kemp and Lion in the theatre of translation, we must now consider the case studies of adaptors of *Sobach'e serdtse*. This will allow the identification of commonalities and differences between different types of prose within the genre of plays adapted from prose.

5.4 *Sobach'e serdtse*

Sobach'e serdtse is a 1925 satirical novella, which was rejected for publication by the Soviet Censor and, like *Master i Margarita*, was never published during Bulgakov's lifetime. Interestingly, as a novella, it exists in a separate sub-category from the novel *Master i Margarita*, which has implications for its adaptation in comparison to the latter, owing to its shorter length. According to Curtis, "with characters defined almost entirely through action and language, the text seemed to cry out to be staged", which resulted in the signing of a contract between Bulgakov and the Moscow Art Theatre (MAT) for a staged adaptation of the work on 2 March 1926 (2017, p.68). This is in line with the introductory discussion of how Bulgakov was able to switch with 'ease' between writing prose and drama, providing a potential impetus behind theatre

practitioners' desire to stage this work. However, the planned staged adaptation at MAT never materialised, since the playscript was confiscated by the OGPU (*Ob"edinennoe gosudarstvennoe politicheskoe upravlenie/the Joint State Political Directorate*). This reveals that Bulgakov was a person of suspicion in the eyes of the Soviet state, despite his fame as the playwright of the critically-acclaimed *Dni Turbinykh*, as was examined in Chapter 4.

According to Losev, there is "one 'material' proof" of the event outlined in Bulgakov's letters: "on the manuscript of *Sobach'e serdtse* stored in the writer's archive there is the following note, written in Bulgakov's hand: "a copy taken by the [O]GPU and returned" (2004, p.10). *Sobach'e serdtse* marked a significant turning point in Bulgakov's career. The derogatory term *Bulgakovshchina* ['Bulgakovism', an anti-Bulgakov term] coined by the critics Blum and Orlinskij that same year (Kejna Sharratt, 1972, pp.78-79) reflects the persecution of Bulgakov and the fact that all of his work was heavily censored, especially in the case of the works previously discussed in this thesis. The fact that Bulgakov was permitted to continue writing novels and plays despite this *Bulgakovshchina* is unusual for Soviet society in this period, especially given that he had been interrogated over the content of his novella.

Despite the censorship Bulgakov faced when the text was first published in 1987, "theatres rushed to adapt the work for the stage, with three concurrent productions running in Moscow that same summer" (Curtis, 2017, p.68). It continues to be a popular text among theatre companies, with 28 productions having been staged in Britain and the US between 1981 and 2024, with the most recent production having been staged at the Camden Fringe Festival in August 2024 (Klimas, 2025). This work now considers two of these Anglophone staged productions; the first case study is the 1988 production by Cambridge Youth Theatre (CYT) in Edinburgh, co-adapted by Richard Spaul and Richard Fredman, which later transferred to London. Spaul's American counterpart is Robert Astle, whose production was also first produced in Edinburgh, before transferring to Allentown, Pennsylvania in 1994. The analysis now turns to the 1988 production of *Heart of a Dog*.

5.4.1 Richard Spaul

Richard Spaul (1959-) is a Cambridge-based theatre practitioner, originally from London. Spaul was immersed in a theatrical environment from a young age as his parents, Alice and George Spaul, were actors who regularly performed with the Tower Theatre Company. During his studies at the University of Cambridge, Spaul regularly acted and directed in university productions. After graduating from Cambridge in 1980, he co-founded the Cambridge Experimental Theatre (CET) company, which toured across Britain and Europe and has therefore acted as an Artistic Director. CET performed both new work and classic works, mostly adaptations of Shakespeare.

In April 2000, Spaul co-founded *in situ:* theatre, “a ground-breaking theatre ensemble based in Cambridge” which performs “site-specific and environmental work in non-theatre spaces”, together with Bella Stewart and Pete Arnold (*in situ:*, 2024a). According to the company website, *in situ:* “has given nearly 200 performances and taught hundreds of people who want to learn how to act” (*in situ:* 2024a). Therefore, this company has two primary functions: firstly, performance and secondly, teaching acting skills. The name of the company, *in situ:*, is also significant, when considered in light of Kemp’s discussion of creating an adaptation for each performance, linking to the two functions of adaptation, as both adapting the object of the TT and the adaptation of that object for performance.

Spaul also has a personal biography listed on the online database Internet Movie Database (IMDb), which identifies several roles that Spaul has played throughout his career: actor, director, teacher and writer (IMDb, 2024). This does not, however, list his involvement as a co-adaptor in *Heart of a Dog*, though it makes his other roles visible to users of the database. Spaul’s experiences have allowed him to cultivate a theatrical presence and associated network of contacts, which will now be examined.

5.4.2 Spaul's network of contacts

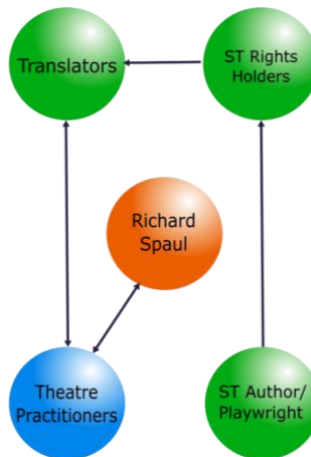


Figure 5.10 – Spaul's network of contacts

As is apparent in Figure 5.10, Spaul's network of contacts is strikingly similar to that of Lion, as analysed in Section 5.3.6, in that Spaul maintains the same degree of separation from both the ST author and ST rights holders, while his involvement with theatre companies accounted for the bulk of his interactions in the theatre of translation, as a professional theatre practitioner.

Given his immersion in the theatrical sphere from a young age on account of his parents' roles as theatre practitioners, it is unsurprising that this is the area in which he had established the greatest number of contacts by the time that he came to work on *Sobach'e serdtse*. The key difference between Spaul's and Lion's network of contacts is that Spaul's interaction with the translator, Sarah Schechter, was indirect, as will be discussed in the following section; Schechter provided the theatre with the translation, which was then passed on to Spaul and his co-adaptor, Richard Fredman, rather than the two working in collaboration, as was the case with Lion and Mead. From this exploration of Spaul's network of contacts, it is apparent that, as with Lessac (see Section 4.3.2) and Lion, the bulk of Spaul's interactions in the theatre of translation are bound to the theatrical sphere, as the setting in which he is endowed with the greatest degree of agency. This issue will be explored further, through Spaul's performance in the roles of collaborator, actor, adaptor, Artistic Director, and dramaturg in *Heart of a Dog* (1988).

5.4.3 Spaul's interactions in the theatre of translation: *Heart of a Dog* (1988)

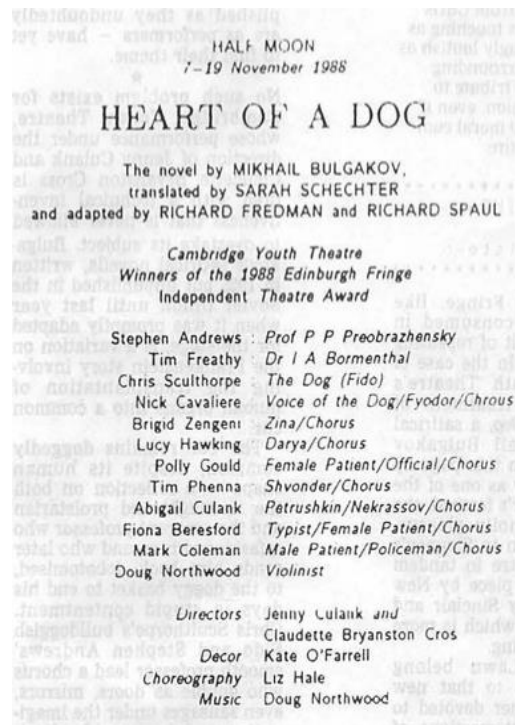


Figure 5.11 – (Creative) cast information for Cambridge Youth Theatre's 1988 production of *Heart of a Dog*, translated by Sarah Schechter and adapted by Richard Fredman and Richard Spaul

This case study considers Spaul's performance the 1988 CYT production of *Heart of a Dog* at the Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh. This production is the first one examined here to have been first staged at the famous Edinburgh Fringe Festival, an annual arts festival featuring a multitude of different types of performance, set against the backdrop of the Scottish capital. CYT's production is also known for having "scooped the first Independent Theatre Award and a two-week residency at the Half Moon Theatre" (Gardner, 1988). This residency resulted in a subsequent production at Half Moon's London-based theatre that same year and funding from Cambridge City Council. As Figure 5.11 reveals, Spaul and his co-adaptor receive equal billing in this *Theatre Record* entry with both Bulgakov as ST author and Sarah Schechter as translator, rendering these figures equally visible to readers of this theatrical record.

Figure 5.12 demonstrates that Spaul's involvement across the performative steps in this production was limited, relative to the other cast members examined in this chapter.

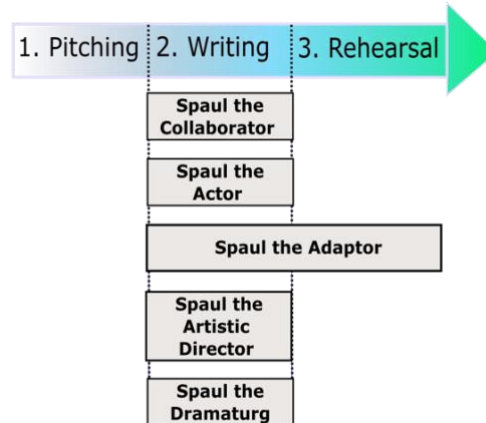


Figure 5.12 – Spaul's roles across performative steps

According to Spaul, he was directly commissioned for the role of adaptor by CYT in a relatively straightforward process, as he outlined in the survey:

Discussions were very informal and we had a free hand in our adaptation. A literal translation was supplied by another writer. We negotiated our own terms. We were paid a fee for the work.

This outline of the process is revealing of several key aspects; firstly, since Spaul was commissioned by the CYT to take on the project, the company had already decided on staging *Sobach'e serdtse*, likely due to renewed interest in the novella which had been published in its country of origin in 1987. Unlike Kemp and Lion, there was no need for Spaul to adopt the role of pitcher, so he was not involved in the first performative step of pitching. Secondly, Spaul and Fredman had a 'free hand' in their co-adaptation in the second performative step of writing, granting them creative control over their work.

Finally, Spaul was aware that a literal translation had been commissioned for the project. Interestingly, he describes the performer of this translation as 'another writer', indicating that he did not know the identity of the translator and, by association, had no direct contact with them. This theory is supported by Spaul's response to the question "What was the role of the translator in the production?", where he explained:

We were provided with a literal translation. But other than that, there was no interaction and we never met. The translator's role ended with the presentation of the translation and went no further.

This account is corroborated by the translator, Schechter, who stated in the survey that her "involvement ended once rehearsals began". Interestingly, Schechter also revealed that the CYT originally intended to use an existing translation for their production: "They'd contacted a well-known translator from Russian and asked for permission to use his version, which he refused, so they commissioned one from me". The identity of this 'well-known translator' remains unknown, though, given the context, it is likely to be Michael Glenny, who published his translation of *Sobach'e serdtse* in 1968, which was the only British translation of the work by a male translator available in 1988.

If the translator who rejected the request was Glenny, his reluctance to allow his translation to be adapted came after his disapproval of a British adaptation of his translation of *Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh*, as discussed in Section 3.3.6, which revealed that collaborations (be they direct or indirect) between translators and adaptors can sometimes be negative, detrimentally affecting relationships between the translator and subsequent adaptors. As such, the role of the translator was destined to be a minor role in comparison to the main role performed by Spaul and Fredman as co-adaptors in the second performative step of writing. This relatively minor role of the translator also links back to the inherent expectations of fidelity for translation and creativity for adaptation, which define the two roles.

The notion of co-adaptation in the present work was first encountered in the case study of Lessac and Morgan's 1981 adaptation of *Mol'er* in Section 4.3.3, so there are at least two examples of this practice in the context of staged adaptations of Bulgakov's work in the 1980s. However, while Morgan sought to fix the 'holes' in Lessac's original script from his 1978 production, Spaul and Fredman were working collaboratively, in the second performative step, in adapting Schechter's literal translation for performance. As with all of the case studies examined, there was indirect engagement with Bulgakov, as a collaborator, though, as with the other cast members examined in this chapter, this was mediated through the TT.

Although it has been established that the co-adaptors had no direct contact with the translator, in the survey, Spaul indicated that he does consider the role of the translator to be significant in the production, to an extent:

[w]e needed to know what the text meant literally and so it was useful to us in that respect. But our main concern was how to bring the novel to life for that particular group of actors and so we departed from that blueprint all the time. So, it was useful but not artistically relevant.

Here, Spaul displays some sensitivity to the source material, though the priority of the co-adaptors was to “bring the novel to life for that particular group of actors”. This casts Spaul (and Fredman) in the role of dramaturg, in keeping with Kemp’s description of his work as dramaturgy as he seeks to “fin[d] a live theatrical event in the source material” and adapts the work to meet the imperatives of the production (Section 5.3.3). Again, it presents the notion of adaptation for a particular performance space or group, as first detected in Kemp’s case study. In this case, the imperatives determined by CYT. The Kempian concept of “finding a live theatrical event in the source material” was employed in this production, based on Spaul’s account of how “the work was about how to ‘translate’ to a stage setting, not simply what words to choose”. Considering the ‘free hand’ that the co-adaptors were given, this indicates that the two had a great deal of agency in the second performative step of writing.

Mark Bly emphasises that it is “commonplace for theatre artists to see a play as essentially a ‘blueprint for action’” (2015, p.316) and it is clear that the co-adaptors of this production regarded the literal translation as a ‘blueprint’ (in Spaul’s own words), or a starting point, in their adaptation. This approach was likely influenced by both Spaul’s roles as Artistic Director and actor, who would have brought knowledge of the prerogatives of both a company and actors in using the adapted TT. However, since Spaul’s role as dramaturg was carried out as part of a co-adaptation structure, he arguably had less individual agency in decision-making processes as these decisions were shared with Fredman. Thus, as a figure involved in the second performative step, despite playing a slightly different role to those of Kemp and Lion in their own theatres of translation, the extent of their agency in this process is the same, as they each shared their power with one other

practitioner (Pimlott, in Kemp's case and Mead, in Lion's situation). Despite this sharing of power, Spaul, Kemp, and Lion were all able to maintain a high level of creative input in this process.

Establishing Spaul's (and Fredman's) role in the third performative step of rehearsals is a more difficult task. According to Spaul, he "had close contact with the directors of the piece but did not actually direct any of the work". This implies that Spaul possessed some degree of agency in terms of decision-making; he had not just direct, but 'close' contact with the directors, though he was never empowered to take on direction work in this context. Such a level of influence suggests that Spaul had significantly less agency and creative input in the third performative step, compared to the power he wielded in the second performative step. Therefore, Spaul's experience in the third performative step is akin to that of Morgan in the 1981 production of *Molière*; in that case, he was heavily involved in the process of co-adaptation, yet was less able to exert his influence in rehearsals, as the power in that performative step was transferred to the director.

This case study reveals that Spaul performed a relatively limited range of roles in the theatre of translation compared to the vast range of roles played by Kemp and Lion; he did not have to take on the role of pitcher as the work had already been chosen by the CYT and he had no direct contact with the translator, despite being aware that they had been hired, though he did have direct contact with Fredman as his co-adaptor and the co-directors, Jenny Culank and Claudette Bryanston Cross. However, his power to act in the final performative step was mediated by the dominant roles of the co-directors.

5.4.4 Mapping Spaul's roles in the theatre of translation

Compared to the other cast members in this chapter, most of Spaul's roles in the theatre of translation are implicit and, thus, not publicly visible. However, the roles he did play (see Figure 5.13) arguably granted him a high status and agency by virtue of this status. As has been established, Spaul played no role in the first performative step, so all of his agency was concentrated in the subsequent two performative steps. His role as Artistic Director of CET served as an undercurrent to his work, as it provided him with experience of managing

a theatre company and choosing works to stage, though he did not directly act in this capacity across any of the performative steps, so this role remains in the green room, together with his role of collaborator, in his indirect collaboration with Bulgakov through the TT.

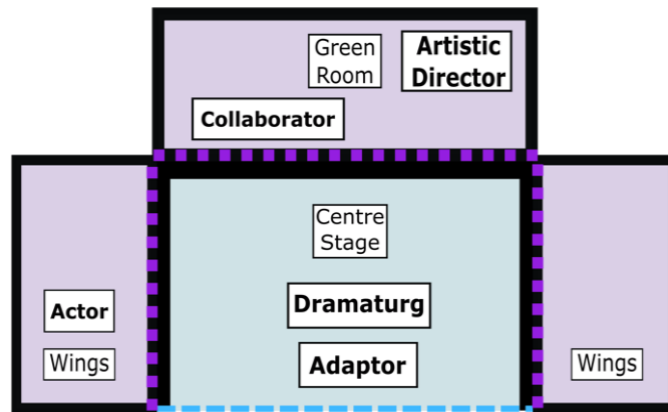


Figure 5.13 – Spaul's roles in the theatre of translation

On the other hand, Spaul's experience as an actor arguably influenced his writing process as an adaptor, since this experience taught Spaul about what an actor requires from a script. However, it was not his main role in the process, so it is located in the wings. Spaul's roles which take centre stage in the theatre of translation are those of dramaturg and adaptor; the latter role takes centre stage as it is the capacity in which he was commissioned by CYT, as well as the role which endowed him with the agency to have a 'free hand' in the adaptation. However, his agency in this role was reduced by the need to collaborate with his co-adaptor, Richard Fredman. Meanwhile, Spaul's role of dramaturg, which was determined to have taken place as part of the co-adaptation process, empowered him to depart from the blueprint of the TT to bring the work to life for a specific group of actors.

Furthermore, his power in the third performative step was also limited by the relative power of the co-directors, Jenny Culank and Claudette Bryanston Cross, though his self-proclaimed close relationship with the directors enabled him to maintain some degree of agency in terms of his ability to influence decisions in rehearsals. Therefore, Spaul's role in the theatre of translation is best defined by the label of dramaturg-adaptor. Although, in the survey, Spaul chose the self-label of adaptor, his behaviour indicates that he

was simultaneously empowered by his role as a dramaturg, justifying the transformation of his identity into this dynamic, hyphenated role. It is now pertinent to compare Spaul's experience with that of an adaptor in a second Anglophone staged production of *Sobach 'e serdtse*, in an American context.

5.4.5 Robert Astle

Robert Astle (1955-) is a New York-based Canadian editor and publishing consultant from Edmonton, Alberta. From 1977-78, Astle studied theatre at École Jacques Lecoq in Paris, before co-founding Small Change Theatre in 1982, a touring company specialising in clown and mask performances whose productions were staged globally at festivals and theatres alike (Canadian Theatre Encyclopaedia, 2020). He is also a co-founder of Les Etablissements Theatre company, which he co-founded with Agnes Limbos in the 1990s. He has also acted as Playwright in Residence at the Centaur Theatre in Montreal, Quebec. Astle has since moved back to New York, where he worked as a literary agent from September 2006 until January 2012, and between December 2012 and June 2016, he “owned and operated a small trade publisher” which “published over forty titles in the USA”, before starting his own publishing start-up, which has been in operation since 2016. According to his page on Reedsy, a literary talent website, he identifies as ‘Editor and publishing consultant’ (Reedsy, 2024). Having analysed Astle's background, it is now time to assess his network of contacts in the theatre of translation.

5.4.6 Astle's network of contacts

It is immediately noticeable that Astle's somewhat compact network of contacts (see Figure 5.14), is identical in nature to that of Mike Lion, as seen in Section 5.3.6 (though, of course, in a different spatial and temporal context). Again, as with Pyke, Lessac, Rappaport, Kemp, and Lion, there is no direct contact with the ST author, and we do not see the same direct contact with the ST rights holders as displayed by Glenny and Ginsburg.

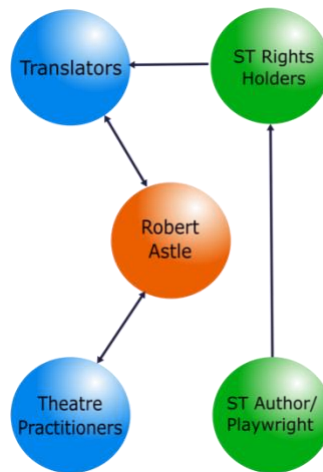


Figure 5.14 – Astle’s network of contacts

Astle, like Lion, has direct interactions with translators, which will be explored in more detail in the following section. Echoing the cases of Lion, Spaul, and Lessac, the majority of Astle’s interactions in the theatre of translation were among theatre practitioners. This now forms the basis of the discussion of Astle’s performance in the capacities of collaborator, Artistic Director, negotiator, adaptor and actor in the 1994 adaptation of *Heart of a Dog*.

5.4.7 Astle’s interactions in the theatre of translation: *Heart of a Dog* (1994)

While this production was first staged in Belgium, then at Edinburgh’s Traverse Theatre and London’s Battersea Arts Centre, it did transfer to two locations in Pennsylvania: Lehigh University, Allentown and Lebanon Valley College, Annville, which is why it features as the American counterpart to Spaul’s British adaptation. Unfortunately, there was no evidence available pertaining to the production in Annville, so the production at Lehigh University is now examined.

According to the Canadian Theatre Encyclopaedia website, in 1990 “Astle returned to Europe to collaborate on the creation of his one-man show *Heart of a Dog*, with Belgian writer and director Agnès Limbos”, spawning the creation of Les Etablissements theatre company. The work has since been staged in Canada, Belgium, Britain, and the US. By the time this work was staged at Lehigh University in March 1994, it had already been staged multiple

times and so Astle had a clear idea of his creative vision, making the conscious decision, in his capacity as Artistic Director, to stage this production in the US.

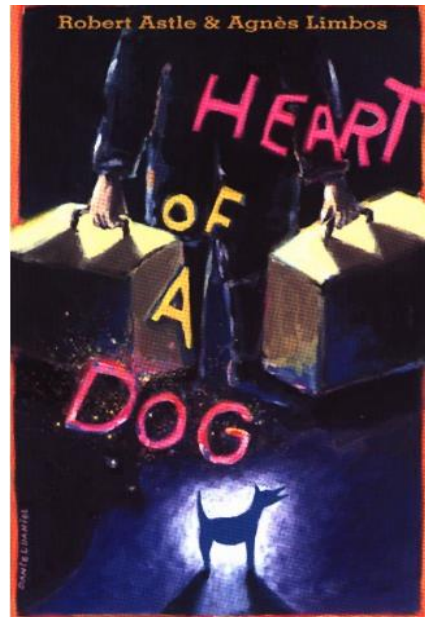


Figure 5.15 – Front cover of the published playscript of *Heart of a Dog*, adapted by Astle and Agnès Limbos (1994)

Like Eugene Lyons, Pyke, Rappaport, and Kemp, these staged productions resulted in a published playtext (see Figure 5.15), which heightens the visibility of the adaptation among public audiences; the playscript is currently being advertised on Amazon, although, as of January 2025, it is not available for purchase (Amazon, 2024). While its current lack of availability for purchase negatively impacts its accessibility, Amazon is a popular marketplace site and both Bulgakov specialists and non-specialists searching for “*Heart of a Dog*” may come across this version through the site’s search function, which Timothy P. Seward refers to as ‘search visibility’ (cf. 2019). Thus, this may indirectly heighten its public visibility.

Returning to Astle, his individual roles across performative steps, like those of Lion (as discussed in Section 5.3.7) were difficult to chart, in terms of where one role began and one role ended, as exemplified in Figure 5.16.

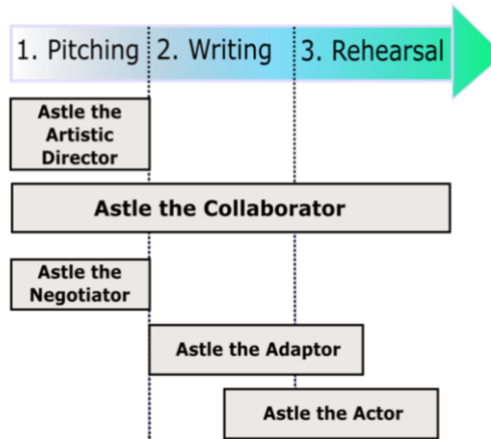


Figure 5.16 – Astle's roles across performative steps

Regarding the first performative step, as Astle shared the responsibilities (and, therefore, power) of Artistic Director with Limbos, they had to discuss which works to adapt for the stage, rather acting as a pitcher in front of a theatre company, like Kemp and Lion (though, as previously mentioned, Lion's role of Artistic Director made this pitch more of a formality). As such, Astle's role in the first performative step did not concern pitching the project to the company.

However, Astle's survey response revealed that he "negotiated an adaptation agreement with the translator, Mirra Ginsburg, and her publisher, Grove Press". That is to say that while there was contact with the translator, it was only in a negotiating capacity, rather than a creative collaboration, whereas in Lion's case, as a translator and adaptor, he collaborated creatively with Mead. When asked the question of whether he considered the work of the translator to be significant in the production as a whole, Astle stated: "Without her permission, I would have had to commission a translator, which would have increased production costs. In retrospect, a new translation would have brought new insight". This retrospective reflection indicates a degree of regret on Astle's part, expressing that his perspective has since shifted to consider the potential benefits of commissioning a new translation for the production, rather than relying on an existing translation from an established Bulgakov translator. Thus, in these negotiations, Ginsburg was arguably the figure endowed with the greatest agency, as she had the power to decide whether or not Astle could adapt her translation of *Sobach'e serdtse*.

As is often the case, the issue of cost was the crux of this matter and despite the possibilities afforded by a new translation, it was a question of whether or not Astle could afford to stage this production. Section 3.3.6 highlighted that Ginsburg withdrew support from Daniel Kadin's 1997 production of her translation of *Sobach'e serdtse*, so it was not necessarily guaranteed that she would support Astle's production from beginning to end. Compared to CYT, who were unable to secure a 'well-known' translator's text and instead had to commission a new translation, Astle the negotiator was relatively successful in this endeavour during the first performative step.

It is difficult to conduct separate analyses of Astle's overall performances in the second performative step of writing and the third performative step of rehearsal, as he played prominent roles in both, the boundaries between which are somewhat blurred, as Astle explained:

I was working with the English translation by Mirra Ginsburg. My goal was to produce and perform a 1-man play based on *Heart of a Dog*. With Agnès Limbos our collaboration was analyzing the text and then through extensive improvisations we created the central character and the staged adaptation was set from that point of view.

This demonstrates that Astle's roles were blurred in terms of his aims and, therefore, agency for these different roles; as Artistic Director, he personally aimed to stage a one-man play, which influenced his subsequent adaptation of the text in the second performative step, in which process he was personally consulting Ginsburg's translation, with no mention of Limbos having done so.

During the second performative step, it is clear that the nature of his collaboration with Limbos merged with improvising the physical performance to meet their mutual goals for the production in the third performative step of rehearsal, which again blurred into his performance as Astle the actor, more specifically the *only* actor. This is closer to the theatrical process of devising, though the difference here is that they were working from a translated script, rather than the usual devising practice of working from collaborating and improvising to create a new performance. Consequently, while Astle undoubtedly had agency in his ability to make decisions on several levels (the interpretation and adaptation of Ginsburg's translation, his goal for the

production as an Artistic Director and as an actor), it is impossible to ascertain his degree of agency in each role, as Astle the adaptor, Astle the Artistic Director and Astle the actor, as the boundaries between the roles are fluid and ever-evolving, or transforming, at different stages of the production.

Unlike the other individuals studied in this thesis, Astle can be regarded as a collaborator across all three performative steps; in the first performative step through his collaboration with Limbos as an Artistic Director. In the second performative step he collaborated indirectly Bulgakov as ST author, accessed through Ginsburg's TT, also implying a degree of indirect collaboration with Ginsburg. Finally, he directly collaborated with Limbos in the third performative step, in her direction of his one-man show. Thus, this role underpins Astle's actions in the production. It is also significant that, like Kemp, Astle published the playtext resulting from the production. However, Astle's playtext was not published until seven months after the production took place, while Kemp's was on sale to audiences during the production run. As such, Astle's status as a published adaptor is not plotted in his theatre of translation for this production, as the text was published much later, though it is worth noting that this occurred as a direct result of the roles he played in the staged production and it did also result in a further production, recorded for the Canadian radio.

Overall, this case study is interesting because it is challenging to separate and assess each of Astle's roles in this production. While the other cast members examined in this chapter display a certain degree of role fluidity, Astle's are markedly more fluid, owing to the merging of his roles in the theatre of translation across all three performative steps.

5.4.8 Mapping Astle's roles in the theatre of translation

Finally, we turn our attention to Robert Astle and the notably fluid roles he performs in the theatre of translation. In the green room is his implicit role as a Bulgakov collaborator (see Figure 5.17). While placing the role of collaborator in the green room is nothing new in the context of the case studies presented in this thesis, it was necessary to specifically refer to this role as *Bulgakov* collaborator in this case, to differentiate it from his centre stage role of

collaborator. The implications of the latter are discussed accordingly in the assessment for centre stage in the theatre of translation.

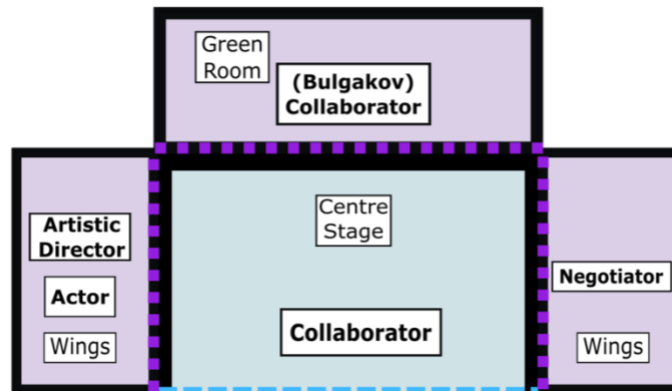


Figure 5.17 – Astle's roles in the theatre of translation

In the first performative step, Astle did not take on the role of pitcher, though the fact that he (successfully) negotiated with Ginsburg to secure the rights to adapt her translation of *Sobach'e serdtse* for the stage implies his power (and, therefore, agency) in decision-making during this step. His contact with Ginsburg was direct, though not in a creative capacity. Therefore, since collaboration ended once the rights were negotiated, the influence of this role ended after the first performative step, so the role of negotiator is therefore placed in the wings.

Similarly, Astle's roles as Artistic Director and actor both remain in the wings; although these roles were arguably influential across the performative steps of writing and rehearsal, his individual power in each role was limited by the lack of clear boundaries between them, resulting in the merging of these two roles into one. Consequently, Astle's self-assessment of his role as collaborator is the most accurate reflection of his role in the production, as it compensates for the blurring of boundaries between his various roles during each performative step while simultaneously acknowledging the collaborative nature of his performance in the theatre of translation. Having identified the cast of this chapter according to labels which more accurately reflect the nature of their respective performances in the theatre of translation, it is now possible to offer some reflections on the performance of adaptors of Bulgakov's prose for Anglophone British and American stages.

5.4.9 The role of the adaptor in staging *Sobach'e serdtse* (1988-1994)

The final two case studies of staged adaptations of *Sobach'e serdtse* have drawn attention to two under-recognised categories in existing scholarship: youth theatre and touring university productions. Staged six years apart, both were first staged at the annual Edinburgh Fringe Festival, which is known for works both by “big names in the world of entertainment” and “unknown artists looking to build their careers”, championing all types of performance, of which theatre is just one category (Edinburgh Fringe, 2024). In these cases, both companies were relatively unknown, with the Fringe Festival providing a platform for the companies (and productions) to garner greater public recognition. As with the case studies of Kemp and Lion, these studies centre on production locations that are under-explored relative to London and New York: Edinburgh and Allentown, Pennsylvania.

In the same way that Pyke's performance as a translator of Bulgakov's dramaturgy at the NT seems to have adhered to traditional expectations of the translator (see Section 4.2.7), Spaul's practice as an adaptor of Bulgakov's prose for the stage met the typical expectations of that role; he drew upon his extensive experience in theatre to create a performable script. Like Lessac and Morgan in the 1981 production of *Mol'er*, Spaul shared creative agency with Fredman, as his co-adaptor, and Spaul was the only adaptor examined in this chapter to have no involvement in the first performative step of pitching. As such, Spaul's role in adapting Schechner's TT was predictable, and did not deviate from the traditional two-tier model of theatre translation. Thus, this performance not present an alternative view of the performatively constructed identity and subsequent agency of Bulgakov adaptors.

By comparison, Astle's performance was unique in relation to all of the other case studies, since he appears to have performed a particularly entangled blend of multiple roles across all three performative steps. The boundaries between these roles were especially blurry, making it difficult to account for the agency of each individual role as part of his overall performance. This performance is more accurately defined as a collaboration of multiple roles across multiple steps, rather than a clearly defined process,

combining clear steps of translation and adaptation. Spaul's case indicated that existing models for understanding translation and adaptation are adequate for understanding the role of Bulgakov adaptors. Meanwhile, Astle's case, like the those of Kemp and Lion, implied that a more fluid model is required to account of how multi-roling transforms the adaptor's status and agency granted by this status. The fluid boundaries of performative steps in the theatre of translation best accounted for this multi-roling.

Considering the venues and scales of productions, CYT's 1988 production was staged at the Assembly Rooms in Edinburgh, which, like 12th Avenue Arts (see the second case study in this chapter), is a multi-purpose venue. The two venues are also similar, since the Assembly Rooms has two performance venues: a Music Hall, seating a theatre audience of 788, and a Ballroom, accommodating 400 theatregoers. It is unclear which venue was used for this production, though both seat a relatively large audience, and the non-repertory, less rigid festival nature of the production arguably afforded practitioners greater creative agency to deviate from the 'blueprint' of the translation, as alluded to by Spaul in Section 5.4.3.

Turning to Astle and Limbos' 1994 production, although it was known to take place at Lehigh University in Allentown, Pennsylvania, it was not possible to determine the specific venue, and the university's 309-seat Diamond Theater at the Zoellner Arts Center was only opened in 1997, three years after the production took place. The horizon of expectations for a production staged at a university, like a festival production, would equally be less fixed and rigidly adhered to than a production staged at a repertory theatre, or by a state-subsidised company such as the NT or RSC. Arguably, the lack of expectation of a conventional approach to staging the prose of a non-canonical writer, who, in turn, is not burdened by expectations in the same manner as a canonical writer such as Chekhov, facilitated greater creative freedom in the translation/adaptation process, and in determining the role of the adaptor in that context.

Overall, the markedly different cases of the two adaptors of *Sobach'e serdtse* for the stage studied here have highlighted that it is no longer adequate to consider how adaptors perform a singular 'role' as a Bulgakov adaptor, and that the greater the number of individual roles performed, the more difficult it

is to track the agency of the adaptor for each individual role. As such, this work has demonstrated a need to consider *how* individual practices deviate from the perceived norms of theatre adaptation, in order to develop a holistic view of translator/adaptor agency in theatre. This is achieved by considering the many different ways in which the social script may be rewritten to meet different production needs, resulting in variations in translator/adaptor labour and, consequently, new labels to convey these variations in labour.

5.5 Conclusions

The main conclusion drawn in Chapter 4 was that the greater the number of roles occupied in the theatre of translation, the greater the status and, therefore, agency, of the translator/adaptor of Bulgakov's original plays, which supports the findings of existing theatre translation scholarship (see Aaltonen, 2001; Bassnett, 1998; Brodie, 2018a; Marinetti, 2021). However, the evidence presented here suggests that it is not necessarily the overall number of roles that affords the adaptor of Bulgakov's prose the largest degree of agency, but the concentration of these roles in theatre. These differences justify the consideration of the separate categories of original plays and plays adapted from prose.

That being said, it has also been demonstrated that there is a need to draw further scholarly attention to the intersection between translation, adaptation, and transformation, as it is manifested in theatre. Rather than being fully independent, static processes, the evidence presented in this chapter has revealed that they are often interdependent and exist as part of a dynamic continuum, as embodied by the characters performing these processes; in the same way that the processes exist on a continuum, so too do translators and adaptors, as humanised individuals.

Returning to the research questions posed at the beginning of this chapter, the best way to approach the first question of the extent to which collaboration occurs between the adaptor and other agents is to comparatively evaluate the nature of their collaboration across three performative steps. Considering how they act, i.e., in which capacity (or capacities), across the

stages of 1) pitching, 2) writing, and 3) rehearsals enabled us to determine how their performance in these collaboration allows them to (re)construct their identities as adaptors of Bulgakov's prose for Anglophone British and American stages. Examining each case study through this lens revealed that the figures involved constantly reconstructed their roles, transforming to meet the demands of each performative step.

The first performative step provided a valuable insight into a process that remains invisible to theatre audiences. It also highlighted the significance of Kemp, Lion, and Astle's experiences in previous theatrical roles in proposing the project to their respective companies, i.e., their agency in interacting with established theatrical hierarchies. The evidence indicates that the respective roles played by the case in this chapter tended to overlap, particularly between the second (writing) and third (rehearsal) performative steps. This demonstrated a need for a framework that accounts for a fluidity of roles.

Analysing the individuals in the case studies presented in Chapters 4 and 5 through the concept of performative steps also allows us to address the second research question: What is the difference between the performances of the cast members who adapted Bulgakov's prose for the stage and those who were involved in staging his original plays? The labels assigned to each figure in the theatre of translation in Chapter 5 have indicated a degree of multi-roling: in this chapter we have encountered the playwright-adaptor (Kemp), director-tradaptor (Lion), dramaturg-adaptor (Spaul), and collaborator (Astle).

In Chapter 4, we met the literary scout-translator (Lyons), actor-translator (Pyke), director-adaptor (Lessac), and Russian consultant-translator (Rappaport). The 'hyphenated' titles, as Jessica Kaplow Applebaum terms them, "designate their many multidisciplinary positions" (Romanska, 2015, p.8), empowering the cast members to "frame [their] involvement within the creative process" (Kaplow Applebaum, 2015, pp.197-198). The majority of the cast members in Chapter 4 had the greatest agency in the second performative step, while Lessac had significant agency in the second and third steps. By contrast, the cast in this chapter had greater agency across all performative steps, to varying degrees, except from Spaul, who only performed across the second and third steps. This is due to the constant reconstruction of their roles to meet the demands of each performative step, whereas the roles of the cast

in Chapter 4, while flexible to a degree, were significantly less fluid and powerful across the first and third performative steps.

These analyses of performative steps and individual theatres of translation raise questions surrounding the concepts of creativity and visibility. Namely, do adaptors view translators as being creative and, crucially, how do *scholar-translators* view the creativity of those who multi-role and does this match translators'/adaptors' own self-perceptions? This has implications in the context of the third research question (see RQ3). For example, the label 'playwright-adaptor' implies creativity, though our assumption is that 'adaptor' is the derivative term out of the two, but we must again consider the crucial question of *how* this figure *wants* to be visible, if at all? Which role do they want to emphasise?

Furthermore, the behaviour of the cast members studied challenges existing social scripts surrounding the horizon of expectations of the roles of translators and adaptors, as the individuals studied continuously write and rewrite their own scripts to suit the needs of different situations or stages of the production process. These actions have also demonstrated how the social script surrounding the model applied to the process itself (Novel in Russian → Russian-to-English Translation → Adaptation in English) has been modified to meet the demands of individual productions. The questions and implications of these challenges to the status quo in theatre translation for the wider themes of agency, creativity and visibility in Translation Studies are now addressed in an overall context in the conclusion to this thesis.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This thesis has highlighted the variety of roles played by individual translators and adaptors in Anglophone British and American staged productions of Mikhail Bulgakov's work. Crucially, it highlighted the similarities and differences between the behaviour of these individuals in productions between 1934 and 2024, suggesting possible reasons behind them, and their implications for the agency of the individuals examined. This provided a chronological account of Bulgakov translator/adaptor behaviour over a ninety-year period.

Over the past twenty years, Translation Studies scholars have discussed the different types of roles played by translators (for instance, Buzelin, 2007; Freeth, 2021). This has raised two core questions: firstly, what is the impact of power dynamics between the translator/adaptor and other agents involved in the creative process on the ability of the former to influence the overall process? Secondly, how should we account for the blurred boundaries that often exist between roles played by translators/adaptors? This leads us to consider the twin issues of the roles for which a translator/adaptor *wants* to be visible and whether or not it is possible to address agency across individual roles in the context of the translator/adaptor's wider performance. These factors were all taken into consideration in the context of this research.

To address these issues, it was necessary to first conduct initial research to compile a comprehensive bibliography of Anglophone staged productions of Bulgakov's work in Britain and the US. This allowed me to fill the gaps in the bibliography of productions compiled by Young (2013), which lists productions of 'non-Chekhov' Russian and Soviet work staged in Britain between 1900 and 1945, and Marsh (2020), whose list primarily consists of British productions of Chekhov's work, with reference to some productions by other Russophone playwrights, including Bulgakov, from 1945-2015. Despite these scholars claiming to draw attention to Russophone playwrights other than Chekhov, there were multiple entries for his work in each bibliography. A subsequent review of available information allowed me to identify ten Bulgakov translators and adaptors, whose experiences formed the basis of the empirical case studies in the present work and were categorised as follows, with each category consisting of multiple cast members:

- Early Bulgakov translators (Chapter 3)
 - Michael Glenny
 - Mirra Ginsburg
- Translators/adaptors of Bulgakov's original plays (Chapter 4)
 - Eugene Lyons; Charlotte Pyke (*Dni Turbinykh*)
 - Michael Lessac; Helen Rappaport (*Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh*)
- Translators/adaptors of Bulgakov's prose (Chapter 5)
 - Edward Kemp; Mike Lion (*Master i Margarita*)
 - Richard Spaul; Robert Astle (*Sobach'e serdtse*)

Subsequent qualitative research in archives, most notably the Glenny Collection at UCL and the Mirra Ginsburg papers at CRBML, and primary data gathered from surveys and interviews with practitioners then formed the basis of these case studies. The mixed methodological approach of this study has been realised through a novel performative framework, the benefits of which for studies of translator agency have been highlighted by scholars such as Marinetti (2013) and Wolf (2017). This framework contextualised each case study through a brief micro-history and network analysis of each individual. This identified their social circumstances and connections with other agents, as shaped and shaped by the translator/adaptor's behaviour.

Performative steps were introduced to the analysis to chart individual roles played by the translators/adaptors across the stages of the creative process that often remain hidden from public view; namely, the first performative step of pitching a project to a company. The second performative step (writing) concerns the mechanical process of interlingual transfer, though it can also reveal creative input on the translator/adaptor's part. Finally, the third performative step (rehearsal) traditionally precludes direct translator involvement, though it can also be influenced by translators/adaptors through collaboration with either the director or actors, or both. Each step involved collaboration of some nature, direct or indirect, advocating for a reimagined 'fifth wall' as a space in which translators/adaptors collaborate with other agents in theatre. These steps have the potential to occur simultaneously, for example the second step (writing) and third step (rehearsal) may overlap, with edits being made to the script, in consultation with the translator/adaptor during

rehearsals, thus they are not always unilateral. The boundaries of this ‘fifth wall’ (established through traditional perceptions of roles) are fluid, accounting for the porous boundaries between differently-labelled roles.

The final stage of this performative approach was an adaptation of Bermann’s “theater [sic] of translation” (cf. 2014) to provide a concrete, recognised performance space as a meaningful point of reference to assess the complex issue of translator agency. Each role played by the translator/adaptor in their overall performance was located in the theatre of translation, and their agency was considered in light of where each role was located. This research reimagined the ‘fifth wall’ as a collaborative space by invoking recognisable theatre spaces as sites of collaboration (Deboeck, 2022, p.97); firstly, the green room as the location for roles that remain either implicit or fully hidden from public view; secondly, the wings as the space in-between the backstage and centre stage. Roles located here are significant but not immediately visible to the public; finally, centre stage as the main space in which an actor performs their most prominent and, therefore, most visible, role. The role(s) plotted in this area determined the translator/adaptor’s reimagined overall role. Adapting this existing concept to meet the needs of this research is akin to how the translator/adaptors studied adapt their own behaviours to meet the needs of each performative step of the production process, as outlined above.

This chapter begins by reviewing the research questions that have guided this thesis, reflecting on how the findings of the three empirical chapters (outlined above) considered the specific nuances of each question and the significance of these findings for the study of translator agency in theatre. Focus then shifts to the original contributions of this thesis to existing scholarship on translator agency; Section 6.2.1 provides an account of how this study has contributed to wider studies of translator agency by assessing role of the translator in Anglophone staged productions of Bulgakov in Britain and the US; Section 6.2.2 considers the practical applications of the novel theoretical framework, based on the ‘fifth wall’, and, finally, the benefits of the compiled bibliography as a resource for scholars and students across Translation Studies and other disciplines are identified in Section 6.2.3. The

conclusion then considers limitations of the research design, before highlighting several potential areas for consideration in future research.

6.1 Responding to research questions

The purpose of the present research was to develop meaningful responses to the three key research questions:

1. To what extent does collaboration occur between the translator/adaptor and other agents, what is the nature of this collaboration and how is it affected by external factors?
2. How does the translator/adaptor (re)construct their own identity as a Bulgakov translator/adaptor and how does this relate to trends in identity construction?
3. How does the terminology used to describe translators/adaptors affect their actions and identity?

To answer the first research question, in order to determine the nature and extent to which collaboration occurred in the case studies examined, attention first had to be paid to the agents with whom the translator/adaptor collaborated in the shared task of bringing Bulgakov to an Anglophone audience. Drawing on a combination of archival evidence and data gathered from the survey questionnaire and interviews (conducted both by myself and by third parties) provided an insight into individual backgrounds and relevant personal experiences of the translators/adaptors studied.

This facilitated the development of networks of contacts for these individuals, identifying the other agents with the whom the translator/adaptor interacted, both directly and indirectly. These agents were found to include, in varying combinations: the ST author/playwright (Bulgakov), ST rights holders, translators, publishers, scholars, literary and theatrical agents, and theatre practitioners, including actors, adaptors, and directors. In turn, this enabled a close examination of the specific (inter)actions of these agents through written correspondence, contracts and personal accounts of the process of bringing

Bulgakov's work from Russian page to Anglophone British and American stages. It was therefore possible to establish the extent and nature of collaboration between these agents, which, unsurprisingly, varied on a case-by-case basis. This analysis revealed that the individuals studied were always engaged in some form of sustained collaboration, whether directly or indirectly.

Direct collaborations (shared labour) were characterised as regular, direct interactions between the translator/adaptor and other agents in the theatre of translation to achieve shared goals. These occurred most frequently between translators/adaptors and theatre practitioners. Since this thesis concerns theatre translation, it is not surprising that this was the most common collaborative relationship. Indirect collaborations, meanwhile, were classified as collaborations facilitated by intermediaries, such as literary agents. Some relationships also occurred independently of the translator, for example between scholars and publishers, and theatre practitioners and publishers. This had implications for translator agency, inferring that translators/adaptors such as Glenny and Ginsburg were simultaneously in an empowered and subordinate position, which was particularly apparent in their dealings with publishers (cf. Gentile, 2021) (see Section 3.3.4). This is since both were able to transcend the limits of external factors and were also limited by them, in the context of different tasks across the performative steps.

The external factors that had the most significant impact on translator/adaptor agency across the range of productions examined were the agendas of theatres and publishers. These were largely motivated by existing power structures and the perceived value of the translation project, in terms of saleability in relation to production costs. For example, as an Artistic Director at Les Etablissements, Robert Astle secured the rights to adapt Ginsburg's existing translation of *Heart of a Dog* due to budget constraints (see Section 5.4.7). However, thirty years later, he now takes the view that "a new translation would have brought new insight" (from the survey conducted as part of this research), suggesting that he regrets the decision to prioritise budget over innovation. In a publishing context, Ginsburg's pitch for *Zhizn' gospodina de Mol'era*, was rejected by Penguin Books, arising from 'concerns' over their "ability to market [it]" (Seaver, 1978). Interestingly, Astle's case demonstrates that the balance of power, in terms of decision-making, was tipped in his favour

(albeit constrained by monetary concerns), while the publisher held power over Ginsburg, in deciding the fate of her proposed project. Therefore, this implies that, unsurprisingly, money is a key external factor affecting the translator's or adaptor's ability to act as they intend.

Overall, collaborations between translators/adaptors and other agents in the theatre of translation were found to depend largely on the number of roles they played and the size of their respective networks, as established through their performances in these multiple roles. However, this was only one aspect under consideration in the case studies of their overall performances. Interestingly, direct collaborative approaches seemed to be more commonplace among American translators/adaptors in bringing Bulgakov's original plays to the stage, as assessed in Chapter 4, rather than in the case of their British counterparts and those adapting Bulgakov's prose for theatrical performance. This can largely be attributed to the translators/adaptors analysed in the American context already being endowed with agency thanks to their visibility in the public sphere for their existing roles, outside of translation/adaptation. For instance, Michael Lessac's agency as an adaptor was closely entangled with his agency as the director of the production, though this entanglement is detrimental in the attempt to trace his individual agency for each role within the context of his overall performance (see Section 4.3.3).

The British translators examined, by comparison, were relatively constrained by the dominant two-tier model in British theatre practice, as highlighted by Brodie (2018a) and reiterated by Aaltonen (2023), meaning that collaborative potential is reduced by existing structures. Such a widely implemented practice constitutes another significant external factor impacting collaboration between translators and other agents in theatre, reducing translator visibility, and, consequently, the ability to perform their work collaboratively. This is particularly apparent in the case of Pyke, whose collaborations with the adaptor Upton in the second performative step took place indirectly, through suggestions in footnotes and explanatory notes, with Pyke not having been involved at all in the third performative step of rehearsal (see Section 4.2.7). In this sense, Pyke's status as a translator did not afford her much agency in the production context.

The fact that the adaptors studied in Chapter 5 experienced a large degree of creative agency in their respective productions is unsurprising, given the typical connotation of adaptation as being creative. This contrasts with translation, which is typically regarded as being bound to notions of fidelity to the ST (Tenbrink and Lawrence, 2021, p.6). However, considering the evidence more closely, the adaptors in Chapter 5 embodied multiple roles in the theatre of translation, a trend that was particularly apparent in twenty-first-century productions (Kemp and Lion). Not only did this reduce the possibility for direct collaborations with other agents because they played the majority of these roles themselves, but it demonstrably also blurred the boundaries between them. This blurring of boundaries refers not just to each adaptor playing multiple, distinct roles, but also the porous boundaries between these differently-labelled roles. The fluidity of these boundaries was made explicit in the deployment of the performative steps visualisations in each case study, proving that it is necessary to consider identity as dynamic, rather than static or fixed.

It is unclear as to whether decisions to multi-role in this manner, as displayed by the cast members in Chapter 5, were made for creative or financial reasons; if creative, it would be regarded as an internal factor, whereas financial issues would be regarded as an external factor. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the possibility that internal factors may have had greater implications for both translator and adaptor agency, as well as collaborative practices, more generally, in staging Bulgakov's work than external factors. It is unsurprising that interactions between agents in the theatre of translation are complex and multi-faceted, given the number of elements and steps involved in staging a Russophone ST in an Anglophone context, especially taking into consideration the performance aspect.

However, it is surprising that interactions and multi-roling have uncovered the potential significance of the internal factor of creativity as a conscious factor. In this context, the adaptor specifically decides to multi-role in order to exercise their ability to affect decision-making processes across all performative steps. This discovery was primarily uncovered through the use of performative steps, breaking down the process into three clear steps. Thus, this has facilitated the clearer conceptualisation of translator agency called for

by Munday and Blakesley (2016) and Kaindl (2021). The significance of this novel tool is explored further in the context of the second research question.

In response to the second question, of how translators construct and reconstruct their identities over time and, thereby, their agency in this continuous process, the novel theoretical framework of performative steps and a reconceptualization of the theatre of translation were implemented. The framing of this research question presupposed that translators are empowered to shape their own identity and the findings of the analysis of performative steps and the theatre of translation confirmed this supposition. Drawing attention to the evidence gathered from the analyses of roles in performative steps, all of the translators/adaptors studied across Chapters 3-5 played roles which overlapped, not just between performative steps, but also with each other. From this evidence, it can be inferred that a great deal of reconstruction of self-identity among the individuals examined took place across the course of these performative steps, to prioritise different goals at different stages.

One role which was consistent in all cases was that of collaborator, i.e., in collaboration with Bulgakov as the ST author. Across all case studies, this indirect collaboration, either through intellectual engagement with Bulgakov's ST or a translated TT, occurred during the second performative step of writing, with the exception of Eugene Lyons, who was able to collaborate directly with Bulgakov during the first performative step of pitching, albeit mediated through his Russophone colleague, Zhukhovitskij. This means that, as it inevitably crossed over with each translator's/adaptor's role across that second performative step, meaning that multi-roling is an inherent practice among translators and adaptors. This has significant implications for the subsequent construction of each translator's/adaptor's identity during the second performative step as their identity as a collaborator is a building block upon which their other identities are constructed and by which these other identities are mediated. Again, this reinforces the notion that roles are fluid and, therefore, as an entity attributed to the status of certain roles, so too, is agency.

On the topic of fluid identities arising from the individual roles charted across performative steps, although the lack of perceptible boundaries between roles complicates the issues of identity, visibility, and agency, it also invites us to transform how we view the roles played by Bulgakov translators

and adaptors; the case studies have revealed how these figures capitalise on their ability to influence decisions and/or creative practices in one capacity to reinforce their status and, thereby, agency as translators/adaptors in theatre. For instance, Edward Kemp drew upon his position as in-house dramaturg at the CFT to influence ST selection, leading to his eventual role as adaptor in the 2004 production of *The Master and Margarita* (see Section 5.3.3). Similarly, prior to his translation of *Belaja gvardija*, Eugene Lyons was well-known as a writer for a prestigious news agency, working in the USSR (see Section 4.2.1). Thus, it is unsurprising that he was able to exploit his connections and status afforded by his work as a writer to negotiate directly with both Bulgakov and the Soviet government, resulting in his being the only American to have secured the rights to translate and dramatize the play in the US.

Overall, the research findings imply that, in the context of both genres explored, it is not accurate to refer to the role played by translators and adaptors in theatre, but, rather, the performance of multiple roles in the theatre of translation; they are engaged in the continuous, performative task of (re)constructing their role to adapt to the needs of each task. Consequently, this research has demonstrated how all of the Bulgakov translators/adaptors studied reconstructed their identities over the course of their respective productions by embodying multiple roles in their overall performances. This finding supports current trends in discussions of identity construction in Translation Studies, which regard identities as a ‘relational entity’ (cf. Fenoulhet, 2020). In other words, identities are “fragmented and fluid, [...] respond[ing] to a combination of labels, which are organised and rearranged according to different life circumstances” (Ros i Solé, 2016, p.56). This corresponds to how identities have been presented in this study; they are entities that are reconstructed according to different stages and needs in the theatre production process, as conceptualised through performative steps.

The theatre of translation then functioned as a space in which to locate each role played by translators/adaptors in their overall performance, as identified in the analyses of performative steps; most publicly visible roles which granted translators/adaptors the necessary status to afford them agency to act with intent were located centre stage. In Mike Lion’s case, the theatre company visibly promoted his roles as director and tradaptor in the 2024

production of *The Master and Margarita*, justifying their centre stage positions. Less publicly visible roles that still contributed to the status of the translator/adaptor in the production process, from page to stage, were located in the wings. For example, Helen Rappaport's previous experience as an actress taught her how to craft a performable translation, but this was not her most publicly visible role in the 1982-83 productions of *Molière*. Lastly, roles which remained hidden from public view, either because they involved pitching or securing rights during the first performative step, or because they were implicit (i.e., indirect intellectual collaboration with Bulgakov through his ST or through TTs), were located in the green room. This is a space where collaboration could and demonstrably did take place, though their lack of public visibility meant that these roles were under-recognised and so too was their agency when performing these roles. For instance, Mirra Ginsburg's role as a theatre collaborator was only uncovered through personal correspondence in archives in New York, respectively, and was not publicly visible, but was significant in her overall performance as a Bulgakov translator, rationalising the inclusion of this role in her theatre of translation.

From the perspective of identity construction, this approach made it possible to assign each translator/adaptor an overall identity that more accurately captured the nature of their performances, than the roles for which they had or, as the case may be, not been officially credited. The adaptors examined in Chapter 5 either indicated their chosen identities in surveys (Kemp, Spaul, and Astle) or these identities were determined through their verbatim account of their experiences on social media (Lion). This reinforces the validity of the assigned identities of this cast of adaptors.

As discussed in Section 1.6.1, this model displays a tension between literal visibility to an audience attending a theatrical performance and metaphorical visibility to the wider world. For example, an extra in the theatrical cast may be physically visible to an audience in the auditorium, but may not have any individual recognition in the wider world, thus rendering them metaphorically invisible, while a translator may be invisible to theatregoers, by not being present onstage, but they may be metaphorically visible in programme credits. Thus, the model present in this thesis challenges the traditional binary of visibility versus invisibility in theatre translation, revealing

that literal visibility cannot be equated to metaphorical visibility, and this distinction must be factored in to wider discussions of translator/adaptor visibility in theatre.

Considering the status and, therefore, agency granted to translators/adaptors for each individual role performed across a production, enabled direct comparison between the performances of cast members who translated Bulgakov's original plays and those who adapted his prose for the stage. It also facilitated an investigation of how translators and adaptors constantly rewrite social scripts to reconstruct their identities through repeated behaviours to meet the needs of each performative step in the theatre production process. The results of the performative step analyses revealed that it was not necessarily the role performed across the greatest number of performative steps that equated to the greatest status, visibility and agency of a translator/adaptor. Rather, agency was primarily granted through the construction of identities that were most publicly visible, i.e., the roles which were located centre stage in the theatre of translation.

Finally, in order to address the third question, it is necessary to first reflect both on the more general findings of the data in the survey questionnaire in order to contextualise the specific results of the case study analyses. As it was ascertained in Section 2.3.2, 100% of those surveyed (which included Kemp, Spaul, and Astle, who were studied in Chapter 5) expressed satisfaction with the roles for which they had been credited, most of which were singular, i.e., 'adaptor', 'translator', 'director'. However, when presented with the opportunity to assign themselves a new label (see Appendix Q14), 71% of British translators/adaptors and 100% of all American translators/adaptors expressed that a new hyphenated role (i.e., an overall role consisting of multiple individual identities), better reflected their labour in the production process.

Considering British and American translators/adaptors together, 44% of those surveyed identified a triple role as best reflecting their labour in the context of the overall production. Two of those triple roles identified were *director-tradaptor* and *actor-tradaptor*, both of which incorporated traditional performance roles and both the roles of translator and adaptor. The combination of translator and adaptor as *tradaptor* implies that these figures

did not draw boundaries between these two roles, instead embodying both as part of their overall performance. This has implications for how the role of the translator is understood in a theatrical context, suggesting that these practitioners, instead, view translation and adaptation as existing on a continuum. In this regard, fluid roles reflect dynamic approaches in the practice of theatre translation.

The case studies, meanwhile, resulted in the assignment of a different label for each individual studied, based on a combination of their own perceptions of their labour and evidence gathered surrounding the perceptions of their labour by theatre practitioners. These roles are reflected in Table 3. Comparing the roles for which each translator/adaptor was credited and the new label assigned to them in the theatre of translation, only 30% of individuals were originally credited for multiple roles in their respective productions, while 80% of the new labels assigned consisted of hyphenated roles. The former is unsurprising, given that theatres typically commission an individual to perform within the remit of one or two roles, i.e., performing in the manner consistent with the traditional expectations of those roles. In contrast with the relative rigidity of the theatrical casting of roles, the latter indicates that it was not possible to reduce the overall performance of the majority of translators/adaptors studied to one role in the theatre of translation, with their performance instead being characterised by the embodiment of multiple publicly visible roles.

Name	Credited role(s)	New label	Definition of new label
Michael Glenny	translator	star scholar-translator	A Russian scholar who translates and is well-known for their Russian-to-English translation work
Mirra Ginsburg	translator	star translator	A translator who is well-known for their Russian-to-English translation work
Eugene Lyons	translator	literary scout-translator	A person who is known for seeking out a specific ST and is known for translating that ST
Charlotte Pyke	literal translator	actor-translator	An actor who translates and is also known for translating Russophone STs for the stage
Michael Lessac	director; adaptor	director-adaptor	A person who has adapted a TT and directed that adapted TT for the stage
Helen Rappaport	literal translator	Russian consultant-translator	A Russian language and culture expert who is also known for translating Russophone STs for the stage
Edward Kemp	adaptor	playwright-adaptor	A well-known playwright who is well-known for adapting TTs for the stage
Mike Lion	director; tradapter	director-tradaptor	A person who is known for their involvement in the process of translating an ST , adapting and directing the TT for the stage
Richard Spaul	adaptor	dramaturg-adaptor	A person who is empowered to depart from the TT as a dramaturg and is known for adapting the TT for the stage
Robert Astle	actor; playwright	collaborator	A person known as a theatre practitioner, who embodies multiple collaborative roles with no detectable boundaries across performative steps

Table 3 – New roles assigned to the translators and adaptors studied in the theatre of translation

However, even within the ‘singular’ roles outlined, there is an implicit performance of multiple roles; as demonstrated in the case of Ginsburg (see Section 3.5), individual roles such as negotiator and literary scout which are not publicly visible, contributed to her status as a ‘star translator’. In the same vein, Astle’s singular role of ‘collaborator’ is recognised as the performance of multiple collaborative roles with no clear boundaries, which led to him describing his own role as that of collaborator (see Section 5.4.8).

The performative framework employed in this work took into consideration the fact that collaboration takes places to some extent across all 3 performative steps of the production process, but it is simply not reflected in credits. This provides a potential reason as to why 100% of translators/adaptors surveyed expressed satisfaction with their credited roles, yet 73% of those translators/adaptors embraced the opportunity to reimagine their own roles as hyphenated roles, encompassing multiple individual identities, to better reflect how they perceived their labour in the production process. Those who chose to reimagine their roles in this manner justified their choice of a new overall identity based on their actions across different aspects of the production process. This is in line with Kemp’s explanation that his roles shift between (and even within individual) productions in order to meet the present needs of that particular situation, again reflecting the evidence presented in the analysis of each translator’s/adaptor’s individual roles across the performative steps.

As recent scholarship has noted, “[c]ollaboration in the arts is no longer a conscious choice to make a deliberate artistic statement, but instead a necessity of artistic survival” (Bacharach et al., 2016, i). While this implies that collaboration occurs between multiple agents, it is here understood that collaboration occurs between the multiple identities embodied by translators/adaptors in their overall performance. In other words, for the purpose of ‘artistic survival’, practitioners must now multi-role, in some cases for external reasons, such as financial reasons (as highlighted in Astle’s case), and in other cases for internal reasons such as the desire to maintain creative control over the production process, though this is more difficult to prove.

The dynamic nature of the multiple roles played by translators and adaptors in theatre reflects wider labour trends in Britain and the US, which

are increasingly demanding greater working flexibility. As asserted by the dramaturg Marianne Van Kerkhoven, “[l]abour is shifting from fixed-function labour to task-oriented labour” and, as such, is in a constant state of movement (2015, p.163). This is supported by the assertion that “the translation profession has been characterised by increasingly diverse jobs, roles and tasks” (Massey et al., 2023, p.1). Thus, the assignment of these new roles demonstrates that flexibility is required to more accurately reflect on the dynamic nature of translator/adaptor labour in theatre, as it is manifested in the constant construction and reconstruction of their own identities, to meet the needs of each performative step.

6.2 Contributions to knowledge

This research has contributed to knowledge across multiple disciplines, particularly: Translation Studies, Theatre and Performance Studies, Comparative Literature, Sociology, and Slavonic Studies. The impact of this work across this multiplicity of disciplines will now be outlined, firstly in terms of establishing the role of the translator in Anglophone British and American staged productions of Bulgakov’s work. It will then address the benefits that were found in applying a performative approach to the study of translator agency, based on, in chronological order: the micro-histories of translators/adaptors, their networks of contacts, the charting of their individual roles across the three performative steps (pitching, writing, rehearsal), and the final mapping of their roles in the theatre of translation, resulting in the assignment of a label that better reflects their labour in their overall performance. Such specific benefits include establishing concrete definitions of these new labels (see Table 3) and revealing core aspects of the theatre production process that often remain hidden from public view. The contributions of the comprehensive bibliography of productions compiled in conjunction with this thesis are then addressed.

6.2.1 The role of the translator in Anglophone British and American staged productions of Mikhail Bulgakov's work

In terms of assessing the role of the translator in Anglophone British and American staged productions of Bulgakov's work, this project has made substantial contributions to furthering scholarly understanding of this complex subject, in several key areas. Previous studies have considered the experiences of translators/adaptors in staging Bulgakov's work, such as Steve Nicholson's 1992 reflection on his own experience of 'transdapping' Bulgakov's *Crimson Island*, and more general studies that reference Bulgakov translator/adaptors (see Upton, 2000/2014; Marsh, 2020).

Although these studies were insightful and yielded meaningful conclusions on the experiences of Bulgakov translators/adaptors in theatre, these were limited to a British context, and did not compare experiences across productions. Meanwhile, this work has provided a unique insight into the experiences and practices of individual translators and adaptors working on the staging of Bulgakov's work in Anglophone British and American contexts, across a ninety-year period, which is the first research project of its kind. Many of these experiences and practices have been under-researched and are relatively invisible to scholars, practitioners and the public, compared to the extensive studies that have been conducted on the work of literary prose translators.

The roles assigned to Bulgakov translators and adaptors in this research have also highlighted the need to consider the critical matter of how translators and adaptors want to be visible and to whom. As per Table 3, most of the roles that have been assigned in this thesis are hyphenated (with the exceptions of Ginsburg in Chapter 3 and Astle in Chapter 5), highlighting the need to consider the ways in which these roles both interact and come into conflict with one another, owing to their different agendas. Furthermore, it considers how other powerful agents wish to present the translator/adaptor; for instance, Chapter 4 demonstrated how the NT credited Pyke in the database record but not in promotional material, while the opposite was true of Rappaport's experience at the RSC. Such inconsistencies are a result of

conscious decisions made by theatre institutions and must be noted and form part of the analysis in studies of translator agency in theatre. It has been demonstrated that translators/adaptors who perform multiple roles often experience an internalised conflict as these different roles compete for agency in terms of influencing decision-making processes. Future research must consider the implications of these inherent tensions for questions of agency.

Secondly, this work has drawn upon a variety of sources, from written correspondence to social media resources, including under-explored archival materials, especially German- and Russian-language materials which are only accessible to those with the necessary language skills. Consulting these under-explored resources facilitated an in-depth analysis of the strategies employed by translators and adaptors to construct and reconstruct their own identity, often in their own words. It has also served to compare the difference in strategies implemented over a ninety-year period. Comparisons between two genres have also highlighted the differences in translatorial/adaptorial behaviour between those working on Bulgakov's original plays and those adapting his prose for the stage. This has revealed a conscious decision among twenty-first-century translators and adaptors to transition to the digital sphere as a space for self-promotion, via professional websites and social media platforms (cf. Desjardins, 2017; Freeth, 2024).

The comparative angle of this research has also extended across genres, highlighting the differences in the behaviour of translators/adaptors between those working on Bulgakov's original plays and those adapting his prose for the stage. The most significant finding in this area was how the adaptors examined in Chapter 5 (Kemp, Lion, Spaul, and Astle) were able to exert greater agency by simultaneously embodying different roles, compared to the majority of actors in Chapter 4 (such as Lyons, Pyke, and Rappaport), whose agency was comparatively limited by the behaviours of other agents and prevailing hierarchical structures. The findings of Chapter 3, meanwhile, demonstrated the unique positions of Glenny and Ginsburg, who enjoyed a relatively high status as translators of Bulgakov and, therefore, were in a position to call upon their status as star translators to serve their own purposes. This established Glenny and Ginsburg as arguably the most significant Bulgakov translators of the past century. Consequently, this has allowed critical

reflections on the similarities and differences between translatorial and adaptorial practices over the past century, as well as between the genres of original plays and plays adapted from prose.

Thirdly, while this research initially sought to examine the role of the translator, specifically, it inadvertently revealed that it was necessary to also consider the role of the adaptor, in the same vein; any adaptation of prose for the stage requires a change in intended medium (from a text meant to be read to a text intended to be performed), so any translator involved in staging Bulgakov's prose would, inevitably, also be considered an adaptor. Such a realisation further highlighted the need to consider the intersection between translation and adaptation in the process of staging Bulgakov for Anglophone British and American audiences. This follows scholars such as Kosok (2004) who has dismissed the dominant disciplinary narratives emanating from both Translation Studies and Theatre and Performance Studies that have frequently characterised translation and adaptation as binary opposites.

Additionally, it follows the logic of Brodie and Cole (2017) who demonstrate the intersections between theory and practice, two areas which have also historically been characterised as a dichotomous pair in Translation Studies and theatre scholarship. This has also demonstrated the need for a theoretical approach that considers the implications of the intersection between translation and adaptation on a sliding scale for individual agency in theatre, taking into account matters of both theory and practice.

6.2.2 Reimagining the 'fifth wall': A performative approach to translator agency

The novel approach introduced in this thesis has drawn upon performative theory, particularly Butler's concept of performativity (1988, 1989, 1993, 1996, 2009) and Bermann's performative metaphor of the "theater [sic] of translation" (2014), to remedy the limitations of theories which have been employed to study the complex issue of translator agency in existing scholarship, considering issues of both theory and practice.

Meanwhile, the performative approach developed in this thesis is based on the concepts of performative steps in which translators/adaptors exert

varying degrees of agency across different stages of the performance of production processes and the theatre of translation as the space in which the performance is enacted, through the visible (centre stage), less publicly visible (wings), or not publicly visible (green room) embodiment of multiple roles, including translator, Russian consultant, and theatre collaborator, to name a few examples. This contributed to the reimagination of the 'fifth wall' as a collaborative space, the boundaries of which are fluid, constantly being shaped and reshaped by translators and adaptors as they construct and reconstruct their identities. Thus, as a concept, the reimagined 'fifth wall' was inextricably linked to the issue of identity, which, in turn, has implications for status, as attributed to each individual role, and agency, as the ability to act with intent, which is afforded to a translator/adaptor by this status.

Considering the performance of translation in this manner has enabled a simultaneous consideration of networks of agents and the respective structures which they both shape and are shaped by, in discussions of translator agency. Performative steps, in particular, invite a reimagination of the roles that the translator/adaptor has the possibility to perform at different stages of the creative process, which then constitute their identity, by considering the page to stage process holistically. In turn, this enables discussions on translator agency in theatre to consider the different ways in which translators and adaptors continuously construct and reconstruct their identities performatively and the subsequent impact of these actions on individual agency.

This performative approach has also contributed to existing knowledge by establishing clear definitions of the ill-defined terms *actor* and *agent*, based, in turn, on the establishment of a more concrete definition of the equally contested terms *performance* and *performativity*. In this research on the role of the translator in theatre, *actors* referred to those with the ability to act intentionally, including theatre practitioners. These *actors* could act in the capacity of translator/adaptor, though they choose not to act in this manner, and certainly not on a habitual or repeated (performative) basis. As such, it is not possible for them to construct translatorial/adaptorial identity. Meanwhile, *agent* was understood as the only type of *actor* who not only has the ability to act intentionally as a translator/adaptor, but who *does* act in a way that

constructs translatorial/adaptorial identity through the performance of habitual, repeated actions. Consequently, this has offered a more concrete definition of these terms on which to base future research. In summary, this approach has facilitated a more comprehensive analysis of the complex and multifaceted issue of translator agency in British and American theatres, by reimagining the perceived limitations of existing boundaries to consider alternative scenarios, and could be applied to research in other areas of Translation Studies.

6.2.3 Bibliography of productions

The bibliography of productions presented in this research (Klimas, 2025) builds on the limited bibliographies of British Anglophone staged productions of Bulgakov's work in existing literature; Stuart Young's bibliography only had one entry for Bulgakov, although this is understandable, given that Young's work only covered the first half of the twentieth-century (2013). Meanwhile, Marsh's 2020 bibliography only listed 15 productions of Bulgakov's work between 1972 and 2015, although it has been ascertained that there were actually 86 productions of Bulgakov's work staged in Britain during that period. It must be noted that, to date, no such bibliography has been compiled in the context of American Anglophone productions of Bulgakov's work, so this bibliography addresses a significant gap in existing knowledge.

Some productions and additional insights were only discovered in the process of surveying theatre practitioners. For example, a Seattle-based practitioner drew attention to the 1995 production of *The Shaggy Dog* at the University of Washington, in an adaptation of Michael Glenny's translation by Roger Downey. This resulted in establishing contact with the director of the play, Štěpán Šimek, who provided an annotated working version of the adapted script, a valuable insight which would not otherwise have been accessible in the course of this research. Similarly, Robert Astle revealed that his 'collaboration' on *Heart of a Dog* had transferred from the Edinburgh Fringe Festival to not only London, as the records show, but also to two university theatres in Pennsylvania, which had not been referenced elsewhere. Therefore, the data gathered from surveys was crucial in developing this

bibliography and furthering scholarly understanding of translator/adaptor agency in student productions of Bulgakov's work.

By expanding the range of productions to include the previously neglected categories of student and amateur theatre, as well as productions staged in regional locations, this bibliography provides a more comprehensive view of the geographical reach and influence of Bulgakov's work. It also addresses the London/New York bias present in many existing studies of theatre translation. Additionally, these findings have both allowed this research and could allow future researchers to examine categories of productions that are currently under-researched.

This bibliography also takes into account the different titles attributed to productions based on Bulgakov's work, by including separate categories for the production title and the ST title. For instance, the bibliography shows that the novella *Sobach'e serdtse* has been staged as *Heart of a Dog*, *A Mongrel's Heart*, *Putting on the Dog*, and *The Shaggy Dog*. Meanwhile, productions of the play *Mol'er/Kabala svjatosh* have run under the titles of *Molière*, *The League of Hypocrites*, *The Union of Hypocrites*, and *Molière in Spite of Himself*. Therefore, in providing separate categories that allow users to differentiate between production titles and ST titles, this yields results which have previously been overlooked in scholarship. For example, *The Shaggy Dog* (1995) might not immediately be associated with *Heart of a Dog*, the text on which it is based, as the title of the adaptation departs from the original. Thus, this consideration allows other researchers, students, and practitioners to mitigate the barriers to knowledge presented by the proliferation of diverse titles originating from various adaptations of the ST.

Consequently, the bibliography of productions generated as part of this research has served to resolve the lacunae and issues identified above, by considering previously overlooked categories and locations, and drawing upon evidence provided in surveys to gain insights which were absent from archival and database records. This has resulted in what is the most comprehensive bibliography of Anglophone British and American staged productions of Bulgakov's work to date, and covers the longest period of any existing studies, spanning ninety years (compared to Young's study, which covers 1900-1945 and that of Marsh, from 1945-2015, as noted in the opening paragraph).

The findings of this bibliography and its comparative qualities are relevant to scholars, students, and practitioners; for Translation Studies, it may allow for a comparison of the terminology used to describe translators/adaptors across time and space or to identify and compare the experiences of other individuals listed; in Theatre and Performance Studies, it emphasises the involvement of translators in productions by naming them, which may contribute to the wider recognition, of translator involvement in the creative process; in Comparative Literature, meanwhile, the bibliography may enable scholars to consider the significance of Bulgakov's prose outside of the realms of literature, in two Anglophone cultures which are shaped by different norms and expectations; finally, in Slavonic Studies, it may support the teaching of staged productions of Bulgakov on Russophone Theatre modules, or in contextualising Bulgakov's significance in Russophone cultural studies, with his role as a playwright often marginalised compared to the role of author for which he is most well-known. Therefore, there are many possible uses for this bibliography of productions across multiple disciplines.

6.3 Limitations of the project and directions for future research

Since the research design is based on a case study approach and thus considers the personal experiences shaping the agency of individual Bulgakov translators/adaptors, it cannot offer universal conclusions to the complex subject of translator agency in theatre. However, this is a widely recognised (and accepted) limitation of this type of research and does not diminish the value of case study analysis (Saldanha and O'Brien, 2014, p.209) for future research projects; from a comparative aspect, such an approach that considers multiple case studies with clear demarcations of temporal and spatial boundaries (2014, p.212) offers a means of analysis for patterns of behaviour and, therefore, a performative approach to agency. It may be the case that similar patterns of behaviour can be observed in translators/adaptors working with different language pairs or from STs by a different author-playwright, as a result of applying this approach in new contexts. Alternatively,

it may suggest that a translator/adaptor has adopted a unique approach, which would be an equally meaningful finding in studies of translator agency.

Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, it has not been possible to access Russian archival materials concerning the transfer of Bulgakov's work across borders. Future research may yield results from holdings in archives in other countries; German archives may prove useful as many of Bulgakov's works found their way to the West in their transfer from East to West Germany during the Soviet period. Research may also extend to Italian archives; correspondence between Ginsburg and Proffer revealed that the Italian publishing house Einaudi purchased the redacted passages from the published Soviet version of *Master i Margarita* from the *Novosti* agency (Ginsburg, 1973). Ginsburg's letter also revealed that Einaudi later sold those rights to Harper & Row in the 1960s. Therefore, there could be significant archival material relevant to studies on the role of the Bulgakov translator held in both Germany and Italy, and, potentially, even further afield.

It is also the case that the rise of the internet and social media in the twenty-first century have become prominent areas of research in studies of translator agency over the coming years; this research has demonstrated how social media is a platform that affords translators and adaptors greater public visibility, in terms of attracting followers and public engagement through the use of targeted hashtags and the comment function. It could be particularly fruitful to examine the impact of these factors both on translator visibility and agency among public, non-specialist audiences. This builds upon existing work in this area by scholars such as Freeth (2024), who has highlighted how the archive is shifting to exist in a digital space. Indeed, this thesis has revealed a change in the pitching practices of translators in the new, digital age as translators no longer write letters to propose projects, but instead can send emails and make themselves visible on social media, if they so wish. Again, this relates to the issue of how translators *want* to be visible, which is likely to become a key consideration in future discussions of translator agency, amidst a growing tendency among translators of maintaining a digital presence.

For an alternative perspective, it may also be useful to consider the experiences of translators/adaptors in staging Anglophone productions of more contemporary Russophone playwrights. This could include playwrights

from under-represented, marginalised communities, such as the female author-playwright Ljudmila Petrushevskaja and LGBTQ+ playwright Valerij Pechejkin. The implications of translating works by these writers for Anglophone stages could be particularly interesting in discussions of translator agency, considering the backdrop of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the subsequent decline in Western relations with Russia. Specifically, this may yield new insights into translator activism in the context of modern states which employ state censorship and in a postcolonial context, which is garnering further recognition in Translation Studies (cf. Wang, 2022; Galvin, 2023). The concept of 'activist' as another role in the theatre of translation is not explored here. However, it could be relevant to other branches of Translator Studies, such as Interpreter Studies and Literary Translator Studies.

In this context, it would also be meaningful to monitor the number of Anglophone staged productions of works by Russophone authors and playwrights that continue to be staged, or, indeed, are not staged. Perhaps some patterns may emerge in relation to staged Bulgakov productions of the last ninety years, but only time will tell. This will aid in furthering scholarly understanding of the landscape of translated Russophone theatre in Britain and the US. Ultimately, this research has expanded the scope of Russophone theatre scholarship beyond the typical Chekhovian focus to draw scholarly attention to the comparatively under-recognised figures of Bulgakov, his translators and adaptors. It has done so by providing a valuable insight into and recognition of the degree of agency experienced by translators and adaptors in staging Bulgakov's work in Britain and the US.

Consequently, by extending this research design to the study of other author-playwrights, researchers can continue to reconsider not the role, but rather, the *performance* of multiple roles by translators/adaptors as they demonstrate their agency. Particularly, how this agency is demonstrated by their collaborations, which transform and are transformed by the reimagined 'fifth wall', in a new branch of Translator Studies: Theatre Translator Studies.

Finally, in relation to online campaigns such as #TranslatorsOnTheCover, future research may seek to answer the question of what constitutes the 'cover' in theatre translation. Such research may consider issues such as the effectiveness of the campaign outside of literary translation

and how perceptions of the 'cover' might vary across cultures and theatrical traditions, particularly since the rise of the digital era. Therefore, in building upon this study to consider the broader implications of the roles of the translator across different aspects of contemporary culture, further research can contribute to reimagining the role of the translator in theory and practice.

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Appendix. Questions asked in the survey questionnaire ‘The role of the translator in British and American staged productions of Bulgakov’

Q1. Which role/s have you played in theatre? (please select all applicable answers)

- Actor
- Adaptor
- Artistic Director
- Director
- Playwright
- Producer
- Russian Consultant
- Translator
- Other (please specify)

Q2. How would you describe your level of Russian?

- Native
- Fluent
- Advanced
- Intermediate
- Beginner
- I have no knowledge of Russian (please skip Question 3)

Q3. If you have knowledge of Russian, how did you learn the language? (please select all applicable answers)

- Native speaker
- From a family member
- From a friend
- School
- University degree
- Time spent living in a Russian-speaking country
- Other (please specify)

Q4. Do you have any formal theatrical training? If your answer is yes, please provide details such as where you studied and the programme title

Q5. Which of Bulgakov’s works have you been involved in bringing to the stage (please select all applicable answers)

- *Adam and Eve*
- *Batum*
- *Black Snow/A Theatrical Novel*
- *Diaboliad*
- *Flight*
- *Heart of a Dog*
- *Ivan Vasilyevich*
- *Molière, or A Cabal of Hypocrites*

- *Morphine*
- *Pushkin: The Last Days*
- *The Crimson Island*
- *The Fatal Eggs*
- *The Master and Margarita*
- *The White Guard/Days of the Turbins*
- *Zojka's Apartment*

Q6. When were you involved in staging Bulgakov's work? (please select all applicable answers)

- 1970-1979
- 1980-1989
- 1990-1999
- 2000-2009
- 2010-2019
- 2020-2024

Q7. How were you commissioned to work on the Bulgakov production/s?

- Who contacted you?
- Was there a formal discussion?
- Did you negotiate your own terms or was it done through an agent?
- Are there any specific terms of the agreement that you are able to mention?

Q8. In which country/countries was/were the production/s staged? (please select all applicable answers)

- England
- Scotland
- United States of America
- Wales

Q9. In which town/city was/were the production/s staged? For US-based productions, please provide both the relevant town/city and state

Q10. How would you categorise the production/s? (please select all applicable answers)

- Amateur production
- Drama school
- Festival production
- Professional (non-repertory) theatre production
- Repertory theatre production
- Touring production
- University production
- Other (please specify)

Q11. For the Bulgakov production/s in which you were involved, where were you credited for your work? (please select all applicable answers)

- Newspaper/magazine

- Programme
- Promotional poster
- Published edition of play text
- Theatre website
- I did not receive a formal credit (please skip Questions 12 and 13)
- Other (please specify)

Q12. For which role/s were you credited? (please select all applicable answers)

- Actor
- Adaptor
- Artistic Director
- Director
- Literal Translator
- Playwright
- Russian Consultant
- Other (please specify)

Q13. Do you feel that the role/s for which you were credited adequately represented your overall role in the production?

- Yes
- No

Q14. Which of the following labels best defines your overall role in the context of producing Bulgakov's work for the stage?

*tradaptor refers to someone who is actively involved in both the processes of translation and adaptation

**adactor refers to someone who is actively involved in both the processes of adapting and acting

- Actor
- Actor-tradaptor*
- Actor-translator
- Adactor**
- Adaptor
- Artistic Director
- Artistic Director-tradaptor*
- Director
- Director-adactor**
- Director-adaptor
- Director-tradaptor*
- Director-translator
- Playwright
- Playwright-adactor**
- Playwright-adaptor
- Playwright-tradaptor*
- Russian consultant-translator
- Scholar-translator
- Tradaptor*

- Translator
- Other (please specify)

Q15. Why do you feel that this particular label best defines your overall role in the staging of Bulgakov's work?

Q16. Did your role/s in the production/s of Bulgakov's work differ from your role/s in productions of plays by other Russian-speaking playwrights? If your answer is yes, how did your role/s differ?

Q17. In the production/s of Bulgakov's work in which you have been involved, what was the role of the translator?

- Did they collaborate with the adaptor?
- Did their involvement end once rehearsals began or were they involved in workshops/rehearsals? (please provide as much detail as possible)

Q18. Do you consider the role of the translator to be significant in the context of the production as a whole? Has your view changed since your involvement in staging Bulgakov's work? (please provide as much detail as possible)

Q19. Do you think it is useful for theatre practitioners to collaborate directly with translators? If your answer is yes, what do you think are the benefits of such collaboration?

Q20. Have you noticed a significant change in your role/s or the perception of translated plays in the theatre industry more generally over the years? If your answer is yes, what are these differences?

Q21. Are there any additional comments you would like to make about the role of the translator in theatre or your own personal experience?