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Unity and diversity

edited by
Adriana Şerban
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Opera in Translation

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Opera in Translation: Unity and diversity
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Introduction

Translation and the world of opera

Adriana Şerban and Kelly Kar Yue Chan

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As the curtain rises, as it were, on the Prologue of this volume, the moment of silence before it all begins is filled – for us, the editors – with a sense of awe at the task we set ourselves, and gratitude for the journey of discovery that opera and the wonderful people who write, compose, perform, direct, translate and study it never fail to provide.

"Every high C accurately struck utterly demolishes the theory that we are the irresponsible puppets of fate and chance", wrote W. H. Auden (1951, 10). Auden, who was an opera lover, librettist and translator of libretti, considered opera "the last refuge of the High style", and perhaps the only art "to which a poet with a nostalgia for those times past when poets could write in the grand manner all by themselves can still contribute" (1968, 116). Yet, in the Western world, opera polarises opinion: still considered elitist (because it is expensive and because it often seems artificial or implausible), it attracts enthusiastic devotees who recognise and admire its beauty, complexity, and the extent to which its inexhaustible richness reminds one of the diversity of life itself – including life's (and opera's) ability to create innumerable challenges to face up to. For them, opera is the ultimate art.

Despite opera's reputation for exclusivity, attendance appears to be on the rise in Europe as well as in the US (Desblache 2007, 167; Desblache 2013). Undoubtedly, as Mateo (2007) points out, the introduction of surtitling of live performances has played a major role in making opera sung in its original tongues more accessible to audiences who do not understand the source languages (often Italian, French or German) and are not familiar with the libretti. In China, Japan and Korea, translation has also been able to generate renewed interest in the traditional heritage. Moreover, several Asian operatic forms have traveled in a more accessible way to the West in translation (Yeung 2009). To give an example, *The Peony Pavilion*, to which **Cindy S. B. Ngai** devotes a chapter in this volume, received unprecedented success when it was performed in the UK in 2008. In fact, Mei Lanfang, one of the greatest Peking opera masters in modern history, already had some of his operas

performed in the USSR and the US back in the 1930s, as **Kenny K. K. Ng** reveals (see also Wu 2012 and Tian 2012). Attempts have been made to render Cantonese opera lyrics into performable English, and to translate historical information about the operas themselves and the artists' biographies (Cui 2013). But opera has also travelled the other way round: witness to this are adaptations of plays by Shakespeare into Cantonese opera performances with surtitles (for example, *Treason of the Hero*, adapted from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*; see Wong 2000) and, from an aesthetic point of view, very interesting translations / adaptations of plays by Shakespeare and Beckett into the Japanese operatic forms of Kabuki and Noh, which make the object of discussion in **Yoshiko Takebe**'s chapter.

In a volume which covers aspects of opera translation within the Western world and also in Asia, as well as some of opera's many travels between continents, countries, languages and cultures – and also between genres and media – it is impossible to avoid dealing in some way with the concept itself of 'opera' (and 'theatre', and 'drama'), within a cross-cultural perspective, as several contributors to this volume attempt to do (Yoshiko Takebe, Cindy S. B. Ngai, Kenny K. K. Ng, Özlem Şahin Soy and Merve Şenol). Is Japanese Noh an operatic form in the way in which Antonín Dvořák' *Rusalka* is an opera? The answer is, obviously, no. But, at the same time, both *Rusalka* and Noh or Kabuki are hybrid art forms, involving the fusion, the synthesis, of drama, music, and in some cases dance. In *Operatic China: Staging Chinese Identity across the Pacific*, Lei opted for the term 'opera' to designate Chinese theatre performance but pointed out that the term remains problematic. In any case, in both Eastern and Western opera, language is only one of several signifiers, whose meaning is a function of its relationship with other (types of) signifiers, as Kaindl explains in his landmark 1995 monograph on opera as text type.

Given that libretti can be used for stage performance or for reading, Snell-Hornby (2007) suggests employing the term 'theatre text' to designate texts created (i.e., written, translated) for performance, and 'dramatic text' for texts which are meant to be read (such as Patrick John Corness's translation of the *Rusalka* libretto). This does not mean, of course, that there are no passages between these two, but only that it is of the utmost importance that the function of the translation, or retranslation, is made clear and taken into account at all the stages of the translation process. In other words, one cannot approach sung translation in the same way as libretto translation, or tackle vocal scores, surtitling, subtitling, summaries of the plot in theatre programmes and written translations in CD-inserts (the usual forms of translation associated with the opera genre) as though they did not present very specific challenges. Indeed, the differences between them are considerable, as are the demands on the translators who often find themselves in a position in which, in order to carry out the task successfully, they would ideally

have to be, simultaneously, playwright, poet, musicologist, singer, actor, director, designer – and perhaps a member of the audience as well (Bassnett 2010, 99). It is revealing that many of the contributors to the present volume are academics and at the same time translators and musicians. However, since no single person can master all the areas the ideal opera translator is expected to have expertise in, collaborative translation may possibly be the best solution, as **Gyöngyvér Bozsik** suggests in her exploration of the intertwined nature of music and language in Bartók's *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*. This is especially true when translating for performance.

In her review of Gottfried R. Marschall's (2004) *La traduction des livrets : Aspects théoriques, historiques et pragmatiques*, Gorlée (2006) pointed out that vocal translation was, at that time, an emerging area of the fast-growing discipline of Translation Studies, and that it had not yet achieved consensus in terms of the theoretical framework and terminology to be used. Over a decade later, this still appears to be the case, and one may legitimately wonder whether it is a weakness or, at the very least, a lack of maturity – or a strength, if only in the sense that, when so many disciplines (Translation Studies, Musicology, Theatre Studies, Literary Studies and more) as well as national traditions are at stake, it would perhaps be unrealistic to expect consensus, uniformity, or attempt to impose them in some way. The very range of existing options may be the best proof of the vitality of an expanding field, which is finding its voice(s).

Admittedly, however, if key terms such as 'translation', 'adaptation', 'transposition', or even 'singable' and 'performable', are used differently by members of the opera translation community and of the wider song translation community, there is a danger of confusion leading to misunderstanding. Thus, some of the contributors to this volume envisage translation as a form of linguistic and cultural transfer, which of course is what most Translation Studies scholars tend to do. Others see it as the transposition (not in the sense of Vinay and Darbelnet 1958, where 'transposition' is outlined as a purely grammatical operation) of a genre or of a whole new body of work into a new environment. Obviously, the difference is by no means negligible, and it generates and at the same time reflects approaches which do not overlap but can be regarded as complementary. The concept of 'adaptation' is a thread running through the volume and although, again, there is no uniformity in how it is understood, most of the authors mean by it the process or outcome of transferring, transforming, (re)creating, trans-posing a work of art across – and also within – genres and media (in the sense of Hutcheon 2006), rather than translation which is less than literal in terms of linguistic and cultural transfer. We consider all these uses valid and, indeed, necessary if an encompassing view is to be achieved.

In the West, research in vocal translation goes back several decades and has German roots (see Staiger 1959 and Honolka 1978). Kaindl's *Die Oper als*

Textgestalt (1995) set the trend for contemporary thought in opera translation theory. Subsequently, the field moved forward through publications such as Gorlée's *Song and Significance: Virtues and Vices of Vocal Translation* (2005), Apter and Herman's *Translating for Singing* (2016), Low's *Translating Song: Lyrics and Texts* (2016) and Desblache's *Music and Translation: New Mediations in the Digital Age* (2019). An important development was the creation, in 1997, of the International Association for Word and Music Studies (WMA).

Opera's hybrid nature, in the sense that several semiotic systems (Gorlée 1997) and genres mingle and coexist, was recognised early on. This is one of the threads that run through the volume, emerging in turn as richness and as challenge – see **Karen Wilson-deRoze**'s contribution on Wagner's *Versmelodie* and **Helen Julia Minors**'s chapter on opera and intercultural musicology as modes of translation. In Asia, many operatic forms rely on costumes, colour symbolism, make-up, themes on the stage and the dramatic atmosphere of the theatre (Lei 2006 and 2015). But poetic lyrics are also very important, as is the case in Kabuki and Noh performances (Yoshiko Takebe in this volume; see also Mirrer 2012). And, as **Marta Mateo** explains in her chapter on the translation of multilingual libretti, most modern approaches agree that the functions of the music and of the verbal text in an opera are "far from a clear-cut dichotomy", since "both can perform the aesthetic function traditionally attached to music as well as a communicative one, often included in the realm of words".

In the East, genres such as *Pansori* in Korea, which are traditional manifestations of East Asian culture and aesthetics halfway between opera and the musical, are comparable to Western operettas, a lighter form of entertainment which, nevertheless, is not devoid of social, cultural and even political implications. Taking as a case in point one of the many Turkish translations of Johann Strauss II's *Die Fledermaus*, **Özlem Şahin Soy** and **Merve Şenol** discuss the role of translation in nation building, within the special context of Turkey's Westernisation process in the first few decades of the 20th century. They also raise the question of the audience for operas and operettas, showing that, due its status as a European import, operetta was perhaps seen as more prestigious in Turkey than in Western European countries. Özlem Şahin Soy and Merve Şenol's study also highlights the fact that, if an operetta like *Die Fledermaus* has remained in the repertoire for such a long time, this is due, among other factors, to the successive adaptations which have called it to life again and again, for new audiences, in contexts often very different from that in which the work originated.

Opera translation has been called a "specialised translating task" (Low 2002), an "art" and a "craft" (Burton 2009; Apter and Herman 2016), and even a "peculiar burden" (Apter 1985) making different requirements on translators by comparison with, for instance, literary translation. This is, of course, due to the association

of words and music, though opera libretti themselves frequently have literary, mythological, and even philosophical roots (see Rosmarin 1999, and Scruton 2004 and 2016). The vexed question of fidelity in translation concerns opera as well but, as Desblache (2004) points out, this age-old concept (which is fraught with problems) cannot apply here in the same way as in certain other types of translation. The constraints are not the same, and nor is the margin of freedom the translator may claim – except, perhaps, if that translator is W. H. Auden who, as **Lucile Desblache** reveals in her chapter, rebelled against established traditions (but did not entirely discard them), transgressing both translational rules and public expectations.

Several contributors to this volume demonstrate that research in opera translation has the potential to challenge traditional dichotomies within Translation Studies and invite us to reconceptualise binary notions such as 'source', 'target' and 'directionality'. Indeed, as Virkkunen (2004) pointed out, from a multimodal perspective there isn't one single answer to the question of which is the source text for, say, opera surtitles: some may think it is the libretto, but each unique performance in its singularity is, in fact, a source text in its own right. In an attempt to lay bare assumptions we operate with, **Mª Carmen África Vidal Claramonte** discusses the intersemiotic rewriting, i.e., translation understood in a broad sense of the term, of Bizet's opera *Carmen* into ballet. She argues that *The Car Man* is a paradigm of crossroads which breaks away from linear discourses and binary oppositions, revealing hitherto concealed angles. In his study of adaptation as intersemiotic translation in early Chinese opera film, Kenny K. K. Ng examines the transposition of theatrical performances into cinema, with particular focus on the symbolism of Chinese theatre. The question of converging media forms, of blending and blurring the lines between the media through which performances are presented, is thus a shared concern with Vidal Claramonte's chapter, and is at the core of Yoshiko Takebe's contribution.

Cultural aspects are a constant presence in the volume, and are especially prominent in the chapter authored by Cindy S. B. Ngai and in **Danielle Thien**'s exploration of the role translation has played in depicting Puccini's Madama Butterfly as a cultural Other; Thien also retraces the transposition of Butterfly's tale from short story and play to opera. Through fine-grained analyses of texts, always seen within their various contexts, **Miquel Edo**'s study of intertextuality in opera translation and **Patrick John Corness**'s discussion of the many challenges of translating Jaroslav Kvapil's libretto for the opera *Rusalka* are able to point to some of the limitations of cultural transfer, but also to highlight the role of scholarship and of creativity in opera translation. In his chapter on English translations of Da Ponte and Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, **Pierre Degott** argues that each version tends to adapt the social, cultural and sexual content of the opera to the new audience,

a conclusion which coincides with Özlem Şahin Soy and Merve Şenol's findings about operetta translation in Turkey. The role of political power and ideology in the field of opera translation is explored in this volume in **Klaus Kaindl**'s study of how, in the Third Reich, it was considered necessary to create new translations of the three Mozart-Da Ponte operas, in view of the fact that Mozart, deemed to be a central part of German culture, collaborated with a Jewish librettist and, moreover, the most popular German translation of the libretto in use at the time was the work of conductor Hermann Levi, who was also Jewish.

The last few years have seen the development of media accessibility, whose aim is to raise awareness of the difficulties visually or hearing impaired spectators face, and to offer appropriate solutions. In the case of opera and operetta, strategies include audio introduction, audio description, audio subtitling and, of course, surtitling (Orero 2007; Orero and Matamala 2007; Weaver 2010). Reception studies involving protocols used in cognitive psychology are crucial in this respect, to provide information about how individual members of the (inevitably, heterogeneous) audience process information when attending opera performances, and what can be done to improve the experience. To our regret, this is a topic the present volume does not engage with. But accessibility also concerns audiences who do not have a disability yet need the spectacle to be brought nearer to them (see Desblache 2007 and Mateo 2007), whether the opera happens to be in their own language or not. Thus, Peking opera initiated a project to publish translations in English of one hundred of its classics, which are a landmark of traditional Chinese culture. A subsidiary of Peking opera, Cantonese opera – which started to become popular at the turn of the 20th century especially in Hong Kong – has also been a significant source of Chinese culture, but regrettably lacks a repertoire of reputable translated versions. The field is open for much needed translation and research.

In fact, as Mateo (2014) reveals, opera and languages have a long history together. The production and reception of operas have sometimes been – and remain today – real towers of Babel, stimulating the spectator's "multilingual imagination" (O'Sullivan 2007). From her unique position as a surtitler at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, **Judi Palmer** reminds us that, when surtitles were first introduced, they were meant to make opera accessible to a larger audience. That is why they had to fulfil "the basic requirement of maximum comprehension, minimum distraction". Palmer deplores the fact that, in the intervening years, there has been a considerable increase in the quantity of displayed text; she advocates an approach which involves seeing the surtitles into the wider perspective of the entire performance, and giving a more active role to the spectators. This, she points out, may mean educating them to play that role.

Filmed performances are becoming common today, including in live transmission (as a matter of fact, opera was filmed even before the advent of sound

in moving pictures), and they also need to be translated. This raises complex intermedial issues, since in such cases opera or operetta become cinema (see Kenny K. K. Ng's chapter, and also Citron 2000 and 2010). There is thus an aesthetics of the opera / film encounter to consider, along with the place of the spectator in relation to the (translated) spectacle. Tensions between high art and popular art operate here, and between live and reproduced art forms (see Benjamin [1936] 2010 on the work of art in the age of its technological reproducibility).

We hope to have succeeded, in a small way, in bringing a contribution to the fascinating area of opera translation. At the same time, we are humbled by the recognition of the fact that there is still so much to say, and do. This, of course, is part of the beauty and, to use a word Jonathan Burton is fond of repeating, the joy of opera. There is always another opera, another performance to look forward to, which needs translating or researching, inviting us to abandon previously held assumptions, to admire, learn, and create. This is a fine balancing act, not least between established tradition and innovation, as well as a labour of love, since many of us find themselves drawn to the work much like W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman who, as Desblache explains in her contribution, became passionate opera translators in spite of their preference for listening to opera in the original language.

The Editors

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Open perspectives

Opera and intercultural musicology as modes of translation

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This chapter proposes that both opera and intercultural musicology can be understood as modes of translation, in which these modes are ways of delivering meaning within a multimodal multilayered context, using the media (the art form) within a genre (a style, a way of doing things). With reference to an operatic production of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the Sferisterio Macerata Opera Festival (2013), evidence of an intercultural artistic agenda is explored through reference to primary source interviews with the artistic director, the festival director and the surtitle translator. Translation is a necessary act for the spectator and production team in ensuring diversity and accessibility of opera across cultural borders. This translation process is multimodal. Intercultural musicology seeks to assess the interplay between the different cultural components of artistic works to explore this multimodal artistic translation.

Keywords: interculturality, music, opera, multimodal translation, Shakespeare, Britten, Mendelssohn

1.   Introduction

Music can be appreciated without needing a (lingual) translation. As such, there might be controversy in claiming musical translation as part of translation studies. The concept of musical translation is a growing field (Desblache 2019; Minors 2019, 2016, 2013). It requires an understanding of the context, to inform meaning-making, across sign systems: the intersections between context and message are vital to exploring the translation of diverse musical text. As noted by George Steiner (1975), human understanding and perception, and all forms of artistic interpretation (Minors 2013), can be understood as acts of translation. The interpreter (the audience) is always dynamic and active in producing meaning. To read, listen,

view and understand opera, the audience is participatory in its interpretative role, in formulating their own multimodal translation, to ultimately understand the narrative dramatic-musical-verbal-physical action.

Exploring translation in opera provides an opportunity to re-assess the cultural and artistic transactions that take place between music(s) and text(s) from diverse cultural contexts. In a genre where the traditional translation concepts of interlingual, intralingual and intersemiotic translation are indeed necessary (Jakobson 1960) within both the creative and interpretative dimensions, and where issues of accessibility are prime to much recent legislation (Weaver 2010, online), it is necessary to question how an opera can convey its meaning(s) via the multilayered combination of art forms (music, libretto, staging, gesture), artists (composers, librettists, directors, producers, singers, designers, actors and so on) and texts (score, libretto, programme notes). In other words, how does opera, and this intercultural example, utilise a multi-layered, multimodal translation?

Opera projects its sense via different modes of communication (mode referring to the way of delivering meaning, which is usually logocentric, but here must acknowledge the other non-verbal ways of communicating), which requires a spectator to actively search for cultural symbols, contextual references and significant intercultural adaptations. As surtitle expert Sarah Weaver notes, "the translator plays a fundamental role in the process" (2010, online) of engaging audiences, by translating the libretto (often projected via surtitles) and therefore issuing cultural symbols via a different lingual mode belonging to a different culture. However, I assert that the spectator becomes a translator, also, by virtue of interpreting the operatic plot through the combination of the art forms. This cultural-artistic transaction concerns not only language, but also cultural location and adaptation (the performance context, location and interpretative choices likewise develops further cultural interplays). Nonetheless, the spectator as translator searches the piece for meaning(s), to access the signs and meaning bearing symbols which cross the sensory, cultural and lingual barriers.

From the perspective of translation and multimodal studies the terms established by Jakobson noted earlier now seem like a "narrow compass of terms" (Herman 2003, 285) which do not acknowledge the developments in the multimodal distribution of meaning which is so prevalent in our digital society. These terms refer to language in the sense of verbal and written text, but barely recognise the communicative capacity of music, gesture, image, film, sound, and so on. Though useful, the translation process whereby meaning is exchanged from one source text to a new target text needs to encompass more diverse contexts where diversity is situated within a culture, and not only between cultures. The multimodal work of Gunther Kress is especially relevant to expanding our intercultural perspective. He asserts that "'translations' across modes within a culture are possible

and hugely difficult", but also cautions "that translation across cultures, whether the same mode […] or across different modes are also possible, though always achieved with enormously difficult selection" (Kress 2010, 10). How, therefore, are such translations and selections made in the case study that follows? What choices were made by the artistic director and festival producer? In order to establish what approach was taken and what selections were made and why, I utilise primary source evidence drawn from filmed interviews and rehearsal notes/observations documented by me during the preparation for the premiere performance of *Sogni* (introduced below).

It is clear that terminology must be laid out to avoid confusion between the different disciplines as the same word (such as mode) can refer to very different things within music, translation, cultural and multimodal studies. I use mode to refer to the ways of delivery, which might be through musical, verbal, gestural representations; I use medium to refer to the arrangement, the pastiche, the choices made to bring the work to performance (though this is not a mode, and not the thing being translated, it is fundamental to analysing the performance event); genre refers to the ways of doing, in this case narrative opera and the operatic style; while domain refers to the audio-visual sensory artistic space (such as the aural musical space, and the visual stage space). Translation Studies refer to a 'mode' as a 'type' of translation. Mona Baker defined a mode as part of discourse, the "role language is playing (speech, essay, lecture, instructions) and for its medium of transmission (spoken, written)" (Baker 1992, 16). This is obviously limited to language. To engage with opera and intercultural communication it is necessary to expand these definitions refined above.

Significantly, Kress also noted the importance for communities of practice to refine terms and to take ownership of how they discuss multimodality when he noted that a mode of translation is "a socially shaped and culturally semiotic resource" (2010, 83). Opera is such a resource which utilises the many examples given by Kress, including music, image, gesture, speech, text, and in the context of my case study, moving images, 3D stage objects, stage layout and so on. As such, following Kress's call that "[w]hat a community decides to regard and use as mode *is* mode" (2010, 91), I understand opera as a multi-layered, multimodal, socially and culturally dynamic semiotic mode which delivers meaning (in this case its narrative) through the interaction of domains and media.

From the perspective of musicology, this chapter develops the notion of intercultural musicology (Minors 2016; Cook 2010) as an act of translation. Translation requires further assessment of music (Susam-Sarajeva 2008; Minors 2013; Desblache 2019), but particularly it needs to consider intercultural translation. We live in a world which is increasingly intercultural where local and global communities share diverse cultural attributes which themselves feed the development of

new cultural practices. I write here from a particular perspective, that of musicology, and therefore from an intercultural musicological perspective. The intercultural aspect incorporates not only a diverse range of artistic media and multiple languages, but it acknowledges the plethora of cultural contexts (incorporating the historical, mythological, artistic and geographic, among others). It acknowledges that opera is composed in many cultures as a shared genre (style), using shared domains, and shared artistic media. An intercultural translation seeks to bring different cultures together, to allow them to meet in and through creative practice. The transaction is a process of exchange, of sharing, which may encompass a transaction of cultural symbols, ideas or processes. The practice produces a new work. This new work is the result of the particular mode of translation, that of an intercultural translation. Notable is that the translation does not necessarily seek to express the sense of one culture via another, as an interlingual translation will express the sense of the source text via the target text. This mode of translation concerns itself with "incorporating multiple attributes" (Minors 2016, 417). As such, it is both selective, as Kress cautioned, but it is also refined due to the specific choices made by the artistic collaborators.

The study of cultural interactions across the arts is dependent on the transfer of meaning/sense between and across elements; how such a transfer takes place, and is incorporated into a production, requires assessment. In questioning how opera is able to express meaning across different cultural contexts within an opera, this chapter aims to apply an intercultural musicological perspective of a unique production of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, entitled *Sogni di una note di mezza estate*, in order to explore the practice of an intercultural translation. In exploring the collaborative approach of this new production, *Sogni* [Dreams], staged on 8 August 2013 on the Sferisterio outdoor stage, as part of the international Sferisterio Macerata Opera Festival, this chapter interrogates the directionality of translation in opera. In other words, it seeks to expose how the creative collaborators utilised the source text(s) and particularly their agenda in setting the source text. Specifically, it refers to how the source texts are re-conceptualised via the festival agenda within the new creative collaborative work. What is the "reach of translation" (Albright 2014, 226) within this operatic context, and where that "reach" is intercultural, how is it achieved?

The role translation plays within an interdisciplinary, intercultural genre such as opera, which is performed on an international stage as part of the Sferisterio Macerata Opera Festival (August 2013), is significant to assessing the work that brings together the following intercultural elements. First, selective sections of Shakespeare's original play (1595–1596) (the source text), though sections are set in modernised interlingual Italian translation with references to contemporary concerns such as email and social media. The translation was produced by Daniele

Gabrieli (2014), who worked directly with the source text, in an attempt to avoid obstacles from previous historical Italian translations of the play (Gabrieli 2014, online interview).[1] Second, sections of Felix Mendelssohn's incidental music for Shakespeare's play are used (1826, 1842), with the German sung text re-translated back into English. Third, sections of Benjamin Britten's full-scale opera (1960), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, are placed side-by-side with the other two elements. The English libretto remains. In addition, two further elements are incorporated which enable *Sogni* to assert its intercultural agenda in performance: dynamic surtitles offer translations in English (during spoken Italian passages, notably those spoken by Puck) and Italian (during the English sung libretto). In addition, scene titles and directions are projected centre-stage in English to announce new sections of the play. Moreover, black and white silent video footage of the Athenian lovers, interspersed with inter-titles, details their love interest and summarises Act 1 (which is cut from *Sogni*) during the musical overture. Attention is further drawn to these inter-titles by situating them centre stage (not at the top of the stage as is usual). They become a back-drop to the setting on the large stone wall of the Sferisterio. Furthermore, they are enclosed in a 1920s art deco style frame, signalling their integral role in the production.[2] In a work that fuses the overtures of Mendelssohn and Britten, the visual imagery and textual references enable all elements to speak together, to project the opening plot location, characters and relationships.

Sogni is utilised as a case study because the production expresses, and in fact relies upon, the notion of translation, and specifically of intercultural translation. Interculturality is central to the production's creative concept, the creative process and is produced in performance. Of particular note here, to demonstrate the dialogue between cultural symbols that are not easily aligned, are the scenes concerning the fairies, led by Titania. These scenes depict the balance between magic and nature, a world within which the four Athenian lovers interact, but which is conveyed entirely from the perspective of the fairies. Daniel Albright notes that the "human desire is presented as a parody of itself" (2007, 284). This fairy perspective

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1. Interviews with the festival director, artistic director and translator, were filmed in Macerata during the Sfersiterio Macerata Opera Festival in August 2013, as part of the AHRC funded project "Translating Music" (Desblache and Minors 2013, online). These interviews provide evidence of the creative aims and interpretations of the creative collaborative team. "Translating Music" was a network led by Lucile Desblache, Helen Julia Minors and Elena Di Giovanni. All time code references in the text refer to the start of the quotation. The interviews are available online. They are titled by the name of the artist. All interviews can be found at: http://www.translatingmusic.com/styled-3/styled-13/index.html (last accessed 23 March 2020).

2. Images of the Sferisterio stage and the 1920s art deco inter-title frame can be seen at http://www.translatingmusic.com/styled-3/styled-13/index.html# (last accessed 23 March 2020).

is highly relevant because it offers a perspective which is other to the spectator and which is situated across Occidental culture. The place of the fairy within diverse cultures enables multiple features of the fairy to be utilised within a single production. By placing the fairies in the foreground and pitching Shakespeare's, Mendelssohn's and Britten's interpretations of the fairies side-by-side, the artistic director, Francesco Micheli, asserts a performative analogy between the power relations within the play and the role of multimodal translation across languages, cultures and the arts.[3] There is friction and contrast, but the resulting work speaks across all perspectives as a combination, namely what I refer to as an intercultural production.

2.   *Sogni* as intercultural practice

Opera's malleability and rejuvenation with new versions of classical and romantic operas produced regularly, alongside its existence both as a live on stage performance and as a mediatised broadcast event, as well as fusion of the two in a single production, ensures opera's "metamorphosis" (Cachopo 2013, 1). João Pedro Cachopo refers to the potential "new skin" which opera can assume through cinematic screening but, considered from an intercultural perspective, opera is open to reinterpretation across historical periods, cultures, and languages, as well as across media. It is this inherent potential for reproduction and reinterpretation that makes it so relevant to a discussion as regards translation studies and intercultural arts research. Albright's recent study, *Panaesthetics*, supports a claim that opera is in fact dependent on translation because the arts are at the same time many and one. This paradox is akin to the acceptance that many elements, from diverse cultures, exist side by side in a single resultant work, as is suggested by an intercultural musicology. Albright asserts that "an artwork is an artwork precisely because it is especially susceptible to translation into an alien medium" (2014, 215). I assert that it is not only susceptible to an intercultural translation, but that such interplay between cultures is necessary for opera's longevity and international appeal. From its beginnings, opera has required its audiences to engage with stories that were concerned with cross-cultural ideas, personas, myths and traditions. Opera is both "strongly multimedial" and "intermedial" as "it is conceived not solely as its music

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3. Primary source examples are drawn from copious rehearsal notes that I took during July-August 2013: I sketched stage plans, noted the director's many requests of the performers during rehearsals, annotated the musical score with performance interpretations and I documented the many conversations I had during this process. These are referred to in the text by reference to rehearsal notes and the date of the relevant rehearsal.

or its text or its decor, but rather as some virtual entity brought into being super-position of these three [or more] components" (Albright 2014, 209). Reassessing the interculturality of opera not only positively promotes the genre's core charac-teristics, but also is able to be mobilised to defend opera against negative criticism regarding its perceived elitism or Western domination. Opera as intercultural practice is open to all cultures: it is a vehicle for bringing together artists and ideas onto the same platform.

In the instance of *Sogni*, the creative production team, as well as the spectators, must translate the intertextual features of the combined works within this pastiche, in order to re-animate the source text (namely Shakespeare) within a contempo-rary international festival. Kress (2010) noted that in an intercultural translation there would be great selectivity: what choices and selections do the artistic team make? This re-animation creates the "new skin" referred to by Cachopo (2013): it is the skin given to it by the collaborators, produced through their multi-layered multimodal translation. The international reach of the festival encompasses both a diverse audience and also a diverse range of works, both drawn from within and beyond Italy. The international reach of the festival seeks to present shared political and cultural issues of current contemporary society. As Gabrieli (*Sogni* translator and surtitle author) notes, in translating the musical texts for *Sogni*, his aim was to "tak[e] something foreign and mak[e] it familiar" (online, 2 minutes, 48 seconds). The language, the symbols or the mythological content may indeed be foreign, but ensuring that a spectator can recognise human concerns through the issues represented in the drama is imperative. The spectators respond to the operatic performance, forming their own understanding of it. The reach of trans-lation in this sense is to have an impact on the imagination and emotive response of the spectators.[4]

It is relevant to consider the aims established by the artistic director of *Sogni*, Micheli, to establish how his artistic decisions refer to and utilise intercultural in-terplay. In exploring the ways in which the festival has an international reach, the director Francesco Micheli, and festival director Luciano Messi, iterate the im-portance of breaking down perceived cultural barriers. In so doing, they both ex-press that the idea of universality within opera is not only possible, but that the act of interpreting a plot is in fact the universal appeal. As such, dramatic depth and interest are offered by an intercultural work that is based upon 'universal' themes of love and magic. Their use of the word 'universal' does not mean that all cultures bear the same content, but rather highlights that the human condition is a shared attribute.

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4. Elsewhere I have explored the role of the spectator within the performance of *Sogni*, with reference to the concept of reciprocity; see Minors (2016).

The creative strategy concerning *Sogni* is telling of the significance of translation, but moreover, that an intercultural mode of translation can reach beyond local, regional and national audiences by ensuring the direction of translation breaks through limiting cultural barriers. To go beyond such limitation, interplay between cultural differences and acceptance that those differences are productive, creative sources, are necessary opportunities for learning, and for opening acceptance and understanding. Micheli acknowledges that there has been a European "fear" regarding what influences might enter European culture: "I feel a heavy atmosphere in Europe […] we are so afraid about […] what can arrive in Europe from other countries and other cultures" (online, 1 minute, 53 seconds). He stresses that opera can respond to the current socio-cultural unrest, and asserts urgency "to feel the power of Occidental culture, to be more open" (online, 2 minutes, 20 seconds). Significantly, there is no claim that Western opera, or Italian opera, has a higher value than opera from other areas. Rather, Micheli recognises that, to develop an intercultural interplay, we must first accept our own cultural frames of reference, our own qualities. His rhetoric is positive and assertive, again avoiding perspectives that opera is elitist or Western. His, and by extension the opera festival's, accessible agenda is aligned with political and educational policies to ensure access to art for all (see Weaver 2010).

For intercultural musicology to act as a mode of translation, for it to assess intercultural-artistic interactions, it must look beyond what Micheli identifies as "walls and diversions" (online, 2 minutes, 30 seconds). In theming the festival, within which *Sogni* was produced, around "walls and divisions", he faces the problem of intersemiotic and multimodal translation as well as intercultural interplay head on. In avoiding limitations imposed by political or societal quarters, he seeks to form "combination[s]" from which something "new" (online, 13 minutes, 4 seconds) results. His definition of the opera festival's aims and of his rationale for creating a pastiche opera are aligned: a combination formed from difference can produce something new which expresses the original story in accessible ways. Using a metaphor, "to break the opera wall" (online, 4 minutes, 36 seconds), Micheli invites spectators and creative artists alike to look beyond their own cultural context, in order to reassess and reinterpret Shakespeare, in order to bring *A Midsummer Night's Dream* onto an international 21st-century opera stage. The resulting pluralistic work is identified in the modified plural title: *Sogni* ['Dreams'].

There is a socio-political dimension to discussions of intercultural arts research and to an intercultural musicology in particular. In seeking to engage with "new generations" (Micheli online, 7.20), the translations of the source texts need to iterate the cultural symbols in ways that do not reinforce prejudices or support cultural barriers. Ultimately, an intercultural musicology, and the production of *Sogni*, both seek "to break the contemporary walls that we have in cultural life"

(online, 1 minute, 6 seconds). An intercultural communication through artistic means is sought – such communication relies on a process of multimodal and intercultural translation.

The directionality of translation is diverse, especially within the present example. For Micheli's laudable, democratic and diverse approach to be successful, in particular, for the opera to be "for all people" (online, 19 minutes, 15 seconds) and accessible to anyone, it is necessary to consider how such a hybrid work – which encompasses old and new, national and international content, different places, reference to myth and current concerns such as social media – is able to reach across such expansive terrain without restrictive barriers. Or put another way, what is the reach of translation in the director's aims for *Sogni* and how does this reach support intercultural musicology (and intercultural translation) as a mode of translation?

As Pamela Burnard et al. demonstrate in a recent reassessment of the meanings and importance of intercultural arts research, an assessment of interculturality comes from a "desire to raise awareness, foster intercultural dialogue and facilitate understanding across and between cultures" (2016, 2). The aim is ultimately to understand and be aware of different cultures. As such, one reach of translation within *Sogni* is to reach out beyond those who are already aware of Shakespeare's play, Mendelssohn's music and / or Britten's music. Those from inside the cultural realm of the artistic product may understand it; those outside that context may need to work harder to decode the references and symbols. In choosing to "break the opera wall" (2013) Micheli is seeking to remove the transience between the insider and outsider. In effect, he is trying to ensure that all spectators, from all contexts, are able to access and experience the work, without perceived barriers. As such the process of translation does not segregate the source and target text but rather brings them together. Moreover, he is seeking to better inform, and perhaps educate, his audience. Wider understanding may yield acceptance and learning. Ultimately, the interplay of arts, eras and cultures created within *Sogni* is an allegory of Micheli's aspirations for society at large, and opera in particular.

As Figure 1 illustrates, translation operates on many levels within *Sogni*. The work is defined by a complex layering of relationships and transactions: beginning with the source text (Shakespeare's play), encompassing the exchange between media (within the different musical versions of the play), as well as between the different cultural contexts, across different historical periods, and of course across lingual borders. In charting out the field of relational musicology, Nicholas Cook proposes that texts should be understood "in terms of a network of interactions between multiple 'texts' and the meanings that are generated through those interactions" (Cook 2010, 1). This chapter responds to this call for a new relational musicology by considering an intercultural dimension to such interactions. The relational, in these contexts, must go beyond language: as Jakobson highlighted, "the

Figure 1. The directionality of translation in *Sogni*

question of relations between the word and the world concerns not only verbal art but actually all kinds of discourse" (1971, 351). The relational detail in *Sogni* refers to the dialogue between creative artists: that dialogue responds to Shakespeare's play, but imposes new interpretations and develops new successive works which belong to their own cultural context. The betweenness of these layers is the location of such a dialogue, an exchange of symbols and ideas, which are then modified. Such betweenness is a positive opportunity to develop understanding. It need not form a barrier to accessing opera. As Georgina Born notes, in her critical case for a relational musicology, musics have always been "defined by their differences" (Born 2010, 222).

There is interlingual, intralingual and intersemiotic translation at play during the creative process and during performance within *Sogni*. When we consider the range of intercultural attributes, additionally, there is an act of intercultural translation that is necessary to the nature of this pastiche opera. After Pierre Bourdieu, the diagram illustrates the intensive probing which occurs regarding the relational aspects at every level (relations and exchanges are illustrated with two-way arrows), or, to cite Bourdieu, in searching for "consensus in dissensus" (1971, 192), the spectators, performers, creative artists and directors are seeking unity which crosses medial dimensions, language boundaries and cultural boundaries. It is necessary perhaps to remember that music is not a universal language, or at least a language at all in terms of semantic sense. We "do not speak music" as our first tongue (Nietzsche in Abbate 1996, 15). If "*Music Speaks*" (Albright, 2009), then it speaks through relations and within contexts. Music is interdependent with its contexts (cultural, performance, and so on). Speaking about music and music

responding to a text both necessitate an act of translation across modal bound-aries. As Albright cautions, "something is desperately wrong about the attempt to understand music as language" (Albright 2009, 12). Not only is the content of what is iterated (via words or sounds) of relevance here, but also the process by which the message is conveyed across media. Music might share comparisons to language and to visual art, but what is required within the translation of musical texts is an understanding of contexts: the creative context of the source text; the context of the production of the work and the festival's strategic aims; the context of any and all creative musical re-interpretations, adaptations and responses to the source text. The context (the outer box in Figure 1) thus encompasses the cultural context, the historical period, the socio-political context and the medial-artistic context. At every level, there are differences and locations between those differ-ences (as illustrated in Figure 1 with the dotted lines).

The position of the researcher (or the spectator, or artist) is significant. As a musicologist exploring the notion of intercultural translation within an intercul-tural context, I seek to establish how the content of Shakespeare's play (as source text, presented at the bottom of Figure 1, akin to a stem holding a flower), and specifically the role and character of the fairies in the following example, is ex-pressed through musical means, and how those means change and adapt accord-ing to successive re-interpretations, new productions and revivals – in particular in response to Micheli's aims for this pastiche opera. To understand the work, Micheli demonstrates awareness that personal positioning of the spectators will impact upon their willingness to engage in dialogue with the work that requires them to act as translators, through their active mapping (within their imagination) of the various elements (listen to Micheli online, from 8 minutes, 55 seconds).

More than four hundred years after Shakespeare's death (1616), it seems per-tinent to explore how Shakespeare's fairy play has been reinterpreted according to contemporary concerns. Micheli considers that, "if we use opera to put meaning in contemporary media, the friendship is very rich" (online, 9 minutes, 15 seconds). He suggests here that the medium of opera is able to interact with current methods of intercultural communication, that opera can embed new forms of communica-tion for wider benefit, not least to inform education, outreach and accessibility of opera to wider audiences. Opera is positioned within the interviews, conducted as part of the network project "Translating Music" (Desblache and Minors 2013, online), as a creative vehicle through which we are invited to "meet our past, our [own] culture" (Micheli online, 20 minutes, 28 seconds) and to reassess and engage with attributes from "other" cultural domains. A dialogue between spaces (cul-tures, art forms, media and historical periods) is set up within the pastiche *Sogni*. Micheli asserts the different perspectives projected within *Sogni*. There is no effort to blend the differences: rather, specific sections are taken from both Mendelssohn

and Britten, pitched side-by-side. The consolidation and segmentation of both enable their particular interpretations to generate "dissensus" (Bourdieu, 1971) and thereby to offer a proposition to the spectator to translate the meanings of the resultant work. In affinity with this idea, Born suggests that analysing such relational features "depends upon a break with the dominant conceptions" of the art forms and the ways in which they are interpreted (2010, 230).

Evidence of an intercultural interplay between the composers Mendelssohn and Britten, and between and with Shakespeare and the production team, including Micheli, is iterated by Micheli's excitement during his interview that these artists are able to "have a conversation" (online, 20 minutes, 55 seconds) across cultural and temporal boundaries. It is telling that he refers to a conversation that ensures that the artists and the works are active, denoting that the pastiche in some ways changes the original. He avoids noting that he has arranged a new work, or formulated a response to the original. It is assumed that aspects of the original remain. The emphasis is very much on revealing the multiple perspectives on the work, by selecting the more "romantic and positive" (Micheli online, 20 minutes, 21 seconds) response of Mendelssohn, especially regarding the fairies, and the "dark side of the moon" (Micheli online, 20 minutes, 33 seconds) in Britten's setting.

3.   *Sogni*: An intercultural production

The fairies in Shakespeare's play are beyond the human world; they are used to create a mysterious perspective on human love. Within art more broadly, fairies exist in various guises within myths, novels and operas. Originating in the 15th century, fairies within English folklore have introduced much tension and mystery into literature and plays. The representation of fairies in literature developed over time and fairies reduced in size (from adult size to creatures as small as little flowers), their magical potential expanded in contradiction to their size reduction, and despite a growth in potential magical power, their original threatening characteristics were diluted (Wood 2014, 229–233). As Micheli (see above) notes, Mendelssohn's 19th-century approach to the fairies is one of a human sized, less powerful creature that is able to manipulate humans. Magic is the source of the plot, rather than the menacing being. Britten shows us, however, a much darker context. There, contrasting settings are pitched side-by-side within *Sogni* to generate "dissensus" and produce new meanings. Table 1 illustrates the location of the fairies and their musical settings within this operatic version.

Table 1. Fairies and their musical setting within *Sogni*

Scene number (there are a total of twelve scenes in *Sogni*)	Musical setting: composer, musical section
2. Overture part 2	Britten, Overture (up to Figure 6)
3. Over Hill and Dale March of the Fairies	Mendelssohn, No. 2, L'istesso
5. Lullaby (Titania) and 5a. Spell 1	Mendelssohn, No. 3, Lied mit chor (fairy choir), No. 4, Andante bars 1–9
6a. Spell 2	Mendelssohn, No. 4, Andante bars 11–20
7. The Woosel Cock	Britten, Figures 30–56
8. Captain of the Fairy Band	Britten, Figures 56–87
9. Up and Down	Britten, Figures 91-end

It is notable that the fairies within Shakespeare's play are associated with dance and music: those possessing magic sing and dance. For example, Bottom, while under Titania's spell, sings within the original play. The fairy band dances and refers also to song and musical instruments. Albright refers to fairies in Shakespeare's musical setting as "devilish spirits" (2007, 195) who are a "menace" (Albright 2007, 196) to the other characters. Significantly, Albright reminds us that the word 'fairy' comes from the Latin for 'fate' (*fatum*), which is an extension of the Latin word *fari*, meaning 'to speak'. Here rests an analogy to the notion of intercultural translation crossing all borders: fairies have "the power that ordains the outcome of events through speech" (Albright 2007, 196). The form of that speech, that communication, need not be words, but can be through music, in this instance through their compositional settings. With reference to Britten's *Six Metamorphoses after Ovid*, Albright makes an assertion that is worth citing here, as it is pertinent to the ways in which *Sogni* utilises the fairies in different settings. Albright places the emotional content of music in the foreground, over the words: "music seems to be nothing more than speech grown so excited that only the excitement is intelligible, not the words" (Albright 2009, 8). Music is representative of the emotional, inner response to the scene. The need to sing, and move beyond speech here is further confirmation that music is a mode of translation as it is a central way not only in the opera, but in the play, to deliver meaning.

Taking two examples, in order to link the musical setting to Micheli's aims, I explore briefly one musical section from both Mendelssohn and Britten. In showing how music presents the fairy domains, it also reveals that, as Britten viewed the Athenians only through the fairies' perspective, so too does Micheli. *Sogni* sets the fairies and their use of magic in the foreground. With Act 1 cut, the fairies introduce the plot. An allegory of intercultural practice is projected as the different representation of the fairies and the frictions within the pan-European cultural

view of them is thrust into the foreground of this production. Fairies, like the spectators, are at once inside and outside the different realms of the play. Setting the entire opera in the forest places the human characters and, by extension, the spectators, outside their normal context. As such, the "dissensus" within their portrayal is utilised to enable meaning to be produced through contrast.

Micheli chooses Mendelssohn's music for Scene 5, the Lullaby sung by the fairy choir and Titania, and then the first spell. Notably the musical setting illustrates the contrasting potential of Titania's character. After a 6-bar introduction, a perfect cadence closes to be replaced by Titania's speaking voice, calling: "Come, now a roundel, and a fairy song" (Mendelssohn No. 3, bar 7). Her speaking is punctuated by woodwind and string chords which move from the tonic of A major (utilising a punctuated A pedal to ground the passage), and modulates to the dominant E major, after Titania announces "Sing me now asleep" (Mendelssohn No. 3, bars 11–12). The *piano* chords that intersperse her voice are subtle, acting as word painting to her reference to "nightly hoots" of the owl. At first she seems innocent and a fairy in line with those guardian angel figures. It is clear that, as Albright notes, "fairy music can establish itself as a special semantic domain only by contrast with some sort of designate non-fairy music" (Albright 2007, 284). What is the resulting fairy music that Titania called? Fairy 1 sings a syllabic, staccato, conjunct phrase that ascends and sustains the word "queen" (bars 23–25). The text is clearly projected by using speech rhythms. Small ascending fanfare passages call four times for "Hence away", prior to the fairy choir. The contrast between Titania and the first fairy is significant because it shows the diversity of their music and their character traits. Notable is the choir: they sing in unison, emphasising the homorhythmic passage set to speech rhythms. The choir is formed from sopranos and altos: the higher register voice aligned to the smaller fairy character. The Elizabethan roundel dance, called for by Titania, refers to a folk dance that is set in circles. In *Sogni*, the fairy choir was formed of children, pitching the adult Titania's rich operatic soprano voice with rich vibrato against the thinner, lighter, non vibrato texture of the children. Titania's dominance is projected in musical terms, but also via the dance reference in Shakespeare's play and Micheli's direction, where Titania sleeps while the others dance.

(1)   **Musical example:** Scene 7, Britten, Figure 35, bars 1–6. Titania, Peaseblossom and Cobweb.

Whereas Mendelssohn sets the fairy choir in union, Britten emphasises the individuality of each fairy, but moreover sets the irony of Titania's magic-induced love of Bottom. Bottom is requested to sing "very loudly" in a "heavy and rough" fashion (Britten, Figure 30). His angular melody and dishevelled singing grate against his reference to the "lark" and his attempt to imitate the "cuckoo" with descending quaver motives (Britten, Figure 30, bars 18–19). Titania calls to her fairies by singing their names separately in ascending then descending syllabic motives that centre around A (see Musical Example (1)). The use of the A enables Micheli's choice of Mendelssohn and Britten to relate across musical section, formulating a large scale tonal and harmonic basis for the work. The fairies respond by repeating the A, ensuring musical cohesion, identifying the fairy group and Titania as other to Bottom in musical terms. The musical setting, illustrated in reduced score in Musical Example (1), demonstrates unrest. It narrates the altered state of Titania by interjecting a descending triplet scale on the flute, and a trumpet fanfare (sharing the A of the fairies). Woodwinds express the uncertainty of the magic imposed on Titania, while the trumpet seems to speak on behalf of the fairy group. Micheli's setting further demonstrates unrest: the four fairy children stand facing front stage, with right hand raised, waving constantly. During rehearsals, Micheli walked the singers through this passage in great detail (personal rehearsal notes). The children walked around Bottom, forming a cross reference to Mendelssohn's roundel. They were asked to "speed up" (rehearsal notes, 1 August 2013) their waving as they walked around him. Each was pressed to develop a different type of wave. Imposing the sinister quality of the fairies' attention to Bottom, they lean in pinching and poking Bottom. Rehearsals emphasised the link between gestures, words and musical rhythm, each being asked to "speak" together (rehearsal notes, 1 August 2013). This combined speaking was further developed when all the fairies were on stage in a line at different moments in the opera: during the technical rehearsal on the Sferisterio stage, Micheli spent time ensuring the children developed their waving to incorporate "flat hands", "waving" and "wiggling fingers".[5] The hand movement was compared to "mice" that "move in time with the music" (rehearsal notes, 6 August, and dress rehearsal, 7 August 2013).

(2) **Musical example:** Scene 7, Britten, Figure 37, bars 2–5. Titania.

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5. Images of the dress rehearsal can be found at http://www.translatingmusic.com/styled-3/styled-13/index.html#, last accessed 23 March 2020.

It is notable that Shakespeare's rhythms and rhyme are integrated into both composers' scores. Puck sings in rhyme (representing the magical qualities). The Athenians, who are affected by but cannot manipulate magic, sing in iambic pentameter and prose. Bottom, who sings in Scene 7 (and was directed to sing in the play), has a variety of metrical phrases, which change when he is afflicted by magic. Likewise, Titania's meter changes in Scene 7, denoting the magic which Oberon has imposed on her. Her opening response to Bottom is in 4/4 meter demonstrating balance, but as her fairies come to her aid, the excitement referred to by Albright, seems to take over and her pleads for the fairies to care for Bottom is set in 3/4 time, a meter associated with dance (see Musical Example (2)). In C major, the melody is conjunct and uses arpeggios and scalic passages to rest repeatedly on the tonic C. The tonal stability and saccharine sweet phrases seem at odds with her altered state: the friction generated between the many representations of the fairies and their musical setting emphasises something sinister here.

That music can adopt features from beyond itself enables it to project culturally innate characteristics, due to its stylistic, gestural content (Minors 2016). Central to Britten, and therefore to *Sogni*, is Shakespeare's dramatisation of fairies through dance and, consequently, meter. Britten had a recognition that an opera set to Shakespeare would speak beyond British culture (noted by his biographers, including Kildae 2013 and Powell 2013). Britten projects a view of the fairies beyond a British mythological understanding, and rather formulates a pan-European cultural perspective by returning to an older, sinister view of the fairies that his 1960 setting contrasts to the well-known 1911 British view of Tinkerbell (from J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*). Their British, 20th-century quality is removed. In affinity with the sinister quality and ominous use of magic on humans by fairies, a recent biographer interprets Britten's opera as "a dream bordering on a nightmare" (Powell 2013, 358).

Only a partial view of the fairies is given in *Sogni* despite the fact that the whole opera is told from their perspective. There remains mystery. Again, the fairies bear affinity to intercultural musicology, and to what can (and cannot) be translated. At all times, something cannot be seen, understood or transferred to a new domain. Something of the original is always lost in translation or, as Albright remarks, "a residue of the untranslatable is left behind after every act of translation" (2014, 219). *Sogni* utilises this residue to create the mystery surrounding the fairies. Whereas Albright refers to the limitations of translation as a "falsification", I consider this bringing together of elements as a combination which illustrates the dialogue across cultures and so a possible intercultural translation, which is constructed at every level, during creation, performance and reception.[6]

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6. Both Albright (2014, 163 and 2009, 3) and Minors (2013, 1–4) question where music can give translation a sense beyond itself.

4.   Conclusions: Intercultural musicology as a mode of translation

Dynamic participation is required of the audience in interpreting multimodal musical works, especially when the content is intercultural. Moreover, a dynamic exchange is fostered between the multimodal, diverse source texts, notably in *Sogni*. Here, an intersemiotic translation goes beyond a composer setting a text; it requires the transfer of sense beyond words (Minors 2019). Jakobson's categories outlined at the start remain useful in reminding us that translation exists not only within language, but also beyond textual language and within contexts. Moving beyond these categories, however, is essential in a multicultural global society, to acknowledge how expressive art relies on, and uses, "moving meaning" (Kress 2010, 124 and 129). Meaning is not concrete: it is emergent (within context) in the spectator.

In discussing opera as a "cultural vice" (online, 25 minutes, 57 seconds), Micheli confirms that, for the spectator, "[t]here is always something to take, to understand" (online, 27 minutes, 11 seconds). The act of taking something from the opera relies on dynamic participation of the spectator in an act of translation. Messi agrees that opera generates an active dialogue that is intercultural in its combination of various cultural objects and artifacts, art forms, and languages, spanning in this case many centuries. Music can be appreciated "without needing a specific translation. It is a sort of first step that everyone can make to a community that involves all of us" (online, 35 minutes). Although a precise lingual translation is not necessary, the intercultural bringing together of diverse elements demands a particular form of translation. What *Sogni* offers is an invitation to look beyond our own contextual perspective, not least due to the plot delivered through the perspective of the pan-European fairies, and certainly due to the bringing together of diverse elements (illustrated in Figure 1) with Micheli's refined creative aims.

The recognition that translation is necessary across so many layers may seem complex, but the directionality of that translation is precisely what distinguishes opera from other genres. Its reach goes beyond each mode: the modes are interdependent. Its reach also goes beyond media and domains: "Modes consist of bundles of (often deeply diverse) features" (Kress 2010, 1). These multimodal features are central to opera. In fact, Ellen Rosand suggested that "[t]he portrayal of madness [in opera] tests the power of the two languages not only to cohere, but to separate" (1992, 287).

The reference to only two languages within this case study is restrictive, in a work where many 'languages' from many contexts communicate. Nonetheless, the betweenness of the artistic elements is important in forming a critical assessment of how *Sogni* is formulated from a combination of works, which impose their difference in order to produce something new. Bringing diverse elements together in a single production does not require the original to lose its cultural attributes: the

perceived 'separation' of cultural context rather enables the different components to communicate. It is also pertinent that the distinctive qualities are encouraged, to borrow Cook's assessment of how multimedia function, to compete, sometimes "vying for the same terrain" (1998, 103) within the opera (briefly illustrated here by reference to the contrasting settings of the fairies). From the juxtaposition and mapping of difference come new meanings and, ultimately, a new work that speaks proudly as an intercultural product.

What is clear is that intercultural communication and meaning "[are] not intrinsic but a product of relationships" (Cook 2010, 3), relationships which communicate across domain, media and modal boundaries, across historical periods and, significantly, across both lingual and cultural borders. Although such communication is planned during the creative process (as iterated in the interviews with Micheli, Messi and Gabrieli, online), it is only realised during performance when spectators must seek to bring the various media together, to map them in their imagination, and to interpret their emergent meanings as a result of the frictions conveyed between the multiple layers of difference. From a broad field of dissensus, the spectator forms an interpretation of consensus – namely a coherent understanding of plot, music and stage action.

In a centenary biography, Paul Kildae confirms that Britten hoped for "many interpretations [of his works] in many different places and all with translations" (2013, 445). Britten's work stretched across cultures, and *Sogni* propagates this. As Cook invites in his proposition for a relational musicology, music has become "a metonym of social interaction" (2012, 196). In affinity with Micheli's aim to foster communication between the intercultural components of the opera, music is utilised to speak across media, to speak across languages and to speak on behalf of the diverse cultures present in the work. *Sogni* is a pertinent example to iterate the importance and necessity of an intercultural musicology which "embrace[s] the cultural other" (Cook 2012, 204). Attention to intercultural practice benefits widely, as Burnard et al. note, it fosters "improvement in and for education" (2016, 2).

In questioning the reach of translation within this operatic production, I maintain that such an intercultural production is dependent on translation, a translation that necessarily goes beyond Jakobson's categories and adheres to the multimodal cultural semiotic claims made by Kress (2010) while also asserting human understanding as an act of translation, after Steiner (1975). Intercultural musicology – as a mode of translation – and the opera production *Sogni* are both concerned with hybridity. Although there may be an Occidental perspective at large, cultural exchange is diverse, pan-European and pan-historical. In essence, as Figure 1 illustrated, there is a complex matrix of relational components across all elements and contexts.

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Surtitles and the multi-semiotic balance

Can over-information kill opera?

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When surtitles were first introduced, in 1982, they were intended to make opera accessible to a larger audience. They fulfilled the basic requirement of maximum comprehension, minimum distraction. In the intervening years, however, there has been an increase in the quantity of displayed text so that the titles have become distracting and intrusive. In my contribution, I explore the reasons for this and discuss why I believe there is a need to put surtitles into their perspective, within the multi-semiotic balance of lyric theatre performances.

Keywords: surtitles, lyric theatre, semiotic balance, libretto

1.   Introduction: From concise to verbose in thirty years

The curtain opens; a rural scene, on the backcloth there are cornfields and haystacks, the lighting is golden, a hint of the setting sun. The chorus enters, dressed in typical peasant attire; they walk wearily across the stage, carrying baskets and sheaves of corn. They sing. A caption appears: "We are weary peasants returning home after a long day harvesting in the fields." The audience looks, reads: well, that's obvious, isn't it? Yes, but why do they look? Can they not discern between information they need to know and that which is clearly evident?

In 1982, when surtitles were introduced, they were intended to make opera accessible to a larger audience. Though relatively sparse, they did, however, fulfil the requirement for which all surtitlers strove: maximum comprehension, minimum distraction. In the intervening years, however, we have seen an increase in the quantity of displayed text so that the titles have become distracting and intrusive. I shall explore the reasons for this and discuss why I believe there is a need to put surtitles into their perspective within the multi-semiotic balance of lyric theatre performances.

The original surtitle systems were based on slide technology; there could be up to three carousels displaying a pre-determined sequence of slides at the touch of a 'Take' button. This severely restricted the number of captions that could be displayed during an act unless there was a musical interlude or scene change which offered the opportunity to change carousels mid-act. Though impractical in many ways, this system did fulfil certain criteria: to make opera accessible to the audience; to divulge the plot in real-time and to be minimally distracting. At this time, audiences were accustomed to 'doing their homework', by reading the synopsis in advance, so that this preparation, in conjunction with reading the titles, would aid understanding of the libretto. There was, in general, a very positive reaction to the introduction of surtitles; however, there was also a significant number of people who opposed their use. I strongly believe that we should respect the views of those who would prefer to see performances without titles and this is a valid argument for some performances to be given without surtitles. Individual seatback-mounted units have gone some way to allowing patrons to decide whether or not they wish to refer to them. This can also be said of hand-held units, though I believe they are totally impractical in the lyric theatre environment, as Stefano Pace, Technical Director of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, pointed out during a demonstration of these units: "They give out the wrong message: at the commencement of a performance we ask patrons to switch off all mobile devices."

In the intervening years, we have seen a move toward an ever increasing amount of text being displayed on surtitle screens. I believe there are a number of reasons for this.

Once surtitles had been established in the international and larger houses and had become accepted as part of the opera-going experience, there was pressure put on smaller companies to provide a similar service. With restricted budgets and fewer staff, the solution was often to give the task of providing surtitles to an assistant director, to members of the music library or to local teachers from music schools. In an attempt to provide a text as quickly and easily as possible, the nuances and finesse of a well-worked-through and edited surtitle text were unrealistic. In many cases, a libretto translation was simply 'cut and pasted' into titles, thereby producing copious amounts of text which was not always sympathetic to the production and which contradicted other performance elements.

Surtitling work was also given over to subtitlers, some of whom were unable to read music, had no lyric opera experience and who were used to providing far more text at a greater frequency. A surtitle is not a subtitle displayed in a different position, there are many considerations to be taken into account, not least the increase in time required to read a surtitle, whether displayed above the stage or seatback-mounted, as neither comes within the composite stage picture. In addition, a local monitor requires the patron to constantly change focus between the

surtitle display and the action on stage which, in the instance of longer or texturally rich operas, is particularly tiring.

Another significant influence on the quantity of text being displayed was the emergence of computer-based technology which allowed an almost unlimited amount of text to be displayed. Finally, the introduction of intra-lingual titles, where every word needs to be displayed – it would, for example, be impossible to omit any of the Sondheim (1979) *Sweeney Todd* lyrics – accustomed the audience further to seeing and reading long and frequent titles.

Surtitle preparation is often seen as a 'translation exercise', which is certainly not the case and should be regarded more as an interpretation of the text within the context of the production. In 2010, I commissioned Jacqueline Page, a Convener of French at the University of Roehampton and a trained interpreter, to prepare titles for a concert performance of Bizet's *Les Pêcheurs de perles* (1863). My motivation for this was to see how someone from a different translation skill-based background could pare down the text whilst still making the libretto comprehensible. Jacqueline subsequently wrote an article discussing her findings, experiences and approach to the task (see Page 2013), one of very few pieces written specifically about the preparation of surtitles and the process involved from commission to first night, and a valuable reference work.

2. A flexible approach to surtitling with reference to additional semiotic information

In his standard lecture on surtitling (see also Burton, n.d.), Jonathan Burton says he believes that the greatest aim of a surtitler is to be "invisible", and points out that "people have come to see the opera not to read your titles". In my opinion, surtitles must be put into context with all the semiotics of the production and their relevance is ever-changing, fluid and flexible. Taking the example of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (1787), we can explain this hypothesis with two extreme examples: the concert and the fully-staged, representational performance. In the case of the concert, there are two fundamental channels: the words and the music, each of which predominates at certain times – the music as a descriptive device of mood, character, location and action, and the words, particularly during recitative, of the intricacies of the plot.

It is night time in Seville. At the beginning of the action, we see Leporello, Don Giovanni's servant, keeping watch while his master is attempting to seduce yet another victim; he looks around furtively and, as he does so, complains about his life. Suddenly, Don Giovanni rushes from the Palace pursued by Donna Anna who has been horrified at the appearance of a strange man in her bedroom. Her

father, the Commendatore, on hearing her cries also appears in the courtyard and draws his sword to challenge the intruder to a duel. Don Giovanni has no choice but to defend himself and fatally wounds the Commendatore. Donna Anna bends over the lifeless body of her father, some servants appear having been woken by the commotion, and Don Ottavio, Donna Anna's suitor, attempts to comfort her, draws her away from the scene and swears vengeance on the culprit on her behalf. A well-staged performance of this scene, involving the action on stage, scenery, lighting and so on, would render a translation of the words almost unnecessary. However, in the context of a concert, the titles are extremely beneficial, despite the descriptive nature of the music and the fairly conventional use of a baritone for the protagonist, a soprano for the leading lady, tenor for her suitor and bass for an older man, her father. In fact, it could be said that surtitles have a greater role to play in the concert hall than in the theatre.

If we were to take the example of Verdi's *Don Carlo* (1867) – the scene that takes place in the Queen's garden in the production directed by Nicholas Hytner at Covent Garden – the scenario is similar. This is a representational production of the work. During this scene, Don Carlo goes to the garden at midnight: the set is darkly lit, there are trees and shrubs, and a star-lit sky, he is reading from a letter and sings "Midnight in the garden". A veiled woman appears whom he assumes is his beloved Isabella; despite her youth, she is married to his father. The two sing of their love for each other. Finally, the woman reveals herself; it is not Isabella, but Eboli. He recoils in shock and says: "It's not the queen". Interestingly, the audience laughed at this point and the director asked for the title to be omitted; however, the laughter persisted: the audience had understood the situation perfectly without recourse to any surtitles. In fact, this entire scene could be played without titles and the audience would have no difficulty in understanding the action on stage nor lose any information pertaining to the progress of the plot.

However, had this been a conceptual production, the importance of conveying the text would have been greater and the surtitler would have had to eke out the story-line in order for the audience to understand the action on stage. It is in cases such as this, when there is a conflict between staging and text, that the surtitler is required not to 'mis-translate' the libretto, but to 'accommodate' the production in order not to confuse the audience. The practice of updating productions or setting them in different locations imposes particular challenges on the surtitle author; the trend for 'black box' sets, where there were almost no visual clues as to location, period or time of day also proved problematic.

At a pre-model showing presentation of a Wagner opera given by the director and designer, it was clear that the production concepts were in conflict with Wagner's very clear textual and musical indicators; in addition, Wagner's scores are littered with stage directions, making his intentions for the staging very clear

too. I asked how the production concept could be reconciled with the music and text and was informed that it "didn't matter". When I was in turn challenged about my concerns, I replied that it is the role of the surtitler not only to translate the text but to make sense of the other, apparently conflicting information in order to present the audience with a cohesive and comprehensible story line. Apparently disparate production elements are confusing to an audience; wasting time trying to make sense of them is distracting and results in a lack of engagement with the action on stage. If, for example, a performer exits on stage left only to reappear stage right, one is concerned as to how and why this can have occurred.

Of all opera libretti, Wagner's pose the greatest challenges to a surtitle author, many of his words being invented to give flavour and colour to the text. Authors find it challenging to step back from these rich, heavy, poetic texts in order to present a concise narrative, resulting in long verbose titles which fill the screen and, due to the 'through-composed' style of the libretto, continue endlessly with little respite throughout the performance.

3. Audience surtitle reading habits and expectations: The tendency to use language as a first point of reference

Why, then, do we feel compelled to translate that which is unnecessary? Since the initiation of surtitles, surtitlers have literally pre-programmed the audience to look at the screen when the titles appeared: at the beginning of a phrase, the commencement of the vocal line and so on. The audience has developed an intuitive viewing habit, which we as surtitlers need to fulfil; in fact, patrons will continue to glance at the screen until a title does appear, even if the music and text are clearly being repeated from an earlier rendition, as you would find in a *da capo* aria. If the text does not appear, the spectators feel they are being denied information or that the system has broken down, though this is now rare.

As an animal, Man relies on language, either written or spoken, as his primary system of communication to the exclusion of all others. In many cases the music clearly depicts elements of the story line – for example, a storm (Verdi, *Rigoletto*), the imminent arrival of a carriage (Rossini, *La Cenerentola*) the hacking off of St John the Baptist's head (Strauss, *Salome*) – but we frequently use the text to identify these, rather than accessing them from the music.

In his book *So kam der Mensch auf den Hund*, Konrad Lorenz conjectures as to how early man and wolf with common communication strategies of gestures and glances were able to hunt effectively together (1953, 7). And, in *How to Speak Dog*, Stanley Coren describes how the manoeuvres for a military exercise were imparted entirely using the pointing of a finger, nods, glances and hand gestures

(2000, 157). Often, the audience will refer to the written word, in this case the surtitle text, despite being able to interpret the numerous semiotic signals, both audible and visual, in other ways.

I watch two of my dogs in the garden. The younger wants to play, she bows, wags her tail and puckers up her nose; the older dog refuses, stands stiff-legged, turns her face away, half closes her eyes, yawns and draws her tail down. The younger dog persists, with jumps, leaps and facial expressions. Eventually, the older dog concedes and, with a bow, throws herself to the ground, belly-up so the other dog can 'attack' her. They are charming and fascinating, and their antics and vocalizations are entirely comprehensible even though they are in another 'language'. If there were surtitles provided for this 'performance', would I refer to them? I would only be confirming what I already know and would miss the details and intricacies of this spontaneous entertainment. Yet, I have been told by audience members who are fluent in the language of the opera in performance that they still feel compelled to read the titles to 'confirm' that they have correctly understood the text being sung. Why?

As surtitlers, we need to look at our work as part of a larger picture; it is easy to think of surtitling as an art form in itself, to become influenced by the intricacies and beauty of the original text and to attempt to reflect these in our work. Nevertheless, whilst hinting at the flavour of the libretto, it is necessary to stand back and ask ourselves what the audience needs to know and what they can understand from the complementary semiotics of the production. In a BBC masterclass given by Michael Caine on acting in film, he said that, if following the rushes of the film, you were to ask a member of the production team their opinion of what they had seen, they will only comment on their own particular area of expertise, with an apparent blindness toward other elements of the production. Working in isolation without recourse to the diversity of aspects of a production needs to be monitored at all times, and other members of the production staff, particularly assistant and staff directors, are valuable colleagues in giving feedback on incongruities and inconsistencies that occur between text and production concept.

4.   Considering semiotic complements when composing a surtitle script

What, then, are these semiotic complements, and how are they interpreted? Firstly, the surtitle author needs to consider the music which supports and complements the text, creates atmosphere and depicts narrative background. Audiences need to attune themselves to listening for musical clues occurring in conjunction with the text. The most obvious example of this would be the Wagnerian leitmotif, where characters, places and significant items are each identifiable by a musical theme.

Scenery gives a sense of location: country, town, urban, rural, indoor, outdoor, house, castle and so on. The detail of each of these settings conveys further information about the people who live and work there; perhaps their social and financial status and character.

Lighting conveys a sense of atmosphere, a time of day and also of location: a Mediterranean sun is very different to a British one, the shadows give a sense of time of day and of year. The use of follow spots is also important in highlighting characters whose part is predominant at any given time; this is especially useful during ensembles.

Costume also tells us a great deal about a character, and a singer rushing across the stage in a state of half-dress could have been caught in a compromising position, or just be late for an appointment.

Make-up and wigs are also conveyors of character. Although make-up artists now use much subtler techniques than previously, there is still a need for dramatic make-up designs for characters such as Wotan in Wagner's *Der Ring des Niebelungen* (1848–1874) (one eye missing), the fearsome Queen of the Night in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* (1791), or Mephistopheles in Gounod's *Faust* (1859).

Props are also an important indicator of location and character and are often significant to the plot of the opera being mentioned in the text: the ring, Tarnhelm and Notung in Wagner's *Der Ring des Niebelungen*; the flute in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and the handkerchief in Verdi's *Otello* (1887).

Acting and direction are again key to our understanding of the characters and their roles: the way performers walk, move, sit, dance, and their general demeanour tell us not only who they are, but also something of their mood. The Italian baritone Tito Gobbi was said to have studied the characters he played to the extent of trying to understand who and what they were before the slice of their lives which we experience in the opera, and what happened to them afterwards. Operatic acting was, at one time, quite exaggerated and extreme; however, it has to be remembered that singers were performing in very large auditoria and that patrons at the rear of the house would have a very different view of the action on stage to those in the front stalls. More recently operatic acting has, as a result of television and cinema, become far more subtle, which works well on screen but is lost on many members of the audience too far from the stage to see the intricacies of facial expressions. According to Kenneth Chalmers, surtitle coordinator at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, who is responsible for the multi-lingual subtitles for live cinema relay, the theatre audience misses a great deal of the subtle exchanges between characters on stage and that often it is only in working with cinema productions that these come into full effect. Gone are the days when a singer was only required to walk down stage, stand in front of the conductor and 'stand and deliver'. Advances in technology, most notably conductor monitors which are

placed strategically around the auditorium and stage allowing singers to remain constantly in touch with the conductor, and audio fold-back which gives a clear sound relay of the orchestra have made free use of the stage possible. Furthermore, a generation of 'acting singers', led by Tito Gobbi, Maria Callas, and more recently Thomas Allen, Claudio Desderi, Alessandro Corbelli and others, as well as the employment of directors from 'straight theatre' has raised the standard of acting on the lyric stage. Singers now enrolled at the major conservatoires and opera studios receive a much more comprehensive training which includes acting, dancing and fencing – it no longer being acceptable just to be able to sing. Young artists competing for the prestigious title of Cardiff Singer of the World are judged, quite rightly, not only on their prowess as singers, but on their ability to convey to the audience the drama of the role they are performing. At one of the interviews, the commentators even expressed a concern about the singer's physical appearance – would she, they conjectured, be employable as a Mimì, in Puccini's *La Bohème* (1896), or a Violetta in Verdi's *La Traviata* (1853)?

At a master class on acting in opera at the National Opera Studio in London circa 1986, Thomas Allen said that he often took clues as to how a character might stand, move and behave by looking at contemporary paintings and considering their lifestyles, clothes, whether they danced at court and so on. His portrayal of the Count in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786) and of Figaro in Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (1816) would certainly demonstrate this.

With each of these visual elements it is also important to consider interpretation, particularly in the case of the director, conductor, performers on stage and orchestral musicians. Both text and music are often interpreted in subtly different ways from one performance to the next, something that may be determined by audience reaction: in comedy by laughter, and in tragedy and drama by the silence denoting deep concentration. Indeed, audience feedback is one of the most important features of live performance.

As mentioned before, there are certain conventions regarding the various voices which – although not always true – can be in many instances assumed. The soprano is often the heroine of the piece, while the mezzo or alto usually undertakes a secondary role, a mother, older woman, witch, or sometimes a trouser role, like Cherubino in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro.* The exception to this are the Rossini heroines: as the composer wrote for his wife, who was a brilliant mezzo, the technically demanding roles of Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Isabella in *L'Italiana in Algeri* (1813) and Zaida in *Il Turco in Italia* (1814) are all rather more feisty than the average operatic heroine. Tenors are usually younger men, the heroes of the piece, though there are the comic roles too. Baritones and basses are fathers, demons, kings and doctors – comic or otherwise. Dress any of these in a style appropriate to their role and their character becomes obvious.

5. Reducing the quantity of surtitle text to improve audience engagement with the action on stage

How then should we attempt to redress the balance and reduce the amount of text displayed, in order that the audience's attention is focused on the stage and that they become more aware of the host of signs and signals that are being offered them, to enhance and increase their understanding of the opera?

Should surtitle staff evaluate the surtitle density on an opera-to-opera basis? Opera houses have taken to giving 'difficulty' or 'accessibility' ratings to the operas they are presenting during a season: Puccini's *La Bohème*, Verdi's *Rigoletto* (1851) and Bizet's *Carmen* (1875) may be considered 'easy listening', whereas Schönberg's *Ewartung* (1909) and Strauss's *Elektra* (1909) might be more suitable for the seasoned opera goer. Would it perhaps be appropriate to present one set of titles for an adult audience and another for a schools' matinée?

I believe surtitlers need to fulfil audience expectations; if there is a point in the music or text that is intuitively a place where a caption should appear, we have no choice but to display one; it is more distracting for the audience to have nothing and to constantly glance at the screen in expectation than to have a caption in view. However, should we not be developing an audience that is more active in their opera-going experience? If the text and music is repeated, should the same caption appear again? This is a dilemma in *da capo* arias, where the musical form is ABA, the first section being repeated usually with a great deal of vocal dexterity and embellishment. The repeated text is frequently displayed in reduced form to 'remind' the audience of what is being sung. I feel that to constantly relay text during virtuosic passages is unnecessary and 'bad manners', since it is at this point that audience focus should be entirely on the performer.

There are, however, some directors who request titling throughout the performance. It is my opinion that, if the same titles are repeated constantly in ticker-tape fashion, the audience will stop referring to the surtitle display altogether, so that, when the narrative recommences or changes, the surtitle text is ignored. Is it not preferable to title the most important and significant parts of the text, in order that the audience has access to the key points of the opera's plot, without flooding them with superfluous information? In the case of nearly all surtitle display units, wherever they are mounted, the audience is subliminally aware of the appearance or change of the surtitle text and will refer to it accordingly.

6.   Considerations to be taken into account when displaying text

The 'invisibility' we aim for can be achieved in a number of ways, both textually and in the way we present the text on screen:

– Titles should be short, concise, with good grammar and minimal punctuation;
– The fonts should be clear and easily legible, with good inter- and intra-character spacing;
– The use of italics, bold characters, inverted commas, dashes, etc., needs to be consistent depending on what they are to convey;
– Captions should contain the usual combination of upper- and lower-case characters: text using entirely upper-case characters is much harder to read (since we read shapes not letters) and suggests that someone is shouting;
– The use of colour needs to be carefully considered and is not advised, as various colours suggest certain moods;
– The positioning of the text on screen should optimise legibility: for example, in a traditional "U"-shaped opera auditorium, the text is best displayed in two short lines in the centre of the screen, whereas in a concert hall it may be easier for patrons to read a single line of text displayed on the lower edge of the screen;
– Titles must be legible from all areas of the auditorium, and it is more distracting to have small illegible titles than overly large ones. The brightness of the titles also needs to be carefully gauged with the on-stage lighting and, whilst it is advisable to have a brightness level that is sympathetic to the stage picture, audiences would prefer titles to be too bright than to struggle to read titles that are dim. Good brightness levels are hard to achieve, particularly as lighting from the stage can alter surtitle legibility depending on the angle at which the surtitle screen is being viewed by members of the audience. If there is a very bright light focused toward the audience and apparently just behind the surtitle screen, the text will be rendered at best blurred and at worst illegible;
– The surtitler must consider the reading time required, whether patrons are looking upwards at a surtitle screen or down to a seat-mounted unit.

With these points in mind, it is best to deliver a text which is concise, with good grammar and punctuation, which appears at predictable points in the music and is visually well presented. This is particularly important when presenting titles for the longer operas: Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* (1876) (running time: 6 hours; Act 1 is 2 hours 15 minutes long); or the textually dense operas such as Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, with extended recitative passages and approximately 1,500 captions displayed.

7.   Examples of operatic scenes

Taking as an example the opening of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* (1791) and applying the aforementioned observations, we can derive the following. At the beginning of the opera the tabs open and the audience sees Tamino run onto the stage pursued by a serpent / dragon, while he sings:

(1)   *Die Zauberflöte*, Act 1, Scene 1
Zu Hilfe! Zu Hilfe! Sonst bin ich verloren!
Der listigen Schlange zum Opfer erkoren!
Barmherzige Götter! Schon nahet sie sich!
Ach rettet mich, ach schützet mich!

Which I have translated as:

Help me! Help me! Or I am lost!
Condemned to be sacrificed to the cunning serpent!
Merciful Gods! It's getting closer!
Oh save me, protect me!

The scene is set in a wild rocky landscape; it may be dark; it is almost certainly un-worldly; a man (Prince Tamino) appears pursued by a wild serpent-like creature, a beast of fantasy, terrifying, possibly breathing fire, and very imposing. The music is impetuous, urgent, the downbeats are anticipated to give a sense of someone flee-ing frantically, starting, stopping, turning round and then, with a fast descending scale passage, running on. In contrast, the music depicting the serpent is slower, more confident, a creeping, ascending passage that leaves us with no doubt of the beast's intentions.

The singer is a tenor; we may assume that he is a young man and, from his appearance – being well dressed – that he is of noble birth. We may also derive some information about his character and nationality by the colours and fabrics of his clothes.

Tamino's exclamations in his panic are unremarkable, they are precisely those which anyone in his situation would make: "Help! It's getting closer! Save me!" Interestingly, his use of language is that of an educated man, singing "Help! Or I am lost", rather than "Or I'm done for", or "I've had it". As surtitlers, we need to reflect this and contrast Tamino's lines with those of Papageno and Papagena, who are folk characters.

Should we, therefore, title this sequence? The clarity of the action on stage is such that this would seem unnecessary. Surtitle authors provide titles because the audience expects them. We fulfil that expectation and also put the audience at their ease. Let us compare this experience to a car journey prior to an important

meeting. We get into the car fully prepared: phone, laptop, wallet, sat nav; everything we require for the journey. Turn the key in the ignition; nothing; the car is usually totally reliable, so we are unnerved; we try again: nothing. We start to make contingency plans. At the third try the engine springs into life and, whilst we are grateful, we are now nervous of the car's reliability. Let us put this into the context of a surtitle relay: we hear someone sing at the beginning of the opera and immediately refer to the surtitle screen; if there is no title, we are disquieted; is there a fault with the system, are we being denied vital information? When the titles do start, we fear that they are unreliable. In fact, does this question the efficiency of other elements of the surtitle relay: synchrony, quality of translation and so on? How much, then, do surtitle authors really need to caption? This is another dilemma, because the audience expects a comparable amount of translated text to the quantity of sung text. In this instance, it is completely unnecessary, and this is where 'audience education' needs to be brought into play; if there is no title, it is because the information required in order to understand the narrative is being conveyed by alternative and complementary sources.

In some cases, the words being sung may be very similar to those of the audience's vernacular: for example "*Hilfe!*" and "Help!", and later "Triumph", which is identical. Does the audience not expect to understand what is being sung and refer to the surtitle text as a matter of course? The music and supporting action are so clear in both instances.

Tamino falls unconscious to the ground. Three ladies appear (attendants to the Queen of the Night) and slay the creature, while they sing:

(2) *Die Zauberflöte*, Act 1, Scene 1, contd.
Stirb, Ungeheu'r! durch uns're Macht!
Triumph, Triumph, sie ist vollbracht,
die Heldentat! Er ist befreit
durch uns'res Armes Tapferkeit!

Which I have translated as:

Die, monster, by our power!
Triumph! The heroic deed is accomplished
He is saved by our courageous deeds

The music is slower, more powerful, confident and almost military as they sing of slaying the serpent and of their triumph, though it is more gentle when mentioning their heroic deeds. These ladies are well dressed, a costume designer's dream; they come from a fantasy world, and their wigs and make-up tell us they are well-to-do, that they come from a royal court and that they are a force to be reckoned with. The fact that there are three of them tells us that they are minor characters;

they move and work together, though they are not chorus either. We see them slay the serpent, we know that they are responsible and their gestures and body language confirm this. Again, the sung text is unremarkable and hardly requires titles.

However, as we progress, we discover that these ladies have their weaknesses after all and, following the initial drama of the opening sequence, we hear the following:

(3)   *Die Zauberflöte*, Act 1, Scene 1, contd.
     Erste Dame
     Ein holder Jűngling, sanft und schön…

     Zweite Dame
     So schön als ich noch nie geseh'n!

     Dritter Dame
     Ja, ja gewiß, zum Malen schön!

     Which might be translated as:

     First Lady
     A sweet youth, gentle and handsome

     Second Lady
     I've never seen anyone so fair

     Third Lady
     Yes, certainly, as pretty as a picture!

The music changes drastically, it is now romantic, feminine, caressing, and depicts the emotions of the ladies with great clarity. The director would, no doubt, have them bending over the Prince to look at him, and the ladies' body language would make it obvious that they find him attractive. This is a new scenario and, although the action on stage is clear, the change of mood needs some clarification, hence the need to provide titles.

The ladies continue:

(4)   *Die Zauberflöte*, Act 1, Scene 1, contd.
     Alle Drei
     Wűrd' ich mein Herz der Liebe weih'n
     so műßt' es dieser Jűngling sein
     Laßt uns zu uns'rer Fűrstin eilen
     ihr diese Nachricht zu erteilen
     Vielleicht, daß dieser schöne Mann
     die vor'ge Ruh' ihr geben kann

All three
If I were to give my heart away
it would be to this young man
Let's hurry to our Queen
to give her the news
Perhaps this handsome man
can restore her former peace of mind

It is in the next passage that they reveal their true colours!

(5) *Die Zauberflöte*, Act 1, Scene 1, contd.
Erste Dame
So geht und sagt es ihr
ich bleib' indessen hier!

Zweite Dame
Nein, nein, geht ihr nur hin,
ich wache hier für ihn!

Dritte Dame
Nein, nein, das dann nicht sein,
ich schütze ihn allein

Alle Drei
Ich sollte fort? Ei, ei! Wie fein!
Sie wären gern bei ihm allein
Nein, nein, das kann nicht sein!
Was sollte ich darum nicht geben
könn't ich mit diesem Jüngling leben!
Hätt' ich ihn doch so ganz allein!
Doch keine geht; es kann nicht sein!
Am besten ist es nun, ich geh'
Du Jüngling schön und liebevoll,
du trauter Jüngling, lebe wohl!
bis ich dich wiederseh'

Which I have translated as:

First Lady
You go and tell her,
I'll stay here!

Second Lady
No, you go
I'll watch over him!

Third Lady
No, that can't be
I'll protect him on my own!

All Three
Why should I go? That's all very well!
They want to be alone with him
No, that can't be
What wouldn't I give
to live with this youth!
If only I could have him to myself!
Yet neither will leave
Perhaps it would be best if I left
Oh youth, handsome and lovable,
you faithful youth, farewell,
until I see you again

The music supports the text brilliantly: it is petulant and staccato, with rising scale passages depicting the squabbling and arguing going on between the three Ladies. In addition, the action on stage, which is likely to consist of hand and head gestures indicating that each is telling the others to leave, possibly foot stamping and words sung aside, make it clear precisely what is going on. Whilst the text is amusing, human and entertaining, it really adds nothing to the narrative of the opera – which, incidentally, can be said of almost the entire passage quoted. The most important information imparted is that these ladies serve a Queen who is in some state of distress and the "young man" may be able to alleviate this.

The three ladies leave, Tamino regains consciousness and asks "Where am I?"; again, no surprises. We are then introduced to Papageno, an eccentric and key figure to the opera who describes himself in his aria "*Ein Vogelfanger bin ich ja…*"; however, as is typical of arias, there is very little contained within a relatively long musical passage.

It is when we reach the dialogue that the details of the plot and the characters are imparted. Dialogue and recitative are the greatest challenges to a surtitler; they are text-rich and a great deal of information is contained within a relatively short time; attempting to reduce the titled information to a minimum is extremely difficult and most surtitle authors are aware that the audience is only likely to be able to read a small percentage of the displayed text. Dialogue and recitative are also very challenging to cue; whereas arias, ensembles and choruses have a dictated beat, and the entry points of the respective voices is predictable, entries in dialogue and recitative are undetermined and the cuer may only display the title once the artist has commenced the vocal or spoken line, so that titles cued by even the most

experienced of surtitle operators will still be delayed. It is during these passages that the audience must decide how they might best follow the action based on the quality of the multisemiotic totality on offer.

If, however, this passage were to be performed in a conceptual production or in concert, the considerations of the surtitle author would be very different. Whilst the music is graphic and supportive of the libretto, the action is not wholly comprehensible without recourse to the text, whether printed in the programme book as a libretto or a synopsis, or as surtitles. Although this section of the opera does not impart much information, it is nevertheless entertaining and gives us an insight into the characters. In the absence of the serpent (props), costume, lighting and scenery, we are denied the information we require to understand the scene, and believe we are missing content which may be of importance. In the context of a concert performance, surtitles are able to eke out the plot and explain the music. However, there are still details that we are unable to impart, particularly those pertaining to the location of the action, and this has led to some practitioners supplying time and place descriptions prior to the commencement of the title sequence. Despite clear musical indicators of the character of each of the roles, the absence of costumes leaves us without information regarding character, social status and age. In some ways, the surtitler, by the style of translation employed, is able to convey at least some of these elements. Taking as an example the line spoken by Papageno in a later dialogue: *"Durch Tausch. ich fange für die sternflammende Königin verschiedene Vögel. Dafür erhalte ich täglich Speis' und Trank"*, we might translate this in the surtitles as: "I catch birds for the queen, and swap them each day for food and drink", whereas Tamino's words would perhaps be: "I catch a variety of birds for the queen and exchange them daily for food and drink".

8. Conclusion

The display of text that is superfluous when taking the complementary semiotic elements into account is necessary to some degree, since to supply no text is unacceptable; at the same time, minimising text and providing it at musically and textually intuitive points is paramount. However, surtitlers do need to consider every aspect of the production when deciding how much information they should give. In particular, reducing the amount of text when the other semiotics are supporting and emphasising the information contained within the libretto will give the audience some respite for the text-rich passages to come, and also indicate to them the sequences within the opera where the text predominates and the information required is not, or cannot be, fully conveyed by other means.

Opera is a performance and a visual art form, where the many facets of the production come together to provide a coherent whole; their contributions to the production should work together in a fluid fashion, bearing in mind that each has a role to play, sometimes dominant and at other times supportive. The surtitle text is only part of this and should be seen as supporting the production. Over-titling is distracting and unnecessary; if we are to cultivate an audience which engages with the stage and is allowed to make its own interpretive decisions based on the information received from various sources, we need to develop an opera-going habit that is active rather than passive, and which draws the audience into the rich and varied semiotic nuances of a dynamic operatic experience.

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Tradition and transgression

W. H. Auden's musical poetics of translation

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This chapter interrogates W. H. Auden's ambiguous relationships with translation and examines his opera translations. A virtuoso writer who reveled in language complexities, Auden transgressed both translational rules and public expectations: audiences, music and theatre professionals of his time were all dismayed by his libretti. Yet he was also guided by established traditions and, in particular, by pre-20th-century English literary canons. For educated people of his generation in Britain, references to the values of colonial England were shaken, but not dissolved. Hence, the tendency for Auden to use pastiche and satire as instruments for both criticism and preservation of tradition. Auden also pioneered collaborative translation, writing with his partner Chester Kallman. He thus preempted trends in translation which are key to 21st-century productions.

Keywords: opera translation, libretto translation, re-writing, satire, tradition, W. H. Auden

1.　Auden: Translation, pastiche, satire, and tradition

W. H. Auden (1907–1973) brazenly admitted on several occasions that his prime motive for academic writing and translating was financial. The title of his volume of essays, *The Dyer's Hand*[1] alludes to this, and he stresses the matter further in its foreword: "All the poems I have written were written for love […]. On the other hand, […] though I hope that some love went into their writing, I wrote [other texts] because I needed the money" (Auden 2012, Foreword, unpaginated). He is part of a generation of authors who could and did earn a living through literary

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1. This title is taken from William Shakespeare's "Sonnet CXI" which refers to the reality of the life of a poet, whose financial success depends on his ability to be liked by the public.

translation or academic journalism, which is extremely difficult today. Anthony Burgess, Samuel Beckett, Marguerite Yourcenar, among others, belong to this line of 20th-century writers who contributed to the discovery of major authors through the translation of their work. They translated to earn a living but were also driven by intellectual curiosity and a desire to disseminate literature that they valued beyond borders and languages.

This desire for linguistic and cultural diversity, as well as the crucial function of translation in the polysystem of literature, forcefully outlined by translation scholars since Itamar Even-Zohar's seminal paper ([1978] 2000), are nevertheless often undermined. Auden's biographer, Humphrey Carpenter, thus implies that the author's motivation for translation, in his later years, was not primarily financial, and that it played a comforting and reconciliatory role in his life: "[A]s Auden, and eventually Chester, grew middle-aged, the question of sex between them ceased to matter. Instead, they began to work together as equals on libretti and translations – a productive and entirely happy partnership" (Carpenter 1981, 395). The subsidiary function of translation is often emphasised. Yet relegating translation to a personal redeeming feature fit for retirees no longer fired by any sexual energy or passions is not merely surprising. It also reveals a tangible if unconscious tendency to belittle translational activities.

Auden stated that he initially disliked operas performed in translation (Auden 1951 and 1952). He and his partner, Chester Kallman, both had good knowledge of Italian and German, and began to translate libretti to pay their bills, but unexpectedly carried on doing so "for a reason which is not perhaps a valid one since it is purely selfish: we found ourselves completely fascinated by the task" (Auden and Kallman 2012, 346). Whatever the full range of motives, the fact is that Auden's writing was nearly exclusively limited to libretto writing and translating in the second part of his life. Monroe K. Spears thus notes in 1963 that "opera libretti have been Auden's only long works in recent years" (Spears quoted in Weisstein 2006, 44).

Taking as reference 20th-century theoretical work which highlights the paradoxes of difference and similarity, I shall argue that translation is used by Auden as a transtextual agent, that is to say a transformational tool which allowed him to reinterpret values perceived as no longer relevant to post-Second World War Britain. Auden rebelled against some aspects of social conformity but was always morally engaged and attached to artistic traditions, particularly as regards poetry, his preferred art form, although one that was becoming less popular in its more conservative forms. Libretto writing allowed him an aesthetic connection with the past: "Opera", for him, "is the last refuge of the High style, the only art to which a poet with a nostalgia for those times past when poets could write in the grand manner all by themselves" (Auden 1968, 116).

Socially though, Auden and members of his generation found themselves steeped in a past out of phase with new social realities. Faced with the global horrors of the First World War, the socio-economic fractures of the 1930s and the consequences of the Second World War, many British (and other European) artists used satire as a tool for cultural transformation. It allowed them to articulate their sense of displacement in a society structured around values no longer fully relevant to the reconstruction of their shattered worlds. For the first time in human history perhaps, from the 1920s onwards, deciphering these worlds implied acknowledging a variety of voices which referred to different realities simultaneously: past traditions provided continuity, but their values often no longer suited the changing present. As Mikhail Bakhtin (1981) argued with regards to fiction, to perceive and interpret information involves a constant interaction between different types of languages and layers of meaning: communication is 'heteroglossic'.

The operatic repertoire depends largely on new productions and translations of known pieces, is multi-voiced, and offers opportunities for subversions and diversions of the original text. Discarding both "the heroic world of romance and the mimetic world of history", creative artists in the post-First World War era turned to "the degraded world of satire" (Scholes 1974, 132) as an instrument to rewrite the past into a present full of uncertainties. Satire in itself is a form of intralingual translation, as Susan Bassnett emphasises (2014, 7), but it is also a transformational, comparative tool of creation: since it allows and sometimes actively promotes comparison, it can be used to denounce dogma and heighten social consciousness.

As Gérard Genette noted, "satirical pastiche […] [is] a stylistic imitation aiming to criticise […] or ridicule" (1982, 32). Pastiche and satire are particularly suited to vocal music as a mode of expression, since music can play an interpretative role by giving several meanings to semantic texts. A musical form, for instance a sacred hymn sung with secular words, establishes an instant dissonance between semantic and non-semantic meanings. Similarly, the transmutation of a well-known melody into a new context has long been used by satirists. Genette reminds his readers that "parody is the daughter of rhapsody" (1982, 27) and that, etymologically, the word 'parody' comes from the Greek *ôde* ['singing'] and *para* ['beside', 'along'], which implies the transformation of a melody sung in another voice or in counterpoint (1982, 20). Satire adds a socio-political bite to the plain mimicry of parody. In classical operatic repertoire, music is a point of reference that remains more stable than libretti, which are constantly revised, cut, adapted or translated.

While stage productions give way to new interpretations, sometimes radical, and while libretti are often adapted in relation to these productions, the score may undergo cuts, re-orchestration and structural reordering of musical numbers, but overall remains untouched. It provides the main reference from which fresh interpretations can be made through the production and libretto. Music can, of course,

be intended as a 'hypertext', to use Genette's terminology, that is as a text based on a previous text. Composers have long used satire in their creative transformations of existing music, in particular, to refer to the past critically. A hybrid form, satire, from the Latin *satura*, 'mixture', is born of reliance on and criticism of past and present.

In music, topical content is usually expressed through words and dramatic action. Satire flourished from the 1920s with composers such as Dimitri Shostakovich, Igor Stravinsky, Darius Milhaud, Francis Poulenc and Benjamin Britten. Reflecting on Britten and Auden's work produced in the 1930s and particularly on the song cycle *Our Hunting Fathers*, the singer Peter Pears remarked that "all art must be satirical today" (Pears 1953, 61). Unsurprisingly, the archetypal satirical opera, John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera,* whose extraordinary popularity in the 18th century had faded somewhat in the 19th, was revived very successfully from the 1920s onwards. This new popularity included Bertolt Brecht's adaptation *Die Dreigroschenoper* (*The Three Penny Opera*), translated and performed in eighteen languages within five years of its creation in 1928, a global media phenomenon at the time (Chamberlain 2009, 22). Creative artists of Auden's generation used parody and satire to shift existing references into what Genette (1982) named a "literature in the second degree".

In the case of Auden,[2] this transformational process was particularly visible in his operatic translations, which provided an ideal setting for both translating and / or transgressing tradition. While some of his adaptations, such as Brecht and Weill's *Die Sieben Todsünden der Kleinbürger*, demanded satire, not all his translated lyrical works were suited to it. Yet all required the ability to take a distance from the original work, this distance-making so essential to Auden's expressive language. Through this language, he reinterpreted a past which he both valued and condemned. All his adaptations, even those of the most lyrical and timeless pieces, keep strong references to the past and are based on an in-depth understanding of musical and poetic traditions. They also take a distance from them, so that the past is mediated and stretched into the present. Auden's way of emancipating himself from the rich but stifling tradition to which he belongs is to interpret the past and set it in a contemporary context, not to annihilate it. In search of a way to translate Pamina's vocalises in her main aria "*Ach ich fühl's*", for instance, Auden took John Donne's poetry as a model, in order to keep the repetitive features of the original:

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2. Most of the libretti discussed here were written by W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman. However, for practical reasons, we will sometimes refer to Auden when discussing them. Kallman introduced Auden to opera when he arrived in the US and was a prolific libretto translator, as Mendelsohn notes in his introduction to the edited volume of Auden and Kallman's libretti (Auden and Kallman 1993, xxi fn).

The aria contains a number of high notes, long runs and phrases which repeat like an echo. Any English version, therefore must provide open vowels for the high notes and runs, and phrases which can sound like echoes. There is a certain kind of English poetry which is based upon the repetition of a word or words in slightly different context, for instance, Donne's "The expiration".

(Auden and Kallman 2012, 354)

2. Auden as translator and the context of opera translation

The bibliography of translations and adaptations completed by Auden, on his own or, more frequently, in collaboration, is impressive (Auden and Kallman 1993). It testifies to the important part played by translation in his professional life: volumes of poems, theatre plays, Goethe's epistolary account of his Italian journeys, *Italienische Reise*, a number of songs, and no fewer than twelve opera libretti, if intralinguistic adaptations such as *Paul Bunyan* and some texts completed but never performed are included in this list. Auden's libretto of the *Man of La Mancha* was thus completed but rejected by Dale Wasserman, in charge of its adaptation into the stage musical still successful today.[3] Some of these translation adventures proved to be trying, such as Brecht's take on *The Duchess of Malfi* (1945), which Auden himself regretted having adapted into English (Auden and Kallman 1993, 432). Others, such as the writing of the *Rake's Progress* libretto for Stravinsky (1947–1948), were fulfilling experiences. At a time when professional translators were mostly invisible and tended to complete their tasks so that the translation would be both faithful to the spirit of the original and transparent to read (and hear), Auden figured as a pioneer. He experimented and created through translation, departing from the original substantially at times.

For Auden, opera translation was a form of dialogic expression that allowed him to reshape, extend and interact with existing work. While all translations can have this role to a degree, Auden placed his sometimes bold libretti translations against the stable background of the operatic score, giving new meaning to a well-known piece. For the living composers with whom Auden collaborated, mainly Britten and Stravinsky, the poet's strong artistic personality and the force of his linguistic virtuosity was problematic. Michael Tippett refused a project suggested by Auden, "uneasy at the prospect of working with such a domineering librettist"

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3. Dale Wasserman mentions three reasons for preferring the then unknown author Joe Darion to Auden as librettist of *Man of La Mancha*: first, the Auden text was too wordy to be sung; second, it over-emphasised the satirical dimension of the original novel; third, Auden was found to self-plagiarise, recycling some of his own previously used poetry into the libretto (Wasserman 2009).

(Carpenter 1981, 428). And domineering he was. When the composer Nicolas Nabokov suggested cuts in the setting of his opera *The Sea and the Mirror*, Auden, who had written the words, stopped the project for instance (Auden and Kallman 1993, 716). Even though Auden and Kallman's libretti were "much praised" by some, recalls a famous singer of contemporary operas of the time (Cross 1958, 6), this tended to be by poets or literary critics more than by composers or musicians, who felt in competition with the translator. For instance, Britten, who worked with Auden in the early years of his career, shifted to more malleable (and humbler) collaborators, such as Eric Crozier, for whom "a librettist is a craftsman working for an artist" (Crozier 1981, iv). Willard Spiegelman thus noted about Auden's version of *The Magic Flute* that his "cleverness, a fondness for the obscure or unlikely words, a preference for the polysyllabic to the monosyllabic […] sometimes works against him and perhaps, if our ears can be trusted, against Mozart" (Spiegelman 2009, 94). His tendency for complex verse was rather incompatible with the traditional role of a librettist who acts, in Auden's unexpected but own words, as "the syllabist" (Stravinsky and Craft 1960, 149) of the composer. Moreover, Auden's textual and structural deconstructions and displacements were often criticised by both performers and members of the public.

As Paul Robinson outlines (2002, 34–35), for Anglophone audiences even more so than for those of other languages, an opera in the original language is a relatively recent experience, going back half a century. Prestigious opera houses did offer shows in the original language but this applied to a very limited number of theatres, such as The Royal Opera House. Even in these, operas including spoken dialogue generally were in translation. Moreover, translations written in support of performances were usually limited to print, which operatic audiences, used to reading libretti during the shows, were familiar with. Today, a new adaptation of an opera can be branded as a marketing tool with a novel translation to match an original production but, until the second half of the 20th century, a change in the translation of the libretto of a work from the canonical repertoire could provoke negative reactions from a public used to an established version. Overall, 19th-century operas were written by contemporary composers, so much so that most scores by Monteverdi and Mozart were rediscovered in the 20th century, with the exception of a few works such as *The Magic Flute*, performed without interruption since their creation, in versions that were sometimes loose adaptations form the original, as Pierre Degott notes in the introduction to his chapter in this volume. Charles Nuitter and Alexandre Beaumont's adaptation of *Die Zauberflöte* for a new production of the opera in 1879 appropriated Schikaneder's libretto to such a large extent that the original librettist's name did not even appear on the programme. When Albert Carré, the director of the Paris *Opéra Comique* commissioned a new translation of this opera in 1909, he engineered a solid publicity

campaign, arguing that a new version, approved by musical authorities (including Gabriel Fauré), would be closer to the original, would meet the expectations of 20th-century audiences regarding authenticity, and would reveal an 18th-century Mozart never heard since his death. In spite of these precautions, he met the anger of the Parisian public for whom the 'real' *Magic Flute*, familiar to their ears, had been unfairly discarded (see Gibbons 2012, 37–53).

In some respects, this example from French musical history is comparable to the English-speaking one that led to Auden and Kallman's *Magic Flute*. An NBC (National Broadcasting Company) commission for a televised performance of the famous *Singspiel*, it was aiming to popularise opera, not favoured by the American public, particularly in the post-Second World War era. A music critic thus wrote that "[o]pera comes to the European as naturally as the cinema to the American. In Europe, opera is not burdened with the opprobrium of being an art" (Riker 1953, 162). Auden and Kallman's adaptation of *The Magic Flute* was broadcast on 15 January 1956 – in colour, which was rare at the time and a marker of importance – as part of a strategy to raise the status of opera through mass media. This prestigious production had a mixed, generally negative reception. Its libretto was published independently, primarily for the benefit of literati.[4] Most critics, such as Robert Sabin (1956, 12), the editor of *Musical America* at the time, or Joseph Slater (1956, 35), who equated Auden and Kallman's adaptation to "the unwholesome porridge that has nourished generations of enemies of English opera", were at best suspicious and at worst hostile.

In Europe, the wave of interest for opera which succeeded the Second World War happened within the context of an emerging culture which valued authenticity. Music in general plays an important role in the reconstruction of cultures and of selves, as Richard Middleton (2006, 206) outlined. In the second half of the 20th century, musicians searched for 'original features', and new genres emerged such as baroque music, ancient music or folk music. This took place as part of a movement of counter-cultures which was in full flow in the 1960s. As Pierre Bourdieu (1979) argued, a social boundary between 'high' culture, the culture of social elites, and new popular cultures became visible and uncomfortable, for both producers and consumers of artistic outputs.

Aesthetic dissension increased between the partisans of a timeless, absolute classical music, who sought authenticity, and those who wished to innovate. For a large number of French and German post-war intellectuals and artists, from Pierre Bourdieu to Pierre Boulez, the operatic genre symbolised an anachronism

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4. No reception study of this broadcast seems to exist but reviews by Kerman (1957, 309–316) and Frayne (1985, 52–71) in addition to those by Sabin (1956) and Slater (1956) give a good idea of how this televised performance was received.

of bourgeois culture. They considered opera houses inadequate for contemporary creativity and criticised directors for offering a traditional repertoire only suitable for an elitist and unimaginative public. This schism reached a paroxysm in the 1960s and 1970s, when audiences had new expectations both in high and popular cultures. In a very provocative interview, Boulez (1967) suggested blowing up all opera houses and later outlined his "praise of amnesia" (1971, 5–14).

Overall, this generation of singer-songwriters from Georges Brassens to Bob Dylan were critical of the operatic genre, which they saw as both conventional and pretentious. Yet a large proportion of European and American audiences remained faithful to opera or adopted the genre in the second half of the 20th century. In this post-Second World War era, most artists favoured an art of decontextualisation and abstraction, as is evidenced by Henry Moore's smooth sculptures, Karlheinz Stockhausen's theory-inspired compositions, Jackson Pollock's action painting, or 'cool jazz' forms. A large proportion of their mainly middle-class audience felt excluded from what they perceived to be intellectual art forms which they could not relate to.

Operas, on the other hand, offered new interpretations of the past and of myths that had been continuously present in Western history and were structured around a strong narrative line. Opera gradually re-entered the stage as a familiar but revamped cultural discourse which appealed to audiences craving contextual landmarks and a sense of narrative. Opera is story telling in music. Its multimodal and multicultural nature allows a novel reading of contemporary issues.

3.   Auden and Kallman's opera translations: Tradition and transmutation

Before the practice of surtitling revolutionised access to opera in the late 20th century, singing translations played an important role in the renaissance of the lyrical genre. In an article entitled "Translating Opera Libretti" (Auden and Kallman 2012, 345–357), Auden and Kallman discuss three operas which they translated in collaboration: *Die Zauberflöte*, performed in 1956; *Don Giovanni* published by Schirmer in 1961; and the Brecht-Weill ballet-cantata *Die Sieben Todsünden der Kleinbürger*, whose translation was commissioned by the New York City Ballet in 1958. The strategies that the authors outline in their article do not only reflect personal preferences; they pre-empt general translation tendencies of the 21st century: a concept of translation as re-writing; an ambiguous attitude to tradition expressed by a need to take a distance from the source text; and a collaborative practice of translation. These three pieces are also good illustrations of an attempt to bridge the gap between high and popular cultures that was visible from the 1960s onwards. *The Magic Flute* and *Don Giovanni*, among the most successful

pieces of the operatic repertoire, will be taken as examples of how libretto translation was used by Auden and Kallman as a tool for both preserving and critiquing tradition, and how their translation strategies, novel and controversial at the time, have become common today.

Die Zauberflöte has been one of the most frequently performed operas of the operatic repertoire since its creation in 1791 as a *Singspiel*, a popular musical genre alternating spoken dialogue and music. Since the second half of the 20th century, it has also been one of the operas most performed in translation in the world. In the UK, the first noted performance of *The Magic Flute* in English was in 1911. It was authored by Edward J. Dent, who became well-known for his opera translations (Dent 1911) and led to a new interest in Mozart's other operas, which had been neglected. The work was soon performed nearly exclusively in translation. At the Royal Opera House, where most of the repertoire was sung in the original language, all performances of *The Magic Flute* given between 1947 and 1974 but one were in English (Royal Opera House Performance Database). This one production in German did not gain the favour of the English public who deemed it "virtuous but dull" (Branscombe 1962, 105). In the US, all the *New York Metropolitan Opera* productions of this opera of the same period were in English up to 1967 and in German after that date. It is only in 2006 that an (abridged) English version of the work was staged (New York Metropolitan Archives). The NBC's decision to give a televised performance of *The Magic Flute* in English in 1956 therefore matched the expectations of members of the audience familiar with the work. The NBC also intended to show members of public who were unfamiliar with opera that the genre was accessible. To introduce another opera of the repertoire in English would have been more controversial. Moreover, celebrated figures were appointed to ensure the highest standard of performance: George Balanchine was the stage director, Kirk Browning the film director, and Leontyne Price sang Pamina. The choice of a Black singer in the lead role was controversial, but Price's success in a televised performance of *Tosca* the year before had shown that she could convert ordinary television audiences to opera while at the same time please opera aficionados.

Choosing Auden and Kallman as librettists and giving them all creative freedom was equally bold. When *The Magic Flute* was sung in English, two established translations were in use at that time: Ruth and Thomas Martin's in the US (1941), and Edward J. Dent's in the UK (1913).[5] In both cases, as Dent stated in his preface of the vocal score, they aimed "to make the story clear, and to write words simple

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5. Edward J. Dent's translation was first performed in 1911 and published in numerous editions thereafter. It is still published by Boosey and Hawkes. The first (1913) and most recent edition (2013), as well as the 1937 edition containing a preface of the translator are listed in the bibliography.

enough to be intelligible when sung" (Dent 1937, Preface, unpaginated). Whatever their respective poetic value, which has been questioned in both cases, these translations were not only the libretti of reference for English-speaking audiences at that time, but they were also deliberately drafted in simple language. In particular, they included words containing relatively few syllables, which was in line with vocal composition practices at the time. Such translation strategies were part of a trend for popularising opera, which involved giving priority to comprehensibility. As can be expected, Auden and Kallman enjoyed swimming against the current provocatively, and reconstructed the libretto both structurally and poetically:

> We have every sympathy for those who are distressed by the slightest deviation from a score they know so well and have loved for so long […] but if they wish to enjoy the advantages of opera in English, they must put up with the drawbacks.
> (Auden and Kallman 1993, 133)

However, the translators did not just 'deviate slightly' from the original. To speak in Bourdesian terms, they brutally modified the production field of the libretto, overriding textual expectations and reimagining the source text to fit a new target context. In 1952, Auden and Kallman had written a libretto commissioned by Stravinsky. *Delia or A Masque of Night*, inspired by George Peele's play *The Old Wives' Tale*, was in fact, as Edward Mendelsohn notes, stripped of "most of Peele's incidents and characters [and reshaped] into a 17th-century version of *The Magic Flute* (Auden and Kallman 1993, xxiv). *Delia* was never performed, but its organising principles, including the entire restructuring of the second act, was used in Auden and Kallman's *Magic Flute*. Most would agree that this is more rewriting than translation.

In addition to structural amendments, the translators adapted the original libretto both conceptually and stylistically. One of the most flagrant examples of this can be seen in their translation of one of *Don Giovanni*'s most famous arias, Don Ottavio's *Dalla sua pace*, which they analyse themselves:

> When one compares English poetry with Italian […], one sees that English poetic speech is more concrete in its expressions […]. Further, English and Italian notions of what is proper for an amorous male to say and do are different. To an English sensibility, Ottavio's exclusive concentration upon himself – she mustn't be unhappy because it makes me unhappy – is a bit distasteful. Lastly, Da Ponte's lyric contains only a single idea repeated over and over again with but slight variations, but Mozart has given his second stanza a completely different musical treatment. Accordingly we tried to write a lyric which should be (a) more concrete in diction, (b) make Ottavio think more about Donna Anna than himself and (c) less repetitive.
> (Auden and Kallman 2012, 353)

The lines from the second half of the aria illustrate this potently (back translation in brackets):

> *S'ella sospira* [If she sighs]
> *Sospir' anchio*, [I sigh too,]
> *E mia quell'ira* [And her anger is mine]
> *Que pianto moi*, [As is her grief,]
> *E non ho bene* [I can't feel good]
> *S'ella non l'ha.* [If she does not.]
>
> O nimble breezes,
> O stately waters,
> Obey a lover,
> Proclaim her beauty
> And sing her praises
> Where'er you go.

Auden's at times contradictory views on opera sung in translation have been discussed earlier. While some of his contemporaries disagreed (Cross 1958, 6–8), Auden was undoubtedly more a poet than a thinker. Changes of opinion on various aspects of music and literature are frequent in his critical writing. His translation strategies, outlined by Nirmal Dass (1992, 27), were informed rather than primarily intuitive, but his decisions (and Kallman's, although knowing where each author's contribution starts and finishes is impossible) were aesthetic, poetic and musical rather than theoretical ones. Their operatic translations may warrant criticism for taking too many liberties with the source libretti, but Auden and Kallman's texts mark a turning point in opera adaptation. They dare to recreate a poetic text that allows listeners to be aware of the original text's initial intentions while making it relevant to 20th-century English-speaking audiences.

In this respect, their *Magic Flute* is a landmark in libretto translation. It is conceived as re-writing destined to free the original text of its 18th-century 'straightjacket' – textual, stylistic and societal norms that are no longer meaningful in the 20th century –, while keeping references to this 'straightjacket'. It aims to reconstruct the sense of the original work across two languages, two eras, and two artistic contexts. Authors who used these strategies in literature did it with the tacit consent of their publisher, unbeknownst to their readers, who were not expected to be familiar with the source text. On the other hand, in the case of *The Magic Flute*, it took all the confidence, brio and even arrogance of someone such as Auden to challenge collective memories and expectations relating to one of the most loved and respected pieces of the repertoire. Auden and Kallman's unique and controversial *Magic Flute* has never been performed on an international stage since its televised broadcast, but it has opened a new way: it contributed to recognising the

translator and, what is more, the libretto translator whose status was even more ancillary, as a creator. It also staged translation as a creative product and process. In this sense, even though Auden may not be a theoretician, he is a pioneering practitioner of translation as re-writing, a key notion to contemporary translation, which translation scholars such as Susan Bassnett of George Steiner brought to prominence from the 1970s. He gave a new meaning to notions of faithfulness and equivalence, opposing the stereotypical image of the translator as 'invisible' (Venuti 2003).

If Auden's opera translations tended to be used only for the performance(s) for which they were commissioned, this was in line with the poet's vision of the necessity to update the libretto to match its opera production. In the 21st century, a new textual interpretation of opera, which includes libretto and stage production, is considered essential to its listening. Up to the beginning of the 20th century, operas were primarily contemporary; in the first half of the 20th century, opera had become a sort of musical and theatrical museum aiming to preserve past 'masterpieces'. Since the end of the 20th century, opera has acted as hyphen between high and popular cultures, as a keeper of past traditions and as an interpreter of the present. In an era of hybridity, opera also allows words, musical composition, stage production and design, stage and musical directions to relate to each other across languages and cultures. Auden understood that, to play this messenger's role, the operatic genre needed to adopt different translations – linguistic, temporal, performative and aesthetic – in order to make cultural history relevant to a contemporary audience and place it in a context relevant to new audiences. In this respect, Auden and Kallman's *Magic Flute* led to Ingmar Bergman's 1975 cinematic re-writing of Mozart's masterpiece.

Another key feature of contemporary translation is present in Auden and Kallman's work: an ambiguous rapport with tradition. Since the 1970s, the concept of translation as manipulation of the source text has been widely discussed and explored (see Hermans 1985 and Lefevere 1992). An understanding of the tradition and references of the source text is crucial among all those who produce and translate. But in the cultural context that was Auden's, this understanding was also a critical one. British creative artists brought up in public schools before the Second World War developed a love-hate relationship with tradition and morals. They tended to live in perpetual disguise, playing hide-and-seek with conventions, particularly when they were homosexual. For Auden, translation was a creative instrument that allowed him to play with the past. Like the composer Benjamin Britten, with whom he collaborated closely in the 1930s, Auden prioritised recycling solutions discovered by his predecessors rather than inventing conceptual systems. However, he frequently dressed established references with humour and satire, a double instrument of de- and re-construction of the past. Their aesthetic

positions are comparable, and Auden regretted that Britten ended their collaborative work, probably because he found the poet overwhelming. In spite of their contrasting temperaments – Britten was quietly unassuming while Auden was much more extroverted and arrogant –, their attitude to tradition is identical:

> I can only work because of the tradition I am conscious of behind me. […] I am given *strength* by this tradition. […] [M]any people have pointed out the similarities between the Verdi *Requiem* and bits of my own *War Requiem*, and they may be there. If I have not absorbed that, that's too bad. But that's because I'm not a good enough composer, it's not because I'm wrong.
>
> (Britten in Palmer 1984, 95–96)

Britten and Auden both thrived and depended on borrowing and reshaping existing conventions, although Auden did it with a more systematic biting tongue. While not wishing to entirely rewrite the libretti that he translated, he transmogrified them. One of his techniques for distancing himself from the original text, often with satirical intent, consisted of adding dialogue. Hence, *The Magic Flute* of 1956 contains a "Poem", a "Metalogue" spoken by Sarastro, and a "Postscript" by Astrafiammante (the Queen of the Night) to the translators. The following excerpt from the "Postscript", where the Queen of the Night gives the translators licence to alter the original text, is a good illustration of this distancing strategy:

> In Act Two, We observed, you saw fit to contrive
> A later appearance for Us and deprive
> Our rage of its dialogue:
> We shall survive
> To laugh, unimpressed, at your liberal correction
> Of conservative views about women's subjections;
> Male's vanity's always been Our best protection.
> […]
> So english [sic], remodel Our lines as you please,
> Unscramble the drama and jumble the keys:
> That will serve for the rest of the cast – and your fees.
>
> (Auden and Kallman 1993, 183)

The translation of *Don Giovanni*'s libretto by Auden and Kallman is less radical than that of *The Magic Flute*. It was also commissioned by the NBC and televised on 10 April 1960. Unlike the *Magic Flute* though, it was performed again at the New York Metropolitan Opera the following year, but the translation, included in the spectators' programme, was not sung. The libretto was published by Schirmer in 1961, both as a vocal score and as a libretto. While Schirmer still keeps the rights of the Auden and Kallman translation today, the last vocal score edition that they issued uses Natalia Macfarren's Victorian version, which, as Pierre

Degott demonstrates in his chapter in this volume, is stylish but prim. Auden and Kallman's *Don Giovanni* may be less provocative than their *Magic Flute*, but still controversial, even in the 21st century. As often with Auden's texts, some reference to his own work appear, a form of re-appropriation of a previous creation. No dialogue is added to the original Da Ponte libretto, but in their libretto of *The Rake's Progress*, drafted for Stravinsky in 1947, Auden and Kallman added an epilogue inspired by a scene from *Don Giovanni* which they kept in mind when translating the final *Don Giovanni* ensemble, as the end of the two works shows:

> *The Rake's Progress*
> Not every rake is rescued
> At last by love and beauty
> […]
> Beware, young men who fancy
> You are Vergil or Julius Caesar,
> Lest when you wake
> You only be a rake.
>
> *Don Giovanni*
> So do all deceivers in the end,
> So do all wrongdoers end
> Rakes, betrayers, all take warning
> While there is time still your ways to mend,
> So mend your ways.

Auden saw the character of Don Giovanni as "the defiant counter-image of the ascetic saint" (Carpenter 1981, 398), who can take an ironic stand on morals. If the adaptation of *The Magic Flute* granted him an experience of re-writing, that of *Don Giovanni* was an experience of 'double writing', as Susan Bassnett (1985, 87–102) understood it in the context of drama translation: a dialectical co-existence of the written text and the text which is performed, as well as in the sense of a text given another level of significance thanks to humour and irony which can eat into tradition and allow fresh, second degree interpretations of the source text. Influenced by J. R. R. Tolkien, Auden believed in a division between the primary world of experience, which cannot change and includes a reified historical past (e.g., myths and legends), and a 'secondary world', which relates to evolving creativity (Auden 1968). Opera belongs to both. Musical imagination, humour and satire, as well as translation in all its guises (semantic, cultural and multimodal) allow opera to shape shift. In *Don Giovanni*, Auden, "one of the most challengingly adroit versifiers of all times" (Fuller 1970, 8), enjoyed displacing styles, forms, metres and rhetorical traditions with confidence and virtuosity. Most of the time, this is for linguistic and artistic reasons, but occasionally because "the librettist [can write]

sounds too damn silly in any language" (Auden and Kallman 2012, 349). Auden and Kallman (2012, 348–356) argue convincingly the logic of transferring an interjection into a declarative phrase, a classical quatrain into an Elizabethan pastoral, a concrete image into an abstract expression, and other poetic mediations. More unexpected transfers include the translation of fast sections such as the catalogue aria or the duet between Leporello and Don Giovanni into lines reminiscent of Gilbert and Sullivan's patter-songs or even of Noel Coward's musical songs, as some reviewers have noted (Carpenter 1981, 398). After all, Gilbert and Sullivan found inspiration for their patter number in Mozart's vocal ensembles (Eden and Saremba 2009, 100–101). Occasionally, stylistic changes within the English libretto itself are less convincing. For instance, at the beginning of the opera, Leporello sings directly to the public. His song gives the opera its tone and style. In their version, Auden and Kallman choose a familiar contemporary discourse:

> *Notte e giorno faticar*
> *per chi nulla sa gradir;*
> *piova e vento sopportar,*
> *mangiar male e mal dormir!*
>
> On the go from morn till night
> Running errands, never free.
> Hardly time to snatch a bite;
> This is not the life for me.

It is difficult to reconcile such a contemporary style, not only with the sociolect of the aristocrats prevalent throughout the opera (Donna Anna, Donna Elvira, Don Ottavio) but also with the lines of the chorus of 18th-century peasants that follow in the midst of the first act:

> Pretty maid with your graces adorning
> The dew-spangled morning,
> The red rose and the white fade away
> Both wither away, all fade in a day.

Apart from a few faux-pas such as the one mentioned above, translation flows easily in Auden and Kallman's work. Toing and froing between past and present also befits a genre so dependent on intertextuality as opera. Kallman's excellent musical knowledge, combined with Auden's Italian and German expertise, in addition to their English poetic skills and their exceptional gift for metaphor, were and still are an unusual palette of skills for opera translators to offer. In addition, Auden's personal tendency to be emotionally distant in his creative writing, his mordant sense of criticism and his vast literary culture made him a perfect mediator of intertextuality.

The last aspect of Auden's translational activity identified earlier is the collaborative side of his work. In some respect, all theatre and musical translations are collaborative works. The translation process depends on and takes into account music and stage production. Amendments are always required by members of the musical team, stage production or even by singers. The translation of a libretto must also adjust to the media platform that disseminates it: for instance, today, surtitles are fit for live and HD performances, but radio listeners rely on presenters' summaries to guide them through a show. Auden and Kallman did not live in an age of technological diversity such as the 21st century offers. Yet they were acutely aware of the challenges of translating multimodal texts at a time when these were not always emphasised. They were also conscious that an opera is thought out differently if it is to be performed live on stage or televised, and that this affects the sort of translation provided (Auden and Kallman 2012, 345).

For all his creative and generous qualities, Auden seems to have been a difficult person to work with at times, and many remarked on his arrogance. In their essay on translating opera libretti, Auden and Kallman are critical of everyone involved in the process. The librettists first of all: for instance, Schikaneder and Giesecke, for Auden, "did not know" what they were doing and it was a matter of priority to "discover what, if anything, can be done to improve the libretto" (Auden and Kallman 2012, 345). They are not much kinder to the public, stating that "[w]hether the TV audience could ever be persuaded to tolerate opera in foreign languages is doubtful, […] because mass audiences are lazy" (Auden and Kallman 2012, 345). As for the critics, they consider them overall stupid and arrogant. Such attitudes do not seem compatible with a collaborative spirit. Yet Auden, in spite of his tendency to be condescending and his desire to shine, wrote most of his translations and libretti in collaboration, and did so successfully. He worked not only with his partner Chester Kallman, but with musicians, producers, film and radio technicians, taking their requirements into account when writing his translations. The greatest composers of his generation, such as Britten, Henze, Stravinsky, and Weill, chose to work with him and were inspired by his talent and energy.

Auden had the will and ability to write for all the media platforms of his time: radio, records, film, theatre, newspapers and books. He understood that translation in all its forms was indispensable to communication and that it depended on ever-changing forms of expression, that it required pushing back boundaries, re-imagining past cultures and going beyond global ones. In this, he attempted "to negotiate the perpetual challenge of what it means to be human in the translation age, knowing that the only certainty […] is that there is none" (Cronin 2013, 141).

For Auden, then, libretto translation was an ideal tool to rewrite but also to 'double write' an established repertoire for contemporary English-speaking audiences. Initially dubious about singing translations, he and his partner Chester

Kallman admitted that, in spite of their preference for listening to opera in the original language, they became passionate opera translators. This was due to the fact that, "[i]n comparison with the ordinary translator, the translator of a libretto is much more strictly bound in some respects and much freer in others" (Auden and Kallman 2012, 346). Constraints relate to the fact that the text must fit musical intervals and rhythms. Auden does not extrapolate on the attraction of translating freely. I would argue that, in addition to rewriting and 'double writing' masterpieces of the past, Auden also seized the opportunity to 'counter-write' them through translation, that is, to write 'plurally', against or across dominant values and entities. The reinterpretation of operatic myths and texts which had been listened to for centuries and the prospect of giving them fresh meanings for contemporary audiences appealed to his profound ambivalence about established traditions, which he rebelled against but did not entirely discard. While, in Auden's time, identifying and fighting convention was what was expected of a creative artist, in today's age of "satire-blindness" (Mahdawi 2014) diversity tends to be accepted only if it is economically viable and fast communication often implies that messages are understood literally. Auden's effort to translate opera may remind us, readers, viewers and listeners of the 21st century, that translation is also about the power of deciphering reality "in the second degree" (Genette 1982).

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Across genres and media

When Mei Lanfang encountered Fei Mu

Adaptation as intersemiotic translation
in early Chinese opera film

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This chapter examines the intersemiotic translation of Chinese opera for cinema, between stage and screen. It examines the collaboration of Fei Mu and Mei Lanfang in producing China's first color movie, an opera film, *A Wedding in the Dream* (1948). The two artists attempted to expand the expressive borders of stage and screen to forge a cultural identity of Chinese cinema. But the intermedia venture presented issues in adaptation, cinematization, and translation. How does opera film reconcile the realistic tradition of cinema with the figurative nature of Chinese theater? The study looks at the intermediality of adaptation as a practice of intersemiotic translation, focusing on how the symbolism of Chinese theater can be translated into cinematic form.

Keywords: Chinese theater, Fei Mu, May Fourth, Mei Lanfang, Bejing opera, opera film, intermediality, intersemiotic translation, realism, screen adaptation

1. Introduction

Obsessively committed to fusing opera and film in both theory and practice, Fei Mu (1906–1951) worked persistently to blend traditional stage art with modern film-making, reinventing a culturally distinct cinema with Chinese aesthetic expressions. Fei's entrepreneurial zeal allowed him to cross the conventional borders between the stage and cinema to invite Mei Lanfang (1894–1961) to play in China's first color movie, the opera film *A Wedding in the Dream* [*Shengsi hen*] (1948), for which Fei assumed the directorial role. Mei was already a celebrated Beijing opera star at the time, and Fei, an up-and-coming moviemaker in Shanghai. Their collaborations betoken how, as cultural agents, both partners were ambitious to embrace the new cinematic medium in order to foster a new Chinese visual culture. Their joint venture marked the development of a hybrid Chinese genre of 'opera film' (*xiqupian*).

The Chinese theatrical tradition entails a wide-ranging form of arts, including literature, music, acting, singing, costume and makeup, and dance or acrobatics, encompassing a great variety of regional cultures, dialects, and performative styles. Arias are rhymed verse and dialogues prose. Music is not only indispensable for providing the melody for arias; it is the characteristic music of each regional form that distinguishes its own identity from one another. In this sense, all traditional theater is conveniently translated as Chinese 'opera' (Mackerras 1983, 1) to distinguish the 'spoken drama' (*huaju*) as a nonmusical genre, as Western stage plays were introduced to China in the early twentieth century. In another sense, the translation of 'opera' itself can be problematic. As an umbrella term, 'Chinese opera' aims to cover the multifarious regional stage plays and cultures held together by theatrical conventions resting on a concept of drama widely different from the Western notion of realism and naturalism. Chinese theater's presentational acting style, symbolic and stylistic movements, simple set and props, and elaborate costuming intrinsically differentiate itself from its Western counterparts (Lei 2006, 8–10). The term 'Chinese opera' gained a further legitimate currency in the West with Mei Lanfang's deliberate effort to modernize 'Beijing opera' (*jingju*) and elevate its status as 'national opera' (*guoju*); particularly his 1930 visit to the United States helped cultivate the image of Beijing opera as the national opera of China (Goldstein 1999). 'Chinese opera' has been used in East-West intercultural communication as a foreign art suitable for traditional Chinese theater, which often evokes a sense of antiquity and elitism in the popular perception of the untutored Western spectator.

The Chinese 'opera film' (*xiqupian*), as "one of the most unique forms in world cinema" (Teo 2013, 209), is a much neglected genre in the critical literature on film and remains mostly unexamined in English-language scholarship. The critical oversight is due to the false assumption that opera films are derived from simply filmed versions or recordings of existing opera performances; thus, the hybrid genre manifests an artistic inferiority. More significantly, it is generally assumed that the process of opera's transposition into film entails a progression away from stylized Chinese theatrical forms to the allegedly realist language of film (Farquhar and Berry 2006, 47). In developing the opera film, early practitioners often came up with fragmented modes of storytelling, as "filmmakers could not overcome the initial difficulty of using cinema to tell a story in operatic form" (Teo 2013, 210–211). The inherent link to theater in the new genre presented aesthetic and narrative problems in the attempt to translate traditional theatrical expressions to a newly devised story on the screen. Is it the synthesis of an indigenous form of Chinese theater and a foreign mode of production of cinema that led to some intrinsic aesthetic and performative issues in the new genre? As Stephen Teo asks, "[w]as the genre's form hampered by the nature of opera, which has tended to

struggle to find contemporary audiences and to be relevant to the times?” and: “has cinema in a sense made opera irrelevant, meaning that the opera film itself is an anomaly?” (2013, 210)

What Teo has queried about the incompatibility of ‘opera film,’ I argue, asks for a new critical paradigm to explore the intergeneric creativity of the operatic-cinematic form. This chapter examines the intersemiotic translation of Chinese opera for cinema between stage and screen, looking into new ways to understand intermediality in the link between translation, adaptation, and cinematization of opera. Roman Jakobson coined the term ‘intersemiotic translation’ to designate the intermedial ‘transmutation’ of meanings as an interpretation of verbal signs “by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems” ([1959] 1987, 429). The notion expands the field of Translation Studies as an interdisciplinary venture, relating translation to other disciplines, in particular cinematic adaptation as intermsemiotic translation (Stathi 2015, 322). Significantly, both translation and screen adaptation have to overcome the criticism of originality and the accusation of betrayal, as a work of adaptation or translation is often judged based on a pre-existing literary, theatrical, or linguistic source (Stathi 2015, 321). The intersemiotic transfers in Translation Studies would be useful to understand early film theories of cinema and hybridity. The case of experimental fusion of Chinese theater and film echoed with André Bazin’s interest in the idea of ‘mixed cinema’. Bazin wrote “Theater and Cinema” ([1951] 2005) and “In Defense of Mixed Cinema” ([1952] 2005) in France to defend the adaptation of plays for the screen. The promise of a hybrid cinema intermingling various artistic and performative traditions evokes strong resonances with Hollywood cinema (for instance, the intimacy of Broadway plays and musicals and Hollywood films in the 1930s and 40s) as well as European cinematic traditions.

Western filmmakers have been fascinated with European theater traditions since the earliest days of silent film. For example, Shakespeare’s plays were a popular source of film adaptation in early cinema. One reason for Hollywood’s interest in Shakespeare was cultural respectability for the film medium (Anderegg 2000, 155). In his study of Shakespeare’s remaking through multiple media, Daniel Fischlin considers adaptation as a function of new communication technologies, and intermedial means as forms of representation “reconfigured through an array of media and cultural forms that arise out of specific contexts, diffuse histories, technologies, and creative practices.” Adaptation, enhanced by new technologies and viewed as intermedial transactions and reception, delegitimates the imagined originality of source-texts through the transformation, remediation, or hybridization as narratives “travel in and across media, in and through cultures” (2014, 3).

Adaptation study in recent decades has manifested a close link to intermediality, and the notion of ‘intersemiotic transfers’ would be helpful to understand the symbiosis of theater and Chinese cinema, which had a close affinity with opera

performance from the early twentieth century (Farquhar and Berry 2005). The operatic heritage in cinema has been little explored in Chinese film studies largely because of Chinese opera's distinctive performance codes, artistic features, linguistic registers, and indigenous stories. The transposition of theatrical performances into cinema can be conceived as a converging of media forms, blending and blurring the lines between the various media through which these visual performances are presented. The study looks at the intermediality of adaptation as a practice of intersemiotic translation, focusing on how the symbolism of Chinese theater can be translated into cinematic form.

Building on recent scholarly efforts to recover the dynamic varieties and modernity of opera and opera films in relation to motion picture technology, and a multifaceted mass audience in urban China (Berry and Farquhar 2006; Gao 2005; Teo 2013), I examine the artistic and pragmatic choices made by filmmakers as they wagered on new genres and representations by assimilating the operatic and the cinematic. The operatic means of cultural production and the inherent intertextuality of Chinese operatic performance have great potential to travel beyond the traditional boundary of the stage to different delivery channels advanced by new media technologies. Contesting the prejudice against any form of operatic visual entertainment as a 'feudal remnant' unsuitable for new cultural expressions, I view opera films as pioneering texts of generic crossover exemplifying cinematic modernity, and their champions and collaborators as cultural forerunners initiating novel forms of cultural production and exhibition.

As Fei and Mei engaged in adaptive crossovers between film and opera in generic and aesthetic terms, they attempted to expand the expressive borders of stage and screen, and forge a cultural identity of Chinese cinema. "Opera films are culturally significant because they can transmit the quintessence of Chinese culture", Fei noted. But he meant also to issue a warning based on his own opera filmmaking: "And yet, we take the risk of ruining both film and opera if we handle their medium improperly" ([1941] 1998, 81). This chapter studies the partnership of Fei and Mei in creating China's first color opera film. Whereas their experimental venture in opera filmmaking promised cinematic hybridity, it encountered aesthetic problems in a trans-media adaptation. First, as it is widely (and biasedly) assumed that cinema is intrinsically mimetic or realist, whereas Chinese opera is a symbolic and highly stylized art form (Farquhar and Berry 2006, 47), how does Fei and Mei reconcile the realistic tradition of cinema with the figurative nature of Chinese theater in their experimental venture? What is the quintessential character of Chinese opera film in the fusion of a traditional art form and the modern visual apparatus? My study interrogates the undervalued genre of Chinese opera film as well as the operatic-artistic factors and inspirations in filmmaking. The operatic function in film art denotes intertextual production and audience manipulation,

prompting inter-media and experimental fusions of stage performance and screen projection. The kaleidoscopic heritage of Chinese operatic performances – which encapsulates the country's culture and history, literature and philosophy, music and drama, the arts of evocation and body motion – has offered rich cultural resources for film pioneers to tap and readapt to the new opera film genre.

2. Mei Lanfang: Transmission of operatic heritage

In the winter of 1947, Fei went to visit Mei with the goal of convincing the esteemed opera star to make a color film of Beijing opera with him. At the moment when Fei entered his house in Shanghai, Mei was reading a letter from a Sichuan theatergoer, one of the many 'Mei-fans', who begged the idol to go to Sichuan to perform for the local audience. Mei responded to Fei with great enthusiasm. Showing Fei the fan letter, Mei explained that opera film could reach a wide audience for whom he could never play in person. Fei's proposal also interested Mei for another reason. The opera master was aging and would have seen film as a new medium with immense potential to preserve his stage performances and thereby popularize the art of Beijing opera. Elated by Mei's passion for the project, Fei nevertheless sounded a note of warning: "Though we shall all try our best, you must remember that there is a risk of failing in this first experiment" (Mei 1965b, 46). Mei responded that he had never feared taking risks in experimenting with new arts. His reply evidenced the opera master's enterprising attitude in venturing into the movie industry.

In fact, Mei had long appreciated the mutual attraction and interplay between Chinese theater and film, and understood that filmed operas could become immensely popular and break new ground. In the early phase of his stage career, Mei had demonstrated a sharp sensitivity to public visibility, and made great efforts to exploit the new film medium to promote his star image and performance skills (Mei 1965a). Mei was struck by the use of cinematic close-ups in moviemaking, confessing that the filmic technique had inspired him to improve his skills in facial expressions on stage. Besides, the operatic actor was no stranger to the urban media world. His stardom thrived as much in theatrical culture and mass entertainment as in China's flourishing publicity industry and mass media. Critics have compared Mei's star power to that of Rudolph Valentino (Goldstein 2007, 127). Just as Valentino was an emblem of sexuality and American commodification, Mei embodied a composite image of erotic power, artistic traditions, and national identity. His successful foreign tours to Japan (in 1919 and 1924), the U.S. (1930), and the Soviet Union (1935) made him an epitome of Chinese culture in international circles (Yeh 2007). By the 1930s, Mei enjoyed tremendous popularity owing to the proliferation of illustrated advertisements and journalistic coverage of his

activities in print media. Mei assumed disparate identities and played his roles equally well as an artistic figure and an icon of popular culture. A supreme female impersonator (*dan*) and beloved actor of the Chinese stage, a renowned celebrity, a national figure, a household name, and a brand name in Chinese consumer culture[1] – all evinced Mei's multifaceted flair for traversing the boundaries between the artistic and commercial realms.

Always curious about the latest cinematic developments, Mei was a great admirer of Hollywood's dream factory. During his 1930 trip to the U.S., Mei was invited by a Hollywood producer to make a film of Chinese theater at their studio. In expressing his interest in the newly-invented talkies, Mei said he hoped his film would be distributed in China rather than in the U.S. The Chinese visitor reportedly told his American host:

> It's my ambition to make a sound film that can go to all the parts of China that my company has never visited – indeed, even a lifetime would not be enough for one actor to show his art to all the communities of China. Now we can make use of this new Western technique to take this traditional art to all.   (Mei 1965a, 20)

Mei sensed that the Hollywood musical film was generally welcomed by the American audience. He also thought that the Hollywood musical form had certain parallels, as well as essential differences, with Beijing opera films. An enterprising opera actor as well as a film fan, Mei had already turned his eyes to the infant movie industry. Since the early 1920s, he had performed on the silent screen, being filmed by the Commercial Press and the North China Film Company respectively. In the 1920s, Mei actually chronicled his frustrated efforts to perform in filmed operas as an actor, and reflected on the artistic as well as practical obstacles for opera filmmaking to cross over between the two specific media. He recalled that filming techniques were quite primitive back then. Cameramen were in charge of the filming, and few film directors truly understood the art of Beijing opera. Mechanically recording the actor's dancing, acting, and choreographed movements, these short filmed operas turned out to be vulgar documentaries of lesser artistic value, monotonously done with a stable camera and uncut scenes in long shot. The opera artist believed that, while the filmed operas promised to lend further popularity to his stage reputation and movie stardom, they made little achievement in integrating the arts of classical opera and cinema (Mei 1965a, 14–17).

Mei continued to look for potential partners to make his stage performance available via new visual media. Before the war, Mei purportedly had discussed with the playwright / screenwriter Ouyang Yuqian the adaptation of historical plays by working with new writers such as Yao Ke and Tian Han (Gunn 1980, 120). Despite

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1. Advertisement for the "Mei Lanfang" cigarettes in *Shenbao*, 7 January 1930, 2.

his openness and willingness to adapt his talent to work with modern-style dramatists, however, Mei failed to put any of his collaborative plans to fruition. By the time Mei received Fei's proposal of opera filmmaking, the master performer was over fifty. Shooting an opera film with a serious artist like Fei could well be his last chance to display his virtuosity on the silver screen, thereby perpetrating the art of Chinese opera beyond the stage for an audience nationwide as well as for posterity. A successful opera film would also help to shore up the operatic culture in its fierce competition with the powerful and growing threats of cinema and visual media.

Mei's debut opera film thus came late in his performance career. Mei and Fei had become acquainted in Hong Kong, where they both resided during the Second Sino-Japanese War. When Mei was eager to return to stage life in postwar Shanghai after almost a decade of self-imposed seclusion in protest against the Japanese occupation of China, Fei helped to re-launch his career by producing a series of *kunqu* performances that featured Mei and Yu Zhenfei, another celebrated opera actor.[2] These intrepid artists of theater and cinema finally decided to make a film of *A Wedding in the Dream*. Fei secured money from Wu Xincai, head of the Wenhua Film Company, to finance the production. The partners hoped to expand the borders of stage and screen with the creative potential of opera film, and to modernize Chinese film production with new technologies. Fei enlisted the cooperation of Yan Heming, who had experience with color film in Hollywood. The film was to be made on 16 mm Kodachrome and enlarged for theater exhibition. The director envisioned that stage properties of opera – for example, the colorful costumes and flamboyant makeup – were conducive to visual representation in color film. Fei undertook another innovation by having Mei's singing and speech pre-recorded in the soundtrack and lip-synchronized later to playback during shooting, in order to increase the flexibility of the camerawork.

Mei and Fei worked very hard with the film crew on the picture production from June to November 1948. Their efforts, unfortunately, did not yield to the high level of recognition that they had anticipated. Released in 1949, *A Wedding in the Dream* regrettably failed to attain instant popularity. Nor did it elicit the critical acclaim that the filmmaker and opera artist had expected. According to the advertising pages of *Shen bao*, the opera film had only a short release in Shanghai's theaters, running for just a couple of weeks between March 23 and April 10 in 1949.

The film production was understandably constrained by certain technical problems. The color photography and sound recording innovations were technically deficient. Ultimately, the colors of the finished picture were blurred on the screen. Mei felt deeply disappointed and defeated. He could not hope to have the

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2. Bai Xianyong stated that he had attended Mei's first public *kunqu* performance in Shanghai after the war, which led to the writer's lifetime infatuation with the *kunqu* opera.

film distributed widely, and expressed his intent to "throw it [the film] into the Huangpu River" (Mei 1965b, 47).

Besides these technical and material constraints, the fundamental aesthetic problems of cinematizing Chinese opera troubled the pioneering artists. Before discussing these aesthetic hurdles, let me draw attention to the notion of cinema as a drive to preserve and memorize a performative tradition and culture. Susan Sontag once made the following remark: "Cinema is a time machine. Movies preserve the past, while theaters – no matter how devoted to the classics, to old plays – can only 'modernize'. Movies resurrect the beautiful dead; present intact vanished or ruined environments" (Sontag [1966] 2005, 145). To be sure, Mei willingly embraced the new visual medium, treating film on the one hand as a 'mirror' for an artist to observe his own artistry on stage, and hoping on the other that his superlative performance and stage art might be perpetuated and popularized among a nationwide audience. The operatic master seemingly did not abhor the loss of 'aura', as cautioned by Walter Benjamin in the 1930s, in which the aesthetic vitality of his stage art could be compromised by reproduced cinematic representation (Benjamin [1936] 2002). Technological reproducibility would rather mean for the opera artist a certain utopian opportunity to conserve his great artistry, possibly making his fame more durable than ever. Conceivably, cinema would make the operatic cultural world visible to posterity and even immortal.

Fei must have believed that the new opera picture combined with filmic technologies would put a stamp of stylishness on Chinese film as a complete artifact. For the filmmaker, the opera master could lend his authorial stature, superb performative flair, and the cultural prominence of Beijing opera to his film to make it a memorable piece of art. Opera films, in other words, would allow the audience to gain access to the cultural past. Making an outstanding opera film of high artistic worth and technological savvy would effectively rebrand Chinese cinema as an aesthetically autonomous genre standing above native popular movies as well as foreign (mainly Hollywood) rivals.

Given his cultural ambitions, Fei's filming strategy seems far too respectful of the rules of Beijing opera and Mei's operatic competence. Fei treated the cinematic medium in a way as to 'record' the master's performance and preserve the 'rules' on screen for later generations. In retrospect, Fei's filmic remaking of Chinese opera switched stylistic efforts toward the condensation and consecration of the 'original' faces of operatic arts, rather than reinventing and invigorating those forms with more playful and experimental endeavors. When their new operatic film turned out to be an economic loss, Fei and Mei could only bet on the film's success in getting favorable reviews. But in this case, Fei's dutiful allegiance to the 'cultural authority' of Mei and the operatic past may have discouraged him from taking further chances and making more radical stylistic changes.

3.   Fei Mu: Restoring the operatic stage in cinematic reproduction

Fei Mu was arguably the forefather of a unique Chinese opera film style. Between 1937 and 1948, he produced various screen adaptations of Beijing opera, including *Murder at the Oracle* [*Zhan jingtang*] (1937), *Songs of Old China* [*Gu Zhongguo zhi ge*] (1941), *The Little Cowherd* [*Xiao fangniu*] (1948), and *A Wedding in the Dream* [*Shengsi hen*] (1948). Born into a middle-class Shanghai family, Fei had been well immersed in Chinese cultural traditions and arts since childhood, while he was exposed to Western culture and education in a French secondary school. After leaving his secure job as a bank accountant in his early twenties, Fei joined China's booming movie industry. He steered his own particular course of cinematic exploration, always hoping to blend Chinese culture into cinematic expressions. At an early stage, the director nurtured a critical interest in film's appropriation of spoken dramas and stage operas. He viewed the integration of the modern stage play (*wenming xi*) and spoken drama (*huaju*) into early Chinese film as productive from an aesthetic perspective. Yet Fei did not see film developing along a teleological or evolutionary path, in which modern drama replaces traditional opera as an advanced form of visual performance and hence is more suited to the cinematic medium. Indeed, in 1940s wartime Shanghai, Fei turned to the stage (as he refused to do filmmaking in the Japanese-sponsored film world) to make historical costume plays. He incorporated cinematic techniques into stage presentations, showing his deep interest in merging the different media, blending modern visuality into the stagy world of the past.

Fei was credited with authorship of at least four plays during the war years. All were based on traditional Chinese sources, and had considerable popular appeal as well as positive critical reception. These were *Dream of Plum Blossoms* [*Meihua meng*] (1941), *Concubine Yang* [*Yang Guifei*] (1942), *Concubine Xiang* [*Xiang fei*] (1943), and *Six Chapters from a Floating Life* [*Fusheng liuji*] (1943), of which the latter had a run of over three months. Critics noted the lyrical quality dominant in his plays, attributable to the refined dialogue and background music, and "the usual care and thoughtfulness given to gestures and movement", as though "Fei Mu were turning a stage play into a film". Fei's techniques and innovations on the modern stage seem "bent on restoring the full theatrical potential of the classical drama to the less colorful and unmusical stage" (Gunn 1980, 147).

In merging theater and cinema, Fei put emphasis on the mise-en-scène, a mobile background, and finely drawn sentiments. His reinvention of the theater apparently had not cast off the influence of the cinema. While the historical play was steeped in tradition, he used the stylized elements of music, speech, and gestures of classical Chinese theater to embellish and 'modernize' the theatricality and expressive capacity of modern drama. Like his opera films, the stage productions were experimental collaborations of different performative devices and effects.

One of his former stage collaborators, Sun Qiying, gave an account of how Fei handled the second scene of *Concubine Yang*:

> An imperial concubine, no longer in the emperor's favor, desolately longs for his visit. She meticulously prepares herself, and starts to dance. At this time, the palace eunuch suddenly reports: "His Majesty is busy today. He won't be coming!" Concubine Mei collapses in dismay. The eunuch helps her up. ([1985] 1998, 186)

As Ain-ling Wong observes, "[t]his scene lasted about ten minutes. The performance was sensational. Concubine Mei had no lines at all. There was only this one line from the eunuch in the whole scene. There were no props, only an empty stage with a yellow silk curtain. Music ran through the whole scene, starting with grandiose palace music, which gradually became tender, and ended up (being) sad and despairing" (2000, 57–58).

Here one gets a glimpse of Fei's innovative approach to mixing modern theater and traditional opera. The musical form inherited from the operatic structure is insinuated into the theater as background music to deliver a certain lyrical character to modern drama. Siu-sun Koo (2008, 145) considers Fei's *Concubine Yang* an exemplar of successful screen transplants, as the play "blended cinematic imagery and opera elements to create a sensational theatre experience, which was inspirational to a Chinese theatre coming of age". Fei's opera-and-stage operations could possibly have resulted in a more satisfactory synthesis of the two performative media through the use of stage sets and music. Ain-ling Wong notes:

> The simplicity of the stage setting obviously came from traditional Beijing and Kun operas. The scene was handled with both cinematic and operatic touches. Fei Mu temporarily forgot about drama and concentrated on creating 'atmosphere' with music. Lithe and elegant body movements of the actress outlined a complicated mental landscape.   (Wong 2000, 57–58)

Transplanting the opera to the screen, however, involves formal and aesthetic problems hardly capable of being resolved. Reflecting on his earlier filming experience in the 1920s, Mei observed that as most movements of the Beijing opera were symbolic, and as film chiefly aimed at reflecting reality, there would be a conflict between the two media. Fei likewise opined that film was quintessentially realistic while Chinese opera was stylized. "People generally underestimate the difficulties of cinematizing opera", remarked Fei in 1941. "As a result, the so-called 'cinematization of Beijing opera' (*Jingju dianying hua*) turns into the 'opera-ization of film' (*dianying Jingju hua*)" (Fei [1941] 1998, 81). The director was opposed to the idea of indiscriminately committing operatic techniques and expressions to film, that is, an overemphasis on the signification of film. He was seeking a new filmic practice to reconcile the figurative nature of Chinese opera and the realistic character of cinema.

In his first opera film, *Murder at the Oracle*, Fei adopted a realistic approach to portray the film's sceneries and settings. Here he followed the advice of Zhou Xinfang, a celebrated opera actor and the male lead of the play. The set and props were done in a naturalistic fashion, replete with verisimilar images of flags, fortresses, and bushes in the background. It was against this elaborate backdrop of realistic details that Zhou performed the simulated stage acts such as horse riding and fighting. The eminent leftist dramatist Tian Han, however, indicated that the actor's stylized movement failed to integrate into the film's realistic decors and vistas in an aesthetically satisfying fashion (Tian Han [1937] 1998). The evocative power of operatic performance was simply undermined by the film's realistic mise-en-scène. Fei's screen attempt had difficulty in reconciling the realistic tradition of cinema with the figurative nature of Chinese opera. In the age of realism, the consensus would be to forgo the evocative power of opera in order to give way to hard realism in cinema.[3]

There are discernable contrasts between the theatrical and cinematic representation. Opera establishes a theatrical world of pretense that is articulated by unnatural, i.e., stylized, means of communication. Stylization refers to specific codes of performance richly developed in the Chinese operatic traditions, such as painted faces, falsetto singing, refined speech, conventional patterns of stage movement in acting and dancing. Opera actors act in a fashion remote from real life by virtue of stylization or the 'symbolic' nature of Chinese theatrical performance. Cinema, in contrast, promotes a greater sense of realism and fosters the illusion of a space without limits. Film has a hold over the world of reality, thanks to the cinematographic means of reproduction which is able to recapture reality in time and space. To Bazin ([1955] 2005), the photographic nature of cinema defines the ontology of realism of the filmic medium. Even when the screen opens upon an artificial world and fosters the illusion of space and time, the cinematographic image is still based on an inalienable realism, i.e., the existential reality in which we live. Viewed from this perspective, Fei's challenge lay in resolving the dialectic between cinematic realism and theatrical figuration and conventions. While cinema invariably captures the actualities of objects and nature of reality, stage performance relies heavily on symbolic props and sets, and the actor's elaborate performance and metaphorical treatment of objects and settings (for example, the whip to denote a horse, a performer 'pointing at' the space of terrain over which the character is traveling).

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3. In opposition to the realistic tendency in Chinese cinema, Siu-sun Koo (2008, 151) argues that "film is made for the surreal and the fantastic, which has given birth to German expressionist cinema and surrealist cinema of France and Spain."

In wrestling with the generic differences between opera and film, Fei's adaptation might have consciously or involuntarily engaged the intellectual debates on the status of traditional Chinese theater in modern culture. For May Fourth intelligentsia like Fu Sinian and Hu Shi, the Beijing opera tradition, as Mei's acting brilliantly demonstrated, stood for traditionalism and archaism. They decried the artificiality and unrealistic features of the Chinese theater as deceptive and crude forms resistant to Chinese cultural modernization. May Fourth luminaries championed mimetic realism in literature, drama, and the arts as progressive and modern, and lashed out at the non-mimetic leanings of Beijing opera as the hallmark of cultural backwardness. In the opposite camp, the playwright Qi Rushan, Mei's longtime collaborator and an aficionado of operatic arts, valorized the symbolic nature and stylization of Beijing opera in an effort to reform old forms of Chinese drama and resuscitate ancient aesthetic traditions.

Qi's firm rejection of realism and his espousal of figurative representation in repackaging Beijing opera gave rise to historical oddities in Western cultural perceptions of Chinese opera. Mei's 1935 Soviet Union cultural tour and his stage performance overwhelmed leading progressive dramatists and filmmakers, including Bertolt Brecht, Vsevolod Meyerhold and Sergei Eisenstein. His acting struck the foreign critics as the epitome of a modernist Oriental theater of anti-illusion and minimalist expression. Arguably, the Beijing opera actor inspired Brecht's famous notion of 'estrangement effects' (*Verfremdungseffekte*).[4] Eisenstein (1935, 764) blatantly claimed that "pure realism has been banished from the Chinese stage". While enough critical attention has been given to the irony of differential cultural perceptions of Mei's art in the context of Chinese-Western intercultural theater, it is the conflicting views on the realistic and figurative character of Chinese opera that relates to Fei's problems in screen adaptation.[5]

It is no surprise that Qi would have strongly objected to Mei's temptation to venture into a different medium to promote Beijing opera, considering the risk that filmmaking could contaminate the 'purity' and 'authenticity' of the operatic arts represented by Mei. The conservative dramatist and critic once told the press about his fear that Fei's film might ruin Mei's art:

> It would be better to sell abroad the oldest forms [of arts]. We don't worry about them [foreigners] criticizing [the forms] as too old. They rather appreciate the purely Chinese stuff. On the contrary, if we make it [opera] like spoken drama, they would consider it childish.   (Qi 1948, unpaginated)

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4. After he witnessed Mei's acting style in Moscow in 1935, Brecht reflected on traditional Chinese theater arts and wrote "Estrangement Effects in Chinese Acting" ([1936] 1964).

5. For a monograph study on this subject, see Tian (2008).

Qi believed that the film adaptation would deprive Chinese theater of its cultural distinction, and particularly so in the eyes of foreign audiences. Qi would have disliked Bazin's idea of "mixed cinema" because of the Chinese dismissal of any hybrids or mixtures of operatic and dramatic performances. He therefore teased the crossover filmmaking by Fei and Mei as a weird creature resembling "neither ass nor horse" (*fei lü fei ma*) (Qi 1948, unpaginated).

In the face of Qi's prejudices and objections, Fei and Mei launched their attempt to transgress the limits of opera and film. Mixing history and romance, *A Wedding in the Dream* concerns a young couple captured by invading tribes from the northern Jin troops during the Song dynasty in the 12th century. The two young captives are wed, in obedience to a Jin rule. The new wife encourages her slave husband to flee so that the man can organize people in their native land to strike back at the enemy. She promises to wait faithfully for his return. The husband leaves one of his embroidered shoes as a token of remembrance in parting. After his departure, the wife undergoes great suffering and torture. Ten years later, having achieved fame and rank in his own country, the husband finds the wife, still a captive. Weakened by hardship and ill-treatment, she dies in his arms.

The script of *A Wedding in the Dream* came from Mei's adaptation of a Ming-dynasty *chuanqi* play called *Token of Shoes* (*Yixie ji*). Mei first staged the play in Shanghai theaters in 1936, and changed the original happy ending to make it a tragedy. The original popularity of the play was owed to its intriguing plot, Mei's stardom, and the evidently patriotic flavors of suffering and exile at a time when China was plagued by Japanese invasion. Premiered in Shanghai in February 1936, the play was tremendously popular – so much so that the Japanese-controlled government tried to intervene to stop it (Mei Shaowu 2005, 216). Fei's opera film adaptation obviously exuded the ambience of a defeated China in the rather different atmosphere of postwar Shanghai.

In adapting the play to the screen, Fei stated four chief strategies to settle the differences between the Chinese opera and cinema. (1) It would not be a simple documentary-style filmed opera. (2) On the one hand, the film had to respect the original play, with the goal to capture the techniques and norms of the operatic forms. (3) On the other hand, filming should try to avoid excessive presentation of the simulated movements and abstract props found in traditional theatrical performance. (4) Fei sought to achieve a productive interaction between film and opera, so that the figurative nature of operatic performance could still convey authentic emotions to the audience.

Fei and Mei then agreed to shorten the original script from twenty-one to nineteen acts, cutting out some dialogues and certain scenes. The alterations in dramatic structure were undertaken to make the film sufficiently spectacular,

bringing forth visual aspects of setting, atmosphere, and body movement.[6] Furthermore, Fei's adaptation highlighted the film's visuality in cinematography and the mise-en-scène. The aural elements are equally important. Mei's singing and musical accompaniment were crucial on the screen. Early film theoreticians have indicated the intrinsic formal importance of music in film. Balázs ([1952] 1985, 121), for example, notes that music and singing express the dramatic movement of the character's thoughts and emotions, and such emotional or intellectual linkages can play a decisive dramaturgical part. In a similar vein, Fei sought to make the most of the talking screen by incorporating Mei's singing and operatic music to augment the film's emotional appeal and poetic evocation.

Acts 14 ("Night Lament") and 15 ("Dream") illustrate Fei's employment of audiovisual techniques to achieve such effects. These two scenes have been split from a single act in the original play, so as to illuminate Mei's stylistic acting and poetic expressions in prolonged film sequences. They narrate the heroine's pining for her husband and dreaming of their reunion, shortly before her death. In filming "Night Lament", theatrical and film members in the crew had divided opinions on using the original 'symbolic' stage backdrop or the 'realistic' form of constructed film sets. They decided to do a screen test in the theatrical style, with simplified props such as "a chair and a small loom" on the stage, where Mei sang and performed his body movements. The director filmed it as a long shot in one continuous take. Mei was unsatisfied with the screen test and especially the visual effect, since he found his performance appeared merely monotonous on the planar space of the screen. Fei explained to him the visual contrasts of stage and screen:

> A performance on the stage is in three dimensions, while a performance on the screen is in two dimensions. If a film performance has not been calculated to allow for this difference, the acting will seem stagnant and slow.   (1965b, 47)

Conversant with both dramatic and cinematic practices, Fei realized the demarcation between theater and cinema and their varied aesthetic effects. Theater is confined to a continuous use of space on the stage. Cinema has access to a discontinuous or a fragmented sense of screen space through the use of editing or camerawork. In the theater, the flesh-and-blood actor is the center, and his or her live performance humanly interacts with the spectator. Mei's charm and operatic skills on stage called for active audience participation in this sense. Fei understood the reversed value of the actor on screen as the core problem in filmed theater performance. While Mei possessed supreme charisma on the stage as a flesh-and-blood actor, Mei as an onscreen image is a photographic representation and only a part of the mise-en-scène. The director sought to transform the theatricality of

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6. For a discussion about the performance of *A Wedding in the Dream*, see Zheng (1999).

the play (consisting of painted sceneries, symbolic stage designs, and the acoustic effects of opera) in a cinematic form enhanced by the workings of cinematography and editing.

In transposing a stage performance to film, the opera actor often has to lose his sense of continuity in the actual filming process. Mei experienced this problem in his earlier attempts. He was weary after the long and monotonous process of filmmaking with 'shootings' repeated *ad nauseam*. He found his acting invariably disrupted by changing shots and repeated takes. The integrity of his acting, dancing, and singing was broken. He actually found it difficult to hold coherent emotions and dexterous skills as he could on stage. Walter Benjamin was right in pointing out that a stage actor in person presents the artistic performance to the public audience, but it is the camera that presents the actor's performance on screen. The camera that presents the performance of the film actor to the public need not respect the performance as an integrated whole. Different from the stage actor whose performance in its original form is carried out in front of a randomly composed audience, the film actor's performance is subjected to a series of optical tests before the camera as well as presented before "a group of specialists – executive producer, director, cinematographer, sound recording, lighting designer, and so on – who are in a position to intervene in his performance at any time" (Benjamin [1936] 2002, 110–111).

To respond to the disruptive effect of camerawork and the complex interventions in filmmaking, Fei adopted creative camera movement in making *A Wedding in the Dream*. In performing the "Night Lament" scene, the mobility of the camerawork helped to inject a sense of visual fluidity into Mei's performance, and spatial mobility into the otherwise static two-dimensional movie frame. This scene is crucial in delivering the heroine's emotion and longing as Mei sings and dances on the loom. Present-day critics tend to praise the deployment of the moving camera in this scene, which follows Mei's dancing steps around the loom. The filmic experiment combines theatrical movement and camerawork to give rise to an aesthetic of mobility. In the sequence, Fei staged a realistic prop – a big weaving loom – as the backdrop for Mei's performance. The director found the originally abstract stage device – a miniature loom – lacking expressive power on a two-dimensional screen. Mei developed improvised movements and gestures to accompany his singing on the big weaving loom. The actor later emphasized that the realistic device had stimulated him to renew his body movement and skills. In adding the realistic décor and spectacle, Fei at the same time created the unity of the loom scene by letting Mei complete his stylized movement and virtuoso display in a long take.

Public views on *A Wedding in the Dream* and Mei's performance were polarized, however. Some critics heaped praises on Mei's performance on screen and

recognized the color film's contribution to bringing the renowned opera actor to a wider audience. Others disparaged the film's fidelity to the original text as merely a faithful recording of Mei's performance on stage. The negative comments were quite right in faulting the excessive loyalty to Mei's performance. A critic in *Xinmin bao wankan* commented: "In adapting the film, Fei appears as no different from a normal spectator. He watches Mei's stage performance with rapt attention, and directs the cinematography to faithfully record Mei's performance without much revision." (30 March 1949, unpaginated) A. C. Scott, Mei's biographer, was even more severe:

> Apart from this, the blending of traditional stage technique with that of the cinema was not happily achieved. The realistic backgrounds and the stylized technique and costume of the actors were ill-matched, and the play was not the best of choices for a film. Its conventional, almost hackneyed, pathos, required the severity of Peking [Beijing] stage technique to bring out its dramatic quality; translated into screen terms, with realistic settings and wide vistas, it lost its point.   (1971, 126)

Shortly after its release and disappointing reviews, Fei in an open statement took the responsibility himself and attributed the shortcomings of the film to technical difficulties with the color film. The director blamed himself for putting undue emphasis on color at the expense of the original play written by Mei. Apparently, the deficiency of technology and the color problem did not live up to the film's realistic advantages. Fei believed in film's distinctive capacity to index physical reality when representing the physicality of the performer and the stage performance, for example, the actor's physical figure and movement, the colorful costumes and painted masks, and the use of close-up to emphasize the actor's facial expressions. After watching the opera film, however, one could find that these colorful faces, body movements, and visual spectacles are cinematically ill-disposed to become artistically captivating images on screen.

Besides the technical problems, there is an inherent incongruence between film's realistic tendency and theater's symbolic expressive nature. The transposing of operatic performance to the screen is primarily an issue of artistic expression in fusing two separate media, involving insurmountable obstacles as well as exciting possibilities. It entails representational problems in blending the operatic and cinematic practices to negotiate between stage arts (sets and sceneries, actor's performance and acting) and film aesthetics (cinematography, editing, and mise-en-scène). A film's aesthetic achievement relies on the contents of the expressive techniques, actors' performances, and auteurish agency in transforming stage presentation into screen representation.

But more incisive criticism must find fault with Fei's devotion to faithfully representing the operatic performance without much recreation. In deference to

Mei's wishes, the director opted to preserve the unity and integrity of his operatic performance before the camera. The opera film therefore betrays minimal editing techniques and cinematic reconstructions. Fei rendered the theatricality of the play far too loyally, at the expense of creative cinematic expression and freedom to make the most of the creative edges of film and theater. For instance, cinema excels in sudden jumps in space and time through editing and cinematography. In Chinese theater, the passage of time and space is indicated by the symbolic action or simply the actor's singing and solo recitals. The challenge lies in the way to achieve effectual cross-fertilization of the respective media by manipulating temporality and spatiality in opera film storytelling. In the final dream sequence of *A Wedding in the Dream*, Fei used montage shots to feature the real and unreal in the heroine's consciousness, but the effect is limited to so small a scale that it cannot make up for the film's overall shortcomings. The dream episode has remained the only inspirational moment in the film, with a stylistic potential to mix fantasy and reality as the boundary between theater and the screen collapses. In short, Fei's collaborative filming process with Mei reveals the crucial factors of acting, emotion, and spatial and temporal configurations in filmic visuality.

4.   Coda

This study takes cinematic adaptation as a means of intermediary, intergeneric, and intersemiotic translation to render Chinese opera memorable and accessible to a wider audience in cinema. I treat opera film as a hybrid and experimental form of operatic cinema, delineating the experimentalism of the filmmakers and the performers as they carve out creative potential in between the different performative media.

Fei Mu used the newest medium of film as a tool to preserve the cultural triumph of Chinese opera, once considered a feudal remnant in his time, unfit for modern Chinese culture. The cultural past appears as much a burden as a creative impetus and challenge for artists who strive to modernize it in visual adaptation and inter-media representation. In making the first color opera film, Fei explained that the rules of traditional operas were formulated through the centuries by such a great performing artist as Mei Lanfang, who succeeded in transforming them into an ironclad discipline. Fei then faced the challenge, however, as to how to achieve an organic synthesis of Mei's symbolic stage performance with cinema's iconic realism characterized by its representation of three-dimensional space and the screen projection of time. Fei sought to elevate Chinese cinema with the cultural authority and respectability of the opera art forms, but at the same time maintain his creative camerawork.

Transplanting the operatic world into cinema in *A Wedding in the Dream* promised cinematic hybridity, but it was no easy task as the earliest experimentation. What are the stakes involved in venturing a new film genre when the performer and filmmaker collaborated to push the old and new medium to their limits to explore the borders between visual, aural, and literary forms and performances? David Der-wei Wang celebrates Fei Mu's creative camerawork in the film to "advance his poetics of life as illusion vs. realism" (2013, 69), whereas Stephen Teo argues that opera films were already "*too* signified" to be freely adapted to the modern form of cinema (2013, 210). The divergent views testify to how the opera film served as a testing ground for many key technological advances (color scheme and synchronized sound) as well as balancing indigenous and Western cultural practices in Chinese cinematic adaptation.

The study highlights not only technological and corporeal dimensions of media but also cultural and social factors in the artists' joint venture as they sought to overcome the superiority of fidelity and its biased hostility to adaptation. Fei and Mei struggled to reconcile the realistic tradition of cinema with the figurative nature of Chinese theatre. The realistic bent of cinema endows the visual medium with the power to project an imaginary world that looks real. In theatre, the creation of an illusion of the real world is difficult but not crucial, as the viewers respect the theatrical convention that helps them to accept the performance as it is, in other words, as an "abstraction of reality" (Stathi 2015, 323). Whereas "film provides the illusion of reality" and "theatre provides the reality of illusion" (Kattenbelt, 2006, 37), both Fei and Mei attempted to expand the boundary or stage of intermediality in Chinese opera film, a "nonmimetic mode of Chinese cinema", based not on Chinese appropriations of Western-style realism but on the dynamic extension of local popular cultural forms (Farquhar and Berry 2006, 47–48). The study ponders the issues of intermediality and intersemiotic transfers in opera films as creative screen adaptations, and redefines theater and cinema not as a composite medium in itself but as a venue of intermediality and a fulcrum of confluence of various media forms and performative practices.

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Fluid borders: From *Carmen* to *The Car Man*. Bourne's ballet in the light of post-translation

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This paper takes Matthew Bourne's *The Car Man* as an example of today's *enlarged* definition of translation, following Maria Tymoczko's, Susan Bassnett's, Edwin Gentzler's and other, new post-positivist approaches to contemporary translation. Bourne's post-translation offers an up-to-date version of Bizet's world: he deconstructs genres and genders by subverting opera and dance, but also straight and gay binary oppositions, thus creating richer and more ambiguous identities and characters. Bourne's translation in *The Car Man* wants his intersemiotic rewriting of the past to be more down to earth and more real, taking ballet and opera closer to a new audience. *The Car Man* is a paradigm of crossroads which breaks away from linear discourses and binary oppositions and which opts for less common lines and different angles. In sum, a contemporary translation.

Keywords: translation, post-translation, identity, intersemiotic rewritings, ideology, queer translation theory, gender

1.   Introduction

On August 9, 2015, newspapers all over the world published the news of the death of the British principal ballet dancer Jonathan Ollivier in a motorcycling accident, just a few hours before he was due to appear at Sadler's Wells in the 2015 season's last performance of *The Car Man,* where he was dancing the role of Luca. Ollivier had also danced the role of the swan in *Swan Lake* and the leading role in *Play without Words*, two of Matthew Bourne's most successful works. One of life's tragic coincidences. The driver of the car which crashed into Ollivier was charged with reckless driving.

   Matthew Bourne is currently a most successful international choreographer. His subversion of genres is obvious right from the outset, from the first time you

see one of his dance productions – since his dance theatre is a form of drama and many of his choreographies are *rewritings* of previous films and literary and operatic works. But subversion of genders is also present elsewhere, as he also re-writes the content of many older operas, including the gay element and dissolving the traditional masculine/feminine binary opposition. This is what he does in *The Car Man*, which I analyse in this paper as a *post-translation* of the opera *Carmen*, by Georges Bizet.

Several theoretical considerations inform my hypothesis, i.e., that Bourne is a translator, which serves as a starting-point for this paper: (1) for decades, there has been a new epistemology which facilitates the dissolving of binarisms and promotes the fluid borders between the genres and genders Bourne's dance pro-ductions are based on, and (2) this new epistemology has resulted in very signifi-cant transformations both in musicology and in translation studies, which have made it possible to enlarge the definition of translation and music, by incorpo-rating questions of race, gender, and power. All these categories will appear in Bourne's translations.

For this reason, I have divided this paper into three parts. The first part exam-ines the changes in epistemology. The second looks at how these epistemological changes have modified the definitions of music and translation. Finally, the third part analyses Bourne's work as a *post-translation*. I take Matthew Bourne's *The Car Man* as an example of today's *enlarged* definition of translation, following the new post-positivist approaches to contemporary translation of Maria Tymoczko (2007), Susan Bassnett (2011), David Johnston (2013), Edwin Gentzler (2003, 2015, 2017), and many others. The step Matthew Bourne takes from *Carmen* to *The Car Man* is a translation, not only from an intersemiotic translation, in the words of Roman Jakobson, but as a post-translation (Gentzler 2017), as a her-meneutic rewriting in a world ruled by a very different epistemology to that of several decades ago.

2.   The new epistemology

> […] being prepared to receive what thought is not prepared to think is what de-serves the name of thinking.   (Lyotard [1988] 1991, 73)

The 20th century was characterised by spectacular changes in epistemology which affected all branches of knowledge, starting with philosophy. It could be said that this began on the day Nietzsche declared universal Truth (with a capital T) to be dead. All previous theories about Truth – from Socrates and Plato to Hegel – which had long validated the objectiveness of knowledge, were relegated to the

past. The author of *The Gay Science* was soon followed by Marx and Freud, and the three became what Paul Ricœur called in 1965 "*les maîtres du soupçon*", the masters of the school of suspicion. This was a continuous process which forged its way into Western epistemological bases throughout the 20th century, with the aim of proposing other ways of interpreting reality, to displace the privileges of speculative reason and leave logocentrism behind. Martin Heidegger (1953) introduced us to concepts like 'openness', 'being-in-the-world', '*Gelassenheit*', '*Holzwege*' – which were very useful when it came to creating comprehensible epistemological confusion. Michel Foucault (1966) took things even further, and proposed the death of Man. Jacques Lacan ([1973] 1998) propounded a theory which led to the removal of the subject. Julia Kristeva (1974) presented her concepts of 'intertextuality', 'phenotext' and 'genotext'; in general, the members of the *Tel Quel* group favoured experimentalism and the dissolution of any binary opposition in the field of dialectical materialism. François Lyotard (1985) put forward a philosophy of the sublime which refused to preside the ineffable tribunal of Reason, which from the very start had led Western metaphysics, and in *The Differend* ([1983] 1988) he aimed to go beyond any essentialism. Jacques Derrida (1981) claimed that philosophy is only "the question of the possibility of the question", immersed in the "ruin of representation" or the "closure of absolute knowledge", thus threatening the concept of structure (Derrida [1967] 2005, 351–370). The mood of May 1968 prioritised non-hierarchical and inclusive notions of the text as a vast mosaic of other texts, and this directly questioned both the concept of a unified self (especially a male subject position in hierarchical structures of knowledge and power) and the pre-eminence of referential connections between language and the world. An endless connectivity of a world as text, or its later deconstruction, was revealed, and allowed for Bakhtinian polyphonic and carnivalesque ideologemes in order that the status quo will be challenged (Orr [2003] 2008, 2–3, 28).

Gianni Vattimo and Pier Aldo Rovatti (1983) opened the way to cynicism, weakness and surface, by thinking that operated in paradoxical terms. And, for his part, Gilles Deleuze (1969) proposed the inversion of Platonism in his conclusions to *Logique du sens*, which discusses mainly the meaning of meaning. By inverting Platonism, Deleuze rejected the traditional idea of representation and staked the claim for simulation opposite sameness and reproduction, the claim that simulation should not be a degraded copy but rather that the original and what derives from it should be series which become interiorised in the simulation, with no kind of hierarchy between them, and no privileged point of view. And all this in a universe with no centres like the one proposed by Maurice Blanchot (1965). In short, an era of broken hegemonies, as labelled by Reiner Shürmann (1996), lacking all *arché*.

Thus, whereas the Enlightened modernism of Descartes or Kant saw Reason as a universal faculty, thinkers such as Horkheimer and Adorno, Lyotard and Rorty, and many others, have revealed the limits and dangers of Reason and aim to highlight the conventions that permeate human transactions. In this same line of thinking, another key philosophical concept, the self, has been deconstructed: according to post-structuralist philosophy, there is no longer a unified core self, but decentred individuals who are the product of language and discourse, and who no longer believe in a fixed Truth which mirrors the correspondence between language and reality.

All these attempts, and many others, to overcome traditional binary visions of reality have resulted in the birth of a new epistemology which, undoubtedly, is proving very useful for analysing the reality we are experiencing today: global, hybrid, as rich as it is complex. Far from purity and univocity, 21st-century society has moved from solid hardware to liquid software (Bauman 2000), to paradigms such as loop and entropy (Beck [2004] 2006). Our contemporary world is made up of many worlds which become interrelated and irremissibly linked together. So, it is not important to know who we are, but "what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves" (Hall and Du Gay [1996] 2005, 4). Identities are constructed within representation and not outside it, within discourse and through difference, although the dominating power aims to create certain identities as 'other', as different according to Western categories of knowledge, and wants that Other to see themselves and feel different within a regime formed by the Foucaultian Power / Knowledge duo. Identities are constructed through, not outside, difference. This entails the radically disturbing recognition that it is only through the relation to the Other, the relation to what it is not, to what it lacks, to what has been called its *constitutive outsider*, that the 'positive' meaning of any term – and thus its 'identity' – can be constructed. Every identity has at its 'margin', an excess, something more. The unity, the internal homogeneity, which the term treats as foundational is not a natural, but a constructed form of closure (Hall and Du Gay 2005, 4–5).

In a global society which, at least with regard to its philosophical bases, has largely overcome traditional binarist dialectics and solid and fixed definitions of identities and which, on the contrary, prefers fluid borders, liquid definitions, while it takes pleasure in mixing, joining and bringing into conflict different ways of looking at the world (Bauman 2007, 2006, 2004, 1995). A world based on cosmopolitan spaces in the Appiahian sense, spaces where what we find is "universality plus difference" (2006, 151), where a 'universal' truth (this time with a small "t") is accepted, a truth which is at the same time relative, plural and, paradoxically, fallible. After the Great Divide (Huyssen 1986), we inhabit a liquid epistemology in Bauman's (2000, 9) sense of the word. In our globalised, cosmopolitan, society

borders become liquid as well (Bielsa and Bassnett 2009; Castells 2002). The new epistemology leads to "inclusive differentiation" (Beck [2004] 2006), since its main aim is to allow our perception of diversity not to blur.

3.   Changes in translation and music

3.1   Towards a new definition of translation

> We must no longer take translating just as a means of translating meaning, but as an unveiling of the unquestioned and unthought theory of language in the act of translating. Meschonnic   ([2009] 2011, 69)

The transformations in epistemology have slowly seeped into translation studies too. One of the most important and surprising changes, brought about by the above-mentioned dissolution of the binary oppositions proposed by post-structuralism, is that the new definitions of translation go beyond the traditional original/translation, primary / secondary opposition and understand that the translation is not inferior to the original but, as Jorge Luis Borges said, *completes* the original. Authors like Julia Kristeva (1980, 1986), Roland Barthes (1981), Edward Said (1983) or Jacques Derrida (1985) discuss, in their now classic works, the concept of originality. Roland Barthes, on the other hand, defends the idea that any text is an intertext (1981, 39), and Kristeva's *intertextualité* theory argues that any text is a permutation of texts, an intertextuality (1980, 36).

In this context of overcoming the traditional binary opposition between original / translation, primary / secondary, author / translator scholars began to examine issues of manipulation, ideology, power. Later, in the 1990s, the so-called cultural turn in translation studies (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990), the most important change in the discipline since the 1960s (Wolf 2010, 32), forced us to reflect on the fact that translation always takes place in a context, it arises from a history or histories (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990, 11). The cultural turn raised awareness of the importance of the socio-political context and of ideological and manipulation questions which are always present in the translating act (Bassnett 1999, 215), and that the translator "operates from a position of plurality and carries out a role that is charged with immense responsibility" (Bassnett 1999, 213). In these circumstances, translators become visible (Bassnett 1994; Venuti 1995), because they are no longer copyists but rewriters (Lefevere 1992), and translation is movement, change (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990), a dismembering element which breaks the ideological unity of the text (Godayol 2000, 31), a deconsecration (Lefevere 1982) and decanonisation (De Man 1986) of the original, a critique of the traditional epistemological privileges of that text (Koskinen 1994), communication in which power

relations interfere (Bassnett and Trivedi 1999) and renegotiate the traditional binary opposition. Translation incorporates the power turn (Tymoczko and Gentzler 2002; Vidal 2018), and assumes that "translating is interfering" (Munday 2007). All these characteristics of an expanded view of translation will be present in my analysis of Matthew Bourne's translation of Bizet, which is a "a re-visionary writing", in the sense given by Adrienne Rich ([1971] 1992) to this phrase, with all the political meaning regarding the concept of gender it has for both Rich and Bourne.

With this new vision of translation, which is fluid, non-universalist and post-positivist, the binary oppositions which used to be taken for granted (man / woman, majority / minority, black / white, visible / invisible) are no longer universal, but turn out to be socially constructed narratives (Maier 1995; Baker 2006). That is why many translation theorists have argued that defining translation in our contemporary global era is more difficult than it has ever been (Bassnett, in Bassnett and Lefevere 1998, 25–40; Hermans 1999, 46–54; Davis 2001 et al.; Eco [2003] 2008; Tymoczko 2007, 54–106).

The definition of translation is still undergoing change, is still moving, becoming fluid and constructing itself between fluid borders. The transformations in epistemology have reached translation, and this makes it possible to analyse works like *The Car Man*, using the term "translation" alongside other similarly fluid concepts, as in Michael Chanan's description:

> […] nowadays, in the age of the digital, music making becomes a constant movement of translation, remediation, transgression, creative betrayal and reinvention.
> (in Minors 2014, xiv)

In his rewriting of *Carmen*, Bourne shows that rewriting transcends mere equivalence, mere imitation. To rewrite means adding, supplementing: "the aim is not replication as such, but rather complication, expansion rather than contraction" (Sanders 2006, 12). I analyse Matthew Bourne's *The Car Man* as a translation in constant movement, as an act of remediation, transgression and creative betrayal. Matthew Bourne's work will enable us to examine the notions of subversion and deconstruction across genres and genders, which will be central to my analysis. Bourne makes his public plunge into a network of textual relations. In his dance productions, to discover meaning(s) implies tracing those relations. Reading becomes a process of moving between texts (Allen [2000] 2011, 1).

With David Johnston (2011, 2), I propose a concept of decentred, aterritorial translation: translation as a series of relations "of created relatedness, between embodied selves, interacting with different cognitive, affective and sensorial environments, and other equally embodied selves for whom those environments are, to a greater or lesser extent, other" (Johnston 2013, 369). And, with Edwin Gentzler, I will understand Bourne's as an intersemiotic fusion of media forms:

> Definitions of language are changing, challenged by proliferating semiotic codes and sign systems, informed by new technologies for the construction of texts, and complicated by factors associated with dialects and emerging languages. Definitions of what constitutes a text are also changing, as more oral and performative texts are included in studies. Lines between translation, adaptation, abridgement, paraphrase, and summaries are blurring. The question of what constitutes a translation is under radical review. While some scholars are threatened by such an expanding terrain, many others in the field find it quite invigorating […] Translation scholars need to look beyond the linguistic and literary to music, lights, set, costumes, gestures, make-up, and facial expressions to better understand this new intercultural and intersemiotic age of translation. As the media changes, so too do the performance options increase, and more dynamic theories of translation and internationalization are needed for the future.
>
> (Gentzler 2017, 11 and 217)

I will access the meaning of *The Car Man* as *becoming*, in the sense of Deleuze (1969) and Deleuze and Guattari (1969): becoming is the point at which two very different entities connect by means of a network of infinite relations; that is why the future is a border phenomenon, an experience of / between the limit of both physical and emotional spaces, a journey between genres – translation, music and dance – which are not very distanced from each other. This transversality between disciplines shows that "each of us is a bundle of fragments of other people's souls, simply put together in a new way" (Hofstadter 2007, 252), that human beings are strange loops where everything is interrelated, and this allows us to obtain "a deeper and subtler vision of what it is to be human" (Hofstadter 2007, 361).

3.2   The new musicology

> The late historian of science Thomas Kuhn argued that what he called paradigm shifts occur when certain practitioners begin to focus on anomalies: […] these practitioners try to fit the troublesome data into the schemata they have inherited. But gradually the exceptions (what Jacques Derrida would call "supplements") weigh too heavily against the established model, and a new one has to be devised to take its place.   (McClary [1991] 2002, xiii)

Like historiography, legal studies, translation and many other branches of knowledge, musicology underwent a revolution in its encounters with post-structuralist philosophy which has "enabled music theorists to view their discipline with fresh eyes and to listen to music with fresh ears" (Rodgers 1997, 75). Musicology throughout the 1980s gradually incorporated the epistemological changes that had transformed other disciplines: a very important work in this regard was *Contemplating Music*, by Joseph Kerman, in 1985, which later gave way to one

of the most revolutionary moments in 20th-century musicology, a true change of paradigm in the Kuhnian sense: the publication in 1991 of *Feminine Endings*, by Susan McClary, a member of the so-called 'New Musicology'. She mentions this "disciplinary explosion" in the new introduction to a later edition of the work (McClary [1991] 2002, ix). In fact, what McClary did was incorporate into musicology ideas from feminism or the post-colonial movement, among other fields of the new epistemology, which were also being introduced in translation, literary and film studies, art history and philosophy. McClary recognises the influence of many of the intellectuals I mentioned in the part of this paper dedicated to the new epistemology, including Foucault or Derrida to name only a few, but also the changes in critical historiography introduced by Hayden White: that is why there is a homage to White's most famous work in the subtitle of her book *Conventional Wisdom* (McClary 2000). In this new context, *Feminine Endings*

> […] celebrated this new disciplinary license by exploring a wide range of repertoires from a set of theoretical perspectives new to musicology, if not to other disciplines. Central to this cluster of essays were questions concerning gender and sexuality: cultural representations of women and men in opera, constructions of desire and pleasure in music at various historical moments, and the gendered metaphors prevalent in discourse about music.   (McClary 2002, ix–x)

The incorporation to musicology of questions concerning gender, sexuality[1] and power is what Bourne puts into practice in his translation of *Carmen*. But there is more to it. The new musicology not only emphasises the gender-related aspects of music (McClary 1994) but also raises a number of other issues concerning "cultural interpretations not only of lyrics and dramatic plots but also *of the music itself*" (McClary 2002, x, emphasis in the original). In fact, the new musicology understands music as "appealing to the concept of autonomy to secure music's exemption from cultural criticism" (McClary 2002, x), thus deconstructing the traditional idea that music has no other content than music itself. This idea is key to the work of Matthew Bourne.

In this regard, it is interesting to underline that that the socio-political and philosophical side of music is a line of research in itself, explicit in the 20th century in the complex relations of Shostakovich and Prokoviev with Stalin, in the political themes which infiltrated Copland's scores in the 1930s or when Bartok writes string quartets inspired by recordings of Transylvanian folk songs. Shostakovich wrote his *Leningrad* symphony while the German canons were firing over the city;

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1. The incorporation of concepts like that of gender would later open up an interesting line of research in musicology, and more specifically in opera, as reflected in works like that of Catherine Clément (1988, 2000) and also many others on the question of homosexuality in opera (Koestenbaum 2001; Blackmer and Smith 1995; Bret, Wood and Thomas 1994).

and John Adams wrote an opera with Richard Nixon and Mao Zedong as protagonists (Ross 2007). For Theodor Adorno ([1946] 2006), who wrote, for example, about Hitler and the ninth symphony, musical analysis is an intrinsically necessary presence in negative dialectics. Furthermore, his criticism of Stravinsky in favour of Schönberg is not a mere musical commentary, but a reflection of a way of understanding existence which finds its parallel in the traductological theories of the cultural turn and post-positivism referred to above. Along these same lines of social criticism, Lukács, who compared Mozart with Wagner to reflect on political abuse and evil, or Barenboim (2008, 13ff; Barenboim and Said 2003, 79ff) on the relation of Wagner with Nazism; and, on the other hand, at a later date Attali ([1977] 2011) and his concept of noise would inspire New Musicology, which incorporates notions which are in turn patent in post-positive translation theories and find their parallel in Cultural Studies or Gender Studies. In fact, the concept of noise is much more interesting than that of silence (Cage [1968] 1975, ix): "Listening to music is listening to all noise, *realizing that its appropriation and control is a reflection of power, that it is essentially political*" (Attali 2011, 6, my emphasis). In this line of research of the socio-political relevance of music is where what Attali calls *composing* comes in, and it is obvious that Attali's model, which constructs an ideological criticism of music based on the idea of the relation between noise and order in a piece of music says much about how the society that produced this music channels violence and power, at the same time as it reveals the influence Theodor Adorno's musical theory had on him. That is why Susan McClary ([1977] 2011, 153–154) points out that "[t]he insights of both Adorno and Attali are results of a refusal to read the history of music as a flat, autonomous chronological record, an insistence on understanding musical culture of the past as a way of grasping social practices of the present and future. Both take the music we retreat to for escapist fantasies or entertainment and convert it into discomforting reminders of that from which we sought to hide – political control and money".

Another important name that influenced new musicology is that of Roland Barthes (Szekely 2006; Rodgers 1997; McCreless 1988; Engh 1995), above all his concepts of body, beat, gesture pulsion and grain (especially developed in Barthes 1977 and [1982] 1985). But also his concept of 'text' versus 'work', which I will go on to apply to Bourne's work and which Barthes understands in function of the plural, liquid, anti-hierarchical and social epistemology discussed in the first part of this paper.

The interesting but controversial subject of the social and political consequences of music are also present in translation, if we go back to André Lefevere's "spirited translator", Venuti's "ethics of resistance" or Maria Tymoczko's "empowerment" of the translator. Music "shares a common history of intellectual labor with the society of which it forms so interesting and engaging an organic part"

(Said 1991, 70). To think of music and cultural exoticism from the 1850s to the end of the 19th century (Verdi, Bizet, Wagner, Saint-Säens, etc.) or in music and politics during the 17th and 20th centuries (Monteverdi, Schönberg, the culture of jazz and rock) is, therefore, to trace a map of a series of social and political relations, affiliations and transgressions, none of which can be reduced to a simple reflection of reality. This socio-political side of music is always present in Bourne's productions.

4. From *Carmen* to *The Car Man*

> I love being one thing and then another.
>
> Matthew Bourne (in Macaulay 2000, 217)

Matthew Bourne's work fits into this context of changes of paradigm, of epistemological transformations and appearance of fluid borders between genres and genders where we also find outstanding works like those of the musician John Cage or choreographers like Merce Cunningham, whose works invalidate the tradition of cultivating binary oppositions. Bourne's dance productions subvert and deconstruct genres and genders. That is why, in spite of his extraordinary, brilliant career, Bourne is more widely known as the English choreographer who made *Swan Lake* with male swans. In the traditional *Swan Lake*, the Prince falls in love with a female swan. In Bourne's version, the beloved is a male swan.

Bourne's work falls into the new epistemology discussed above. In fact, I would even dare to claim that, without these epistemological changes, his work would probably not have been as successful as it has been and, furthermore, it could not have been produced in an intellectual atmosphere characterised by binary oppositions.

Along the lines of new musicology, part of his goal is political – to make homosexuality acceptable, as he said in an interview à propos of his *Swan Lake* – and he achieved it. The DVD of his *Swan Lake* is now part of the syllabus for the college-entrance exams in dance in Britain (Bourne 2007, 42).

Without using words, his dance theatre is a form of drama and many of his choreographies are rewritings of previous literary and operatic works. Following the new epistemology, Bourne subscribes to "inclusive differentiation" (Beck [2004] 2006) since his main aim is to allow the spectator's perception of diversity not to blur it. His dance productions are writings as *re-vision* in Adrienne Rich's sense: Bourne takes on the rewriting of the past in order to move into a creative space of his own. Thus, his rewritings are re-visions: "the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction"

(Rich [1971] 1992, 369). From this perspective, he translates the classics using a new iconoclasm:

> In "Cinderella," the Fairy Godmother figure, a man, saves Cinderella, but he is also an angel of death. In "Nutcracker!," the Nutcracker abandons Clara, the heroine, for another woman – indeed, marries the other woman. This scene is anguishing to watch, and finding out later that it was all a bad dream does not entirely salve the pain. Life is nasty; Bourne shows it. (Bourne 2007, 40)

Bourne has also produced a homosexual version of *Romeo and Juliet*, to the Prokofiev score, and named it "Romeo, Romeo." Again, projects like these have an ideological content, they try to overcome traditional binary oppositions, the barriers of acquired conventionality, of what we have been taught is 'normal':

> It's more to do with dancing than with sexuality. A male dancer, whether he's gay or straight, fits into a relationship with a female partner very happily. It's something you're taught, and it fits, it feels right, the lifting and all that stuff. Getting away from that, making a convincing love duet, a romantic, sexual duet, for two men that is comfortable to do and comfortable to watch – I don't know if you can. (Bourne 2007, 44)

However, it is important to also bear in mind that, although Bourne openly admits that in his *Swan Lake* "[t]here is certainly a gay aspect to the piece," he also aims to go further than that in all his works: "but I thought it was more than that, a more universal story," he said, adding that audience attitudes have also changed since early walkouts during the male pas de deux 15 years ago" (Bourne 2007). The proof that, for example, *Swan Lake* raises other political and social questions is the reference to the British royal family and its problems:

> But the work's evocation of sexual and social politics through a contemporary royal family (this was, after all, the era of Diana-Charles-Camilla-Fergie), extended well beyond issues of homosexuality, offering audiences an accessible vision of the tussle between individualism and duty, the cult of celebrity and the need for love in a way that few contemporary dance works had managed. (Sulcas 2010, 23)

The question of identity is very important in these works, because once again it raises the question of the non-binary, deconstructed, fragmented identity of post-structuralist epistemology. For example, referring to *The Car Man*, Bourne says: "I don't apply labels to characters if I can help it. People are more complex than that […] I don't know what a gay choreographer is. I mean I simply don't know what that means" (Macaulay 2000, 378 and 642). What Bourne wants to do is discuss the gay question beyond the binary oppositions of traditional epistemology. Bourne's translations fit, therefore, into the contemporary intellectual panorama where conventions and binarisms are deconstructed, asymmetries of power are

brought to light and the Grand Narratives and the foundations of logocentrism are questioned, all of which has precipitated in his dance productions what Lyotard ([1983] 1988, xiii) calls "the decline of universalist discourses".

In my opinion, Bourne's post-translations are not 'works' but 'texts' in the sense Roland Barthes uses this term: plural writings with multiple voices, a plural stere-phony of echoes, citations, references, which subvert genres (Barthes 1982, 141), thus annulling any solid border. But he also uses the notion of intertext elaborated by Julia Kristeva, according to which references to other texts become a part of the text itself, without taking its paternity into account, thus minimising the authority of the author and any sign of hierarchies. The text is productivity, it is a permuta-tion of texts, an intertextuality: in the space of a text, many utterances taken from other texts intersect with one another (Kristeva 1969, 52). His dance productions are "tissues" (Barthes 1973, 101) made up of different multiple voices which are hierarchically equal and do not offer a single meaning (Barthes 1971, 94). Bourne likes mixing genres which have traditionally been kept separate and which no-body has dared to put together. His productions focus on sense produced sensu-ally (Barthes 1973, 101). With all this in mind, we can say that Bourne's ballets are a clear example of these new definitions of translation referred to above.[2]

Taking all this into account, in this part of my essay I will concentrate on *The Car Man*, a ballet, a Barthesian text, "an eccentric order of repetition, not one of sameness," which is a translation, a re-vision and re-relating of different genres and different works: *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (both Cain's novel and the two Hollywood movies) and Bizet's score for his opera *Carmen*. Bourne translates the novel, the films, and *Carmen*'s music and content into a re-vision, into *The Car Man*. In fact, *The Car Man* offers a new treatment of Bizet's score for the opera *Carmen*: the music has been not only rearranged but also reordered.[3] *The Car Man*

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2. This is corroborated in Linda Hutcheon's analysis of *The Car Man*, from "the newer sense of translation" (Hutcheon 2013, 16), as a translation which implies an ontological shift: "[…] translation is not a rendering of some nontextual meaning to be copied or paraphrased or repro-duced; rather, it is an engagement with the original text that makes see that text in different ways […] they are re-mediations, that is, specifically translations in the form of intersemiotic trans-positions from one sign system to another… In *Beginnings: Intention and Method*, Edward Said argues that literature is 'an order of repetition, not of originality – but an eccentric order of rep-etition, not one of sameness' […] Despite being temporally second, it is both an interpretive and a creative act; it is storytelling as both rereading and rerelating." (Hutcheon 2013, 16 and 111)

3. There are also other texts in Bourne's Barthesian text, like for example *The Birds*, by Hitchcock (Macaulay 2000, 198), which he translates into the scene where the swans climb on the Prince's bed in Act Four, *Rocco and His Brothers* (1960), by Visconti, and other films like *Fight Club* (1999), *My Own Private Idaho* (1991) or *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955) (Macaulay 2000, 371–373).

highlights the palimpsestuous nature of the original text. It demonstrates that any text is a hypertext, "grafting itself onto a hypotext, an earlier text that it imitates or transforms" (Genette [1982] 1997, ix). That is why part of the sheer pleasure of *The Car Man* is experiencing the tension between the familiar and the new and the recognition both of similarity and difference, since "one who really loves texts must wish from time to time to love (at least) two together" (Genette 1997, 399). *The Car Man* is a transposition which changes frames and therefore contexts, telling the same story from a different point of view and thus giving way to a shift in ontology. Following Deleuze and Guattari, this translation is a *becoming*, a derivation that is not derivative, a rewriting that is second without being secondary (Hutcheon 2013; Sanders 2006). *The Car Man* takes an old story and rewrites it as something that will work for the modern audience (Macaulay 2000, 14). This rewriting adds, supplements, expands rather than contracts. It is a translation in Borges' sense: a translation that *completes* the original. A post-translation in Gentzler's terminology: "in a translation culture, or better said, translational cultures, always in an ongoing process of movement and manoeuvring, invariably traversing boundaries, changing and adapting" (Gentzler 2017, 8). Thus, translation is no longer a secondary process but "one of the most important processes that can lead to revitalizing culture, a proactive force that continually introduces new ideas, forms or expressions, and pathways for change" (Gentzler 2017, 8).

Gender reversal as a translation strategy with regard to Bizet's opera appears several times throughout the ballet: for instance at the beginning, Seville is transformed into Harmony, USA in the 1950s, the tobacco factory becomes an auto repair shop and the diner is populated by women waiting for the men to come out of work, whereas in *Carmen* Act One the men of Seville are waiting for the female workers to come out of the cigarette factory. Furthermore, the Carmen / José axis in the opera turns into the Lana / Luca / Angelo triangle in *The Car Man*, although "Angelo's character has no aspect of Carmen – he's entirely on José's side, and like José, he will come back from prison obsessed, a transgressor" (Bourne, in Macaulay 2000, 659). Thus, the Carmen role too is translated: in the opera, Carmen is the working-class *femme fatale* who changes lives and who goes from one lover to another. Bourne takes the sexualised body of the Carmen of the opera and divides her into a male character (Luca) and a female (Lana), both of whom seduce the Don José character (Angelo) (Hutcheon 2013, 165). Bourne states that the character of Carmen herself can be in his piece a man or a woman. In fact, in *The Car Man* she has *both* a male and a female role (Macaulay 2000, 359). In contrast, Bizet's opera "is organized in terms of the traditional Western dichotomy between proper and improper constructions of female sexuality, between the virgin and the whore" (McClary 1991, 56). Whereas Micaëla, Don José's childhood sweetheart, represents the stereotypical Angel in the House, with a musical

discourse which accordingly is simple, lyrical, diatonic and sweet, Carmen is the dissonant Other, with the music which represents her grounded in the physical impulses of exotic dance, the Habanera and the Seguidilla, and marked by its chromatic excesses (McClary 1991, 56–57).

What is important in *The Car Man* is realism. Bourne's post-translation wants his intersemiotic rewriting of the past to be more down-to-earth and more real – his characters are working-class – taking ballet and opera closer to a new audience. *The Car Man* is violent, has very little lyricism and its characters are not instantly likeable. In the opera, the Carmen-José affair is central to the story, but what is central in *The Car Man* is a triangle: Lana, Luca (he is the car man) and Angelo. With this triangle, Bourne introduces a gay element and rewrites the whole story, translating *Carmen*'s original heterosexual triangle into a much more gender fluid situation, because he not only introduces the gay element, but in order to avoid any binary opposition, Bourne makes Luca bisexual.

Furthermore, Bourne also deconstructs the dichotomy in Bizet's opera between the racial Other and the white European and his idea of "the necessity for White bourgeois codes of behaviour (as exemplified by Micaëla) to reign supreme in the face of apparently more permissive, more sinister lifestyles of the 'darker races'" (McClary 1991, 63). And although Carmen is given great power within her position in the opera, the conventions of gender and ethnic representation Bizet draws upon conspire to demand her murder (McClary 1992, 65). Bourne deconstructs this too. He dissolves the binary oppositions and universalisms of Bizet's opera and, along the lines of new contemporary liquid epistemology, he mixes races and genders in his work. For example, it is very interesting to know that this idea is put into practice from the moment Bourne chooses his dancers, who are a mixture of sizes, shapes, races and genders (Macaulay 2000, 210). That is why, opposite the Spanish character of *Carmen* (the Spanish component in the "idealised" sense constructed by Mérimée), *The Car Man* features an Italian-American community. As Bourne has pointed out in more than one interview, he aimed to highlight the hybrid character of our global society, something which is obvious in this work both due to the content translated by Bourne and the physical appearance of the dancers he chose, as mentioned above. Bourne has made it quite clear that he wants the people who go to see his production to identify with the people on the stage. That is why he opts for a mixture of races and genders, hybridization and fluid borders. Thus, Matthew Bourne translates *Carmen* for a contemporary world. Thus, he is able to "resist particular social constructions, introduce new ideas, and question the status quo" (Gentzler 2008, 3).

Bourne offers the audience a "liquid" story (Bauman 2007, 2000). His identities are "nomad" (Braidotti 2011). He deconstructs binary oppositions in genres and genders by subverting opera and dance, but also straight versus gay identities,

the racial Other versus the white European, thus creating richer and more ambiguous characters. This all shows that Bourne's rewritings are based on the concept of identity on which contemporary translation theory is also based.

5.   Inconclusive conclusions: New venues in Translation Studies

> The intersection of translation and music can be a fascinating field to explore. It can enrich our understanding of what translation might entail, how far its boundaries can be extended and how it relates to other forms of expression. Research into this area can thus help us locate translation-related activities in a broader context, undermining more conservative options of translation and mediation. It can also offer us a new perspective on who may act as a 'translator' under different circumstances.   (Susam-Sarajeva 2008, 191)

Bourne's text cannot be contained in a hierarchy, even in a simple division of genres and genders, but should be understood according to a serial movement of disconnections, overlappings, variations (Barthes 1977, 158). Bourne's post-translation of *Carmen* is structured but off centred, plural, in a Barthesian fashion:

> The Text is plural. Which is not simply to say that it has several meanings, but that it accomplishes the very plural of meaning: an *irreducible* (and not merely acceptable) plural. The Text is not a co-existence of meanings but a passage, an overcrossing; thus it answers not to an interpretation, even a liberal one, but to an explosion, a dissemination. The plural of the Text depends, that is, not on the ambiguity of its contents but on what might be called the *stereographic plurality* of its weave of signifiers.   (Barthes 1977, 159, italics in the original)

Just as it is for Barthes (1977, 164), for Bourne the text is a social space "woven with citations, references, echoes, cultural languages antecedent or contemporary, which cut across it through and through in a vast stereophony" (Barthes 1977, 160). But also as in the case of new musicology, Bourne uses narrative strategies in his quest for cultural interpretations of operas, far from purely musical procedures, far from those music theorists who like to assume that musical events "simply perch on the surface of what underneath is autonomous bedrock. No gender, no narratives, no politics: just chords, forms, and pitch-class sets" (McClary 2000, 2). In *The Car Man*, Bourne uses his intertexts as starting-points to deconstruct the "purely musical" and conventions, to examine "the values they represent, the interests they reinforce […] the possibilities they exclude" (McClary 2000, 2). For Bourne it is very important to deconstruct these conventions that so permeate human transactions that we usually fail to notice their influence. Through his post-translations, he examines "the values they represent, the interests they reinforce,

the activities they enable, the possibilities they exclude" (McClary 2000, 5). That is why I believe Bourne would agree with the following definition of music:

> I will claim that music […] is assembled of heterogeneous elements that lead away from the autonomy of the work to intersect with endless chains of other pieces, multiple – even contradictory – cultural codes, various moments of reception, and so on. If music can be said to be meaningful, it cannot be reduced to a single, totalized, stable meaning.   (McClary 2000, 7)

Bourne's post-translations in works like *The Car Man; Cinderella; Romeo, Romeo; Dorian Gray; Swan Lake* and many others, do not aim to achieve equivalence in the sense of the prescriptivist theories of the 1960s, but they are the practical exemplification of the new definition of translation understood as a hermeneutical act (Gadamer [1975] 2004, 383ff; Ricoeur 2004), as rewriting (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990), as a daily vital act (Duch 1998), as movement (Johnston 2011, 2013), as protest from the post-positivism of an enlarged translation (Tymoczko 2007). His cultural productions are not rewritings of exhaustion but of replenishment (Barth [1980] 1984), genotexts (Kristeva 1974) concerned not with sense but with 'significance', the manner in which the text "signifies hat representative and communicative speech does not say" (Kristeva 1980, 18). Bourne's rejection of simplistic binarisms reveals a parallel rejection of the founding subject as the original and originating source of fixed meaning in the text. His rewritings situate meaning beyond the traditional oppositions between primary / secondary texts and genres, thus "engendering an infinity of new contexts in a manner which is absolutely illimitable" (Derrida 1977, 185).

From this new post-structuralist way of seeing translation, we can state quite clearly that *The Car Man* is a post-translation of *Carmen*. If we consider Bourne as a post-translator, we cannot help but resort to his creative drives, drawing on his emotions, attitudes, and associations and by experimental processes, not copying or mimicry, in order to allow for an open encounter with difference. Post-translation thus helps break down barriers and leads the self to forms of creativity and transformation that are not only fundamental to translation, but allow the self to grow: "Breaking the stranglehold of slavish adherence to the original text invariably results in better translations in many ways" (Gentzler 2017, 11). This opens up a new and fascinating line of research in which new translation studies and new musicology are a reflection of the new epistemology of the 21st century.

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Aesthetics of translation

From Western European drama into Japanese operatic forms

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This chapter discusses the question of how Western European drama such as plays written by William Shakespeare and Samuel Beckett can be translated into the Japanese operatic forms of Kabuki and Noh theater, which are traditional, composite arts of music, dance and drama, corresponding to Western opera and ballet. The study reveals that the translated plays enable 21st-century Japanese audiences to depart from the established assumptions about the Western source texts, and that translations are able to capture the essence of the plays written by Shakespeare or Beckett in a way which is familiar to those audiences. At the same time, by transposing Western drama into the world of Japanese opera, the traditional Japanese theater also becomes more accessible to contemporary Western audiences through a synthesis of music, dance and drama, beyond the barrier of language.

Keywords: William Shakespeare, Samuel Beckett, Kabuki, Noh, theater, opera, intersemiotic translation, performance, nonverbal elements

1. Introduction

There are traditional performing arts of music, dance and drama both in Europe and in Japan. It is noteworthy that opera and Kabuki were both born around 1600. In an attempt to examine the aesthetics of translation from European drama into Japanese operatic forms, this paper focuses on the two most prominent playwrights that are still frequently translated and performed in Japan, in the beginning of the 21st century: William Shakespeare and Samuel Beckett. The first section discusses the relationship between opera and Kabuki as well as Noh theater, in order to demonstrate the importance of examining translation aesthetics from European drama into Japanese operatic forms. The second section focuses on William

Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and *Comedy of Errors,* which have been translated into the Japanese operatic forms of Kabuki and Kyōgen. In contrast to the flamboyant Kabuki and the comic Kyōgen, the third section scrutinizes Samuel Beckett's *Footfalls*; the Japanese audience associates this play with the operatic form of Noh theater, which has a more subtle and profound atmosphere. The final section summarizes the translation aesthetics of Japanese operatic forms exemplified in these plays by reflecting on the distinctions between translation and adaptation.

1.1　Baroque opera and Kabuki

Surprisingly perhaps, baroque opera in Western Europe and Japanese Kabuki have features in common. First of all, they were both born around 1600, within the context of turbulent politics and wars: "Opera was created just before and after 1600 on the basis of beliefs about the manner in which music had been employed in the performance of classic Greek drama" (*Encyclopedia Americana* 1993, 761). The oldest existing opera is "Peri's *Euridice*, sung at the Pitti Palace on Oct. 6, 1600" (*Encyclopedia Americana* 1993, 761). On the other hand, "the first documented mention of *Kabuki odori* (Kabuki dance) appears in 1603" (Ortolani 1995, 174) and "[t]here is record of at least one invitation to play before the Imperial Court in 1603–1604" (Lombard 1966, 291).

Secondly, both opera and Kabuki have their roots in sacred rituals and divine services. The opera house observed the traditional Greek open-air theater and temples, whereas Kabuki theater was based on the conventional Noh outdoor stage within the pale of a shrine. The annual events at the temples and shrines formed the transition of respective seasons of opera and Kabuki.

The audiences of Western opera and Kabuki also share a number of characteristics. Opera houses and Kabuki theaters used to be centers of social intercourse for merchants both in Italy and Japan. Going to see an opera or a Kabuki performance meant dressing up and interacting with other people, savoring the beauty of the arts and the worlds of illusion. In a similar way to the bravos for opera singers, Kabuki audiences call out stage family names to encourage the actors.

The visually entertaining stage setting has been another significant similarity between opera and Kabuki. Ever since the 17th century, techniques for rapid changes in setting have advanced steadily, and the artistry of the scenery has captured the attention of the audiences. It goes without saying that costumes worn by the actors on the stages have also attracted the audiences of both Western opera and Kabuki. Thus, Kabuki is "highly stylized with elaborate costumes and scenic effects" (*Encyclopedia Americana* 1993, 254).

In the 1600s, in both Italy and Japan, male actors impersonated female roles, since women were banned from performing on the stage. Under such

circumstances, the beautiful *bel canto* in the 18th century and the 19th century was performed by castrati, whereas the aesthetics of the Kabuki form were enhanced by female impersonators.

Last but not least, lines in opera and Kabuki are both chanted with melodies and rhythms. Opera, which is usually considered to be a product of its music, should also be treated as a form of drama, where the lines are sung by the characters in the story. On the contrary, Kabuki, which is regarded as a form of theater, has music at its core, since lines must be voiced with melodious sounds:

> Unlike modern drama and other forms of theater based exclusively on movement and dialogue, what is most characteristic of Kabuki is that it is indeed a fusion of the arts, a blending together of three elements – music (in the broad sense of the word), dance and gestic acting.   (Kawatake 2006, 86)

These high-priced entertainments in the West and in Japan have survived for four centuries until now, if briefly interrupted in the 1960s by the rise and growing popularity of movies and television.

1.2   Opera and Noh

Like the flamboyant art of Kabuki, the more exquisite world of Japanese Noh may also be compared to Western opera. While the latter has inherited the dramatic essence of Greek theater, Kabuki derives from the Japanese operatic forms of Noh and Kyōgen.

Like Western opera, Japanese Noh and Kyōgen are syntheses of music, dance, and drama. The main elements consist of music, a libretto, a chorus, and Japanese orchestral players. There are operatic recitatives called *sashi*, as well as solo operatic arias by the main character called *Shite*.

Historically speaking, both Noh and Kyōgen have their roots in Sarugaku, which literally means 'monkey music', and came to Japan from China between the 11th and the 14th centuries. While Noh was established in the 14th century by Kanami and Zeami, Kyōgen established itself as an official entertainment in the 17th century.

Noh style and technique were cultivated by Kanami with a dance called *kusemai*, which takes place accompanied by the rhythms of a drum. Noh drama was further refined by Kanami's son, Zeami, into a performing art grounded in *yugen*, or aesthetics of quiet elegance. According to Zeami, "even when playing demon roles the performer should not forget to preserve a graceful and elegant stage appearance" (quoted in Ortolani 1995, 114).

Kyōgen was thus based on Sarugaku, or 'monkey music', and it consisted of pantomime, dance, songs, acrobatics, juggling, and comic dialogues. During the

course of its establishment in the 17th century, Kyōgen became gentler and more humorous, its mood cheerful rather than satirical and vulgar.

While Kyōgen is performed as an interlude between Noh dramas to arouse laughter from the audience, Noh puts more stress on symbols and the surrealistic atmosphere created through the use of masks. According to Ortolani, "[i]n the present context, Kyōgen indicates the comical form of traditional Japanese theater which developed in parallel with the Noh and is still performed mainly between the plays on a typical Noh program" (1995, 55).

In both Kyōgen and Noh, *kata* is a key stylized pattern of singing and acting. Yet there is a difference between the two. On one hand, the *kata* in Noh "do not stress acrobatic complexity but rather require a deep concentration on an interior process resulting in the projection of intense but relaxed energy" (Ortolani 1995, 142). This is appropriate for expressing the elegance of motif in Noh theater, the profound beauty and pathos of the past. On the other hand, "a greater acrobatic skill is exhibited in Kyōgen than in Noh, especially in the performance of animal roles requiring non-human agility and extraordinary dexterity and mimetic ability" (Ortolani 1995, 155). This is implemented by performing a non-human character in an exaggerated manner and enhancing its comical movement.

For the manipulation of the props on the stage, *Kuroko* play an important role. The *Kuroko* are black-garbed stagehands that assist the performers and that the audience is meant to ignore. They play an effective role in the Kyōgen version of Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, which will be discussed in the following section.

The mimetic art called *monomane* is also an important factor in both Kyōgen and Noh. This mimicry is expressed through pantomime of the characters. In Ortolani's words, "[t]he difference between *monomane* in Noh and in Kyōgen is that in the former the imitation concerns mostly illustrious or even divine roles, while the monomane of Kyōgen aims at the ordinary" (1995, 152).

Although both Kyōgen and Noh share the same root of Sarugaku as the prototype of Japanese operatic forms, the latter "makes visible and concrete the invisible and the abstract", while the former, on the contrary, "makes 'unreal' the most concrete and real world; that is, it transforms it into a humorous, stylized, theatrical representation which becomes like a world of fantasy and fairy tale" (Ortolani 1995, 153).

2.   From Shakespeare into Japanese operatic forms

In this section I focus on two masterpieces by William Shakespeare that have been translated into the Japanese operatic forms of Kabuki and Kyōgen. The first part analyzes the adaptation of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* into Kabuki form. In the

second part I examine Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, translated and revitalized into Kyōgen form.

According to Linda Hutcheon,

> [i]n many cases, because adaptations are to a different medium, they are re-medi-ations, that is, specifically translations in the form of intersemiotic transpositions from one sign system (for example, words) to another (for example, images). This is translation but in a very specific sense: as transmutation or transcoding, that is, as necessarily a recoding into a new set of conventions as well as signs. (2013, 16)

My objective is to shed light on the significance of nonverbal aspects provided by the Japanese operatic forms.

2.1   Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* into the Japanese operatic form of Kabuki

In 2009, a Kabuki version of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, translated into Japanese and directed by Yukio Ninagawa, was performed not only in Japan but also at the Barbican Theatre in London, with English subtitles. Linguistically, the names of the characters in the original text were changed into Japanese names with similar sounds and cadence. Non-linguistically, the Kabuki version used stylized *kata* (see above) for chanting, music, movements, and dance.

This unique event was realized with the help of not only interlinguistic trans-lation of subtitles from Japanese into English, but also to nonverbal elements of Kabuki – which enhanced the effect. These elements include astonishingly beau-tiful settings, costumes, lighting, music, dance, facial expressions, and gestures. Such nonverbal aspects enhanced the effect of conveying the nuances of the hu-man relationships depicted.

According to Kikunosuke Onoe, acting in Ninagawa's production of *Twelfth Night* (2005, 2007, and 2009), "the aim was not merely to perform Shakespeare in kimonos but to enact Shakespeare in the *kabuki* form, integrating *kabuki* ele-ments and contemporary nuances with the old-fashioned language of the poet" (Oki-Siekierczak 2013, 224–225). Thus, this translation may be seen as a fruitful fusion between Western and Eastern perspectives, both linguistically and non-linguistically; it embodied the language of the Shakespeare through Japanese operatic form.

2.2   Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* into the Japanese operatic form of Kyōgen

In 2001, a Kyōgen version of Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, translated and adapt-ed by Yasunari Takahashi and directed by Mansai Nomura, entitled *Kyōgen of*

Errors, was performed not only in Japan but also at the Globe Theatre in London, for international audiences, in Japanese with English subtitles. Although the black-garbed stagehands called *Kuroko* in Kyōgen and other theater forms are meant to be ignored by the audience, in this version they became active and visible as a special chorus during the entire show:

> The beginning of the play was notably different from Shakespeare, with the choric figures dressed in black gowns, with black hoods, and grotesque Kyōgen masks (*buaku*), milling through the yard, muttering, "*Yayakoshiya, yayakoshiya!*" meaning something like: "How troublesomely complex!"
>
> (Harvey 2003, Prologue, unpaginated)

This chorus highlighted and accentuated the theme of the original text, i.e., the chaos of mistaken identities. The masks and black costumes worn by the *Kuroko*, as well as their acoustic vibration as chorus, interpreted the original text nonverbally:

> As in most Kyōgen performances, the clothes were bright and attractive, with lighter pastel shades. There was a direct visual contrast between this up-tempo lightness and the severe black gowns worn by the chorus, whose presence was enough to cast a visual damper on the stage.
>
> (Harvey 2003, Costume and Design, unpaginated)

The Globe in London was a wonderful venue for the performance of the play in its country of origin. In Harvey's words, "[t]he Globe stage worked very well indeed for this Kyōgen adaptation, the hollowness of the stage responding well to the foot stamping, and the drums stage right, and Shakuhachi stage left providing an atmospheric accompaniment" (2003, Introduction, unpaginated). The synthesis of music, dance, and drama functioned to perfection in the Kyōgen performance of *Comedy of Errors*:

> The mask change occurred when Mansai [who played the role of the twins] nipped behind the 'wall' – it was slickly achieved, with the whole group revolving and realigning, with Mansai returning to the front midstage point. Again, here was an exhibition of Kyōgen actorly skill transforming the dramatic space with a unique combination of mime and dance.
>
> (Harvey 2003, Scene 5, unpaginated, my addition)

These nonverbal elements of Kyōgen, including masks, costumes, chorus, foot stamping, drums, Japanese flute, mime and dance, played a crucial role in focusing the attention of the audience on the comic elements of the original text written by Shakespeare.

3.   Beckett into the Japanese operatic form of Noh

While the previous section focused on translating Shakespeare into the magnificent opera form of Kabuki and the jocular opera form of Kyōgen, this section scrutinizes Samuel Beckett's *Footfalls* through the lens of the Japanese operatic form of Noh theater, which has a more minimalistic, silent atmosphere. According to Kawatake,

> Kabuki makes use of all conceivable colors in well-thought-out combinations for everything from stage sets to costumes, makeup and props. Its color sense becomes the more apparent when compared to that of Noh. The Noh stage is plain unadorned wood with but a single gnarled pine tree painted on the panels in the background. Props may be used in certain plays, but even these are merely abstract and symbolic. This austerely minimalist aesthetic also lies behind tea ceremony rooms.   (2006, 108)

Beckett's predecessor, William Butler Yeats, admitted the influence of Japanese Noh on his writing, and adopted the essence of Japanese Noh in the play *At the Hawk's Well*. I will discuss this in the following, and then examine the hypothesis of an influence on Beckett of Japanese Noh theater, focusing in particular on aspects such as Noh arias and mechanisms of storytelling. Unlike Yeats, when interviewed by Yasunari Takahashi back in 1981, Beckett answered "NOT CONSCIOUSLY" (Takahashi 1982, 68) when he was asked whether he was influenced by Noh drama.

3.1   Japanese operatic form in Yeats's *At the Hawk's Well*

While Yeats's *At the Hawk's Well* consists of drama, dance, music and recitation, this opus did not merely follow Western operatic form but sought to be performed in an unconventional style. Through Ezra Pound, Yeats was able to read Japanese Noh translated by Ernest Francisco Fenollosa, which inspired him to incorporate Japanese operatic elements in *At the Hawk's Well*. The symbolic essence of Noh-masks is clearly present: "their faces made up to resemble masks" or "wearing masks" (Yeats 1997, 113).

Besides the characters of the old man, the young man, and the guardian of the well, there are three musicians who recite and sing the stage directions and the background of the story. The old man and the young man, who share the ambition to obtain the well's water for eternal youth and immortality, miss the opportunity to drink from the water controlled by the guardian's dancing. The mysteriousness and sense of uncertainty are operatically manifested through the performance of the musicians.

At its first premiere in 1916 at a private house in London, music was composed by Edmund Dulac (1882–1953), and the guardian of the well was performed by

the dancer Michio Itoh (1893–1961). Yeats and Dulac attempted to convey artistry and fluctuation of tonality in the English language through their Noh chants: "Yeats' discovery of the Noh form opened his eyes to a non-verbal mode of expression which consorted very well with his own concept of dynamic imagery, and in imitating this form he was excited by the symbolist possibilities of the dance" (Sekine 1990, 86). It is also well known but worth mentioning here again that this Noh oeuvre written by Yeats in English was imported to Japan and adapted into a Noh play entitled *The Hawk's Princess*.

3.2 Beckett's *Footfalls* within the framework of Japanese operatic form

In order to understand the translation aesthetics of Beckett's *Footfalls*, it is necessary to outline the Noh conventions of *Shite* and *Waki*. In Noh drama, *Shite*, the primary role, comes from another world, while *Waki*, the secondary role, lives in this world and guides the audience. Although *Waki* asks *Shite* who he or she is, the latter does not identify himself or herself immediately. Instead, *Shite* asks *Waki* to read the Buddhist scriptures. This is done lyrically in a style of aria with diminuendos and crescendos. On the rhythms of the music, the character *Shite* arrives on the stage as his or her true self and dances to express her real emotions. At the end, *Shite* is purified with the aid of *Waki's* prayers. This is the primary category of Noh called 'fantasy Noh' (*mugen Noh*). 'Fantasy Noh' illustrates the process of purifying the agonies of the ghostlike figure, *Shite*. As opposed to 'fantasy Noh', there is 'realistic Noh' (*genzai Noh*), depicting a character who lives in the same world as the audience.

A later play by Beckett, *Footfalls*, was performed in Tokyo in English by an Irish company, Mouth on Fire, in February 2013. At a post-performance session, director Kenichi Kasai, who had crafted Beckett's *Quad* into a Noh performance in 2006 at Tessenkai Noh Theater in Tokyo, asked how the Irish actors and director regarded the relationship between Beckett's work and the Japanese Noh theater. The Irish director answered that Beckett never visited Japan and did not acknowledge the direct influence of Noh theater.

Through the lens of Japanese Noh theater, May's pacing on the stage overlapped with the image of slow-tempo Noh shuffles called *suriashi*. Without raising the heels, the actor slides the sole of the feet along the stage surface. This image of stylized Noh shuffles coincides with May's calculated footsteps. The aesthetics of Noh dance is characterized by *suriashi, kamae* (posture of the entire body and mind used in martial arts such as karate and judo, for defense but also for preserving a fighting spirit), and circular movement. Like Noh dancers, the sound of May's shuffling created lyricism on the stage, while body posture maintained tension.

The calculated steps of the woman in *Footfalls* resonate on the empty stage, along with the unseen Voice, and present a ceremonial pattern. According to an

interview with Billie Whitelaw, who premiered *Footfalls* in 1976 and for whom Beckett wrote this play as well, Beckett is said to have advised her 'to be not quite there'. From this advice, Billie Whitelaw perceived that she "was in a sort of strange no-man's-land, gray, neither here nor there" (Kalb 1989, 235). This surrealistic element is what supports the structures of Noh drama, where past and present intermingle on the stage. Thus, Beckett's *Footfalls* bridges the gap between past and present, punctuated by the sound of a chime. To put it in Gibson Cima's words, "[c]omplicated storytelling strategies allow Beckett, like Zeami, to interweave the narrative past and the dramatic present" (1993, 193).

As I explain above, *Shite* is ambiguous and is not identified in the first part of Noh dramas. However, with the help of *Waki*'s prayers, *Shite* is able to purify itself in the second half. In *Footfalls*, after the chime is heard, it is May who speaks on the stage instead of the unseen Voice that dominated the first part of the play. In the end, there is a peaceful atmosphere, with a little faint light and the sound of the chime, and no trace of May on the stage. Through these scenes in *Footfalls*, Japanese audiences associate May with the image of *Shite* purified by the prayer of the unseen Voice, itself assimilated to the role of *Waki*.

The name of the heroine in *Footfalls*, May, is that of Beckett's own mother. Religious vocabulary such as 'Amen,' 'God,' 'Holy Ghost' outwardly creates a solemn space and a poetic atmosphere on stage, yet under the surface such words seem to represent emptiness of meaning. According to Anthony Cronin's biography of Beckett, the playwright's mother, May, "read the Bible to her children every day and continued to do so even after they had begun to attend Sunday school" (Cronin 1996, 19). Having been brought up in such a religious environment, Beckett was later dismissive of Irish Protestantism, saying: "My brother and mother got no value from their religion when they died. At the moment of crisis it had no more depth than an old school-tie" (Cronin 1996, 21). Nevertheless, Beckett, who did not profess to believe in God, seemed to gradually let his characters merge into the ceremonial space where an unseen spiritual figure dominates within the character on the stage. Compared to his early dramaturgy, there are less verbal lines, and the movements are more restricted. The fragility of female characters is more obvious than in his early years. James Knowlson, one of Beckett's biographers, reveals that Beckett strived to pay homage to his mother, May:

> In the final months of his life, Beckett's feelings of love for his mother and remorse at having, as he saw it, let her down so frequently, struck me [Knowlson] as still intense, almost volcanic. It was virtually the only 'no-go' area in our conversations. Whenever the subject arose, it was clear that it was too painful, even unbearable.
>
> (Knowlson 1996, 670)

Thus, the Japanese operatic form of Noh theater has a strong affinity to the concept of purification of the soul in Beckett's *Footfalls*, taking the audience somewhere in between life and death, past and present, the conscious and the unconscious, a place similar to a mother's womb. May's sliding steps in *Footfalls* reflect, through kinetic artistry, the process of purification of *Shite*'s agonies. In effect, if not in explicit words, in *Footfalls* Beckett searched intensely for the nonverbal possibilities of contemporary theater through a Noh-like performance style.

4. The aesthetics of translation

This final section engages with the question of why it is meaningful to transpose plays by Shakespeare and Beckett, such as those discussed above, into Japanese operatic performances, instead of merely translating the texts themselves, for example through a foreignizing method. As I endeavor to show, aesthetics is to be found at the core of this debate.

4.1   Translation aesthetics: Adaptation

According to Mary Snell-Hornby, a question frequently raised is "whether the creative, performable foreign language version of a theater text is actually a translation at all" (Snell-Hornby 2007, 116).

When operatic texts are performed on the stage, they are required to contain theatrical elements to convey the messages of the original. In other words,

> [w]hen performed on stage, the words spoken constitute only one element of a theatrical production, along with lighting, sets, costumes and music. Here, because it forms part of an integrated whole, greater demands are also placed on the translation with respect to its 'performability' thus increasing the tension between the need to relate the target text to its source (the adequacy factor), and the need to formulate a text in the target language (the acceptability factor).
>
> (Anderman 2011, 92)

As Bastin explained, "adaptation is a procedure which can be used whenever the context referred to in the original text does not exist in the culture of the target text, thereby necessitating some form of re-creation" (2011, 3–4). However, where operatic productions performed on stage, in theatrical spaces, are concerned, translation concepts apply in a somewhat different way than in other types of translation, including literary translation: "Unlike the translation of a novel, or a poem, the duality inherent in the art of the theater requires language to combine with spectacle, manifested through visual as well as acoustic images" (Anderman 2011, 92). Owing

to the fact that both Western opera and Japanese traditional performing arts, including Kabuki and Noh, are syntheses of music, dance, and drama, the content of the lines chanted and sung by the actors on the stage are not the only elements to consider. Nonverbal elements such as settings, costumes, masks, music, lighting, and the special stylized pattern of singing and movement, all have a role to play.

Within the context of Japanese operatic performing art, nonverbal elements such as Kabuki and Noh dance (*suriashi, kamae*, and circular movement) successfully harmonize with the motif of the original texts. Operatic recitatives called *sashi* as well as solo operatic arias by the main character, *Shite*, are also compatible with the story, and do not lead to departures from the original text. Moreover, the chants and chorus of Japanese operatic forms also enhance the effects of dynamism on the stage. Finally, the lyricism and artistry intrinsic to the source texts vibrate through the actors' movements as well as through the cadence of the target language.

In other words, translating Western drama into Japanese operatic forms is a process of enrichment, becomes part of a broader translation aesthetics. In his "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation", Roman Jakobson outlined three types of translation: "intralingual translation" (e.g., dialects); "interlingual translation or translation proper, i.e., an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language" (Jakobson 2004, 139); and "intersemiotic translation or transmutation", defined as an "interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems" (Jakobson 2004, 139). The productions adapting plays by Shakespeare and Beckett into Japanese operatic forms clearly belong to the third translation type in Jakobson's classification.

4.2   Translation aesthetics: Paralanguage, kinesics, and proxemics

When the plays by Shakespeare and Beckett were translated into Kabuki and Noh forms, the linguistic meaning of the lines chanted or sung on stage became the secondary focus for the Western audiences attending the performances. This is because linguistic elements are translated into actual voices and physical movements: "With various *kata* as building blocks, a sequence of movements is created. This limited number of *kata* is strictly choreographed; their size, speed, angle, or power is determined according to the character portrayed" (Kagaya 2016, 24–28). The visual and acoustic elements in the theater have a stronger impact than the literal meanings of the words in the text. Paralinguistic features such as rhythm, intonation, resonance, pitch, pause, and facial expressions become more significant factors for expressing the emotions of the characters. Without necessarily comprehending the details of the words spoken by the actors, the audience is thus able to follow the performance, and relate to it.

The stage directions in the original texts were transformed into kinesic movements particular to Kabuki and Noh: postures, circular movements, shuffles, exaggerated poses, quick costume changes, and masks. These nonverbal elements unique to Japanese operatic forms are not disrespectful of the intentions of the playwrights, and can even serve to highlight the legitimacy and the artistic value intrinsic to the original works.

The relationship between the characters on stage became clearer when the conventions of *Shite* and *Waki* were integrated into the performance. In *Footfalls*, May performed the part of *Shite*, while the Voice offstage was *Waki*. As Snell-Hornby explains, "[p]roxemic features involve the relationship of a figure to the stage environment, and describe its movement within that environment and its varying distance or physical closeness to the other characters on the stage" (2007, 109). May's delicate pacing in *Footfalls* or the distance between *Shite* and *Waki* exemplified through May and the Voice demonstrate the importance of proxemics in the theater.

Translated and adapted into Japanese operatic forms, Western drama written by Shakespeare and Beckett is neither 'translation' nor 'adaptation'. The answer to Snell-Hornby's question of "whether the creative, performable foreign language version of a theatre text is actually a translation at all" (2007, 116) must imply admitting that opera translation is distinct from translating other genres. Translating for opera involves the creation of a new work of intersemiotic art. And when Western drama takes the form of Japanese Kabuki and Noh, the potentialities of nonverbal expression are expanded and multiplied, without endangering the audience's comprehension but, on the contrary, heightening it through the use of nonverbal elements: paralinguistic, kinetic, and proxemic.

5.   Conclusion

This study discusses some of the ways in which Western drama is represented and performed in Japanese operatic forms in the beginning of the 21st century. Kabuki was an excellent choice for Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. It enabled the audience to understand that the "reason Shakespeare was accepted so rapidly into modern Japan was not just that Kabuki was the only theater in the early Meiji period (1868–1912) that could stage it", but undoubtedly also because of the "many similarities between Shakespeare and Kabuki" (Kawatake 2006, 263). And, indeed, as Kawatake points out, "[b]oth were theatres for townspeople; both came into the existence around the same time; both use actors to perform women's roles; and their structures and forms of expression have much in common" (2006, 258).

The Japanese operatic form of Kyōgen was used for Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, leading to a performance entitled *Kyōgen of Errors*. Japanese humorous chants and stylized movements of *kata* embodied the English lines of the play. As all the performances revealed, "four hundred years after their inception, [these forms of theater] still have the power to delight and move audiences throughout the world" (Kawatake 2006, 258, my addition).

I have also examined the relationship between Japanese Noh theater and the work of Samuel Beckett. I argue that there are important similarities between Beckett's *Footfalls* and Noh, making Noh a choice of predilection when it comes to translating / adapting this play into a Japanese operatic form. The aesthetics of Noh chants, the convention of *Shite* and *Waki*, the use of *suriashi, kamae*, and stylized *kata* are clearly attuned to Beckett's aesthetic qualities.

Finally, I have sought to highlight the importance of using creative new approaches to opera and translation, bringing together Western aesthetic practices and Eastern perspectives in terms of both linguistic and nonverbal aspects. Through the use of intersemiotic translation (in the sense of Jakobson), the original language of the text gives rise to multiple possibilities of nonverbal translations for performance (see also Takebe 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016).

The effect on audiences, Western and Eastern alike, is in all probability one of enabling the spectators to depart from banal, standard images of what the texts mean, and to capture the essence of the plays written by Shakespeare and Beckett with fresh eyes, beyond the barrier of language.

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Text and context

Translations, adaptations or rewritings?

English versions of Mozart and Da Ponte's *Don Giovanni*

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This paper analyses the various English translations of Da Ponte and Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, with an aim at showing that each version tends to adapt the social, cultural and sexual contexts of the opera. From Natalia Macfarren's Victorian translation of the 1870s to Jeremy Sams' modern version currently in use at the English National Opera, via Edward Dent's sprightly text written in the 1930s for the London lower middle classes, Ruth and Thomas Martin's version meant for a conservative American public and W. H. Auden's most poetical reinterpretation, all versions resort to strategies aimed at drawing on the new receiver's culture. Whatever their own specificities, all versions tend to reduce the strangeness and otherness of the original text, offering their own interpretations of Mozart and Da Ponte's universal masterpiece.

Keywords: adaptation, Auden, Da Ponte, Dent, Macfarren, Mozart, music-linked translation (MLT), rewriting, Sams, translation

1. Introduction

Few operas have had more appeal and longevity than Mozart and Da Ponte's *Don Giovanni* (1787), one of the very few 18th-century works in the operatic repertory that has been played continuously since it was first performed. In the context of Mozart's canon, the same could not be said of *Così fan tutte* or *The Magic Flute*, operas that either completely disappeared from the stage for a while or which were adapted beyond the point of recognition. If one were to assess the success of a given work by the number of translations published over the years, *Don Giovanni* would probably rank among the very top five in terms of universal popularity (see Loewenberg 1943, 222–228).

However tempting it might be, a complete, thorough and systematic analysis of all the translations of Mozart's masterpiece that have come down to us, in dozens of languages, is of course unthinkable within the scope of the present paper. Restricting the field of study to one single language can nevertheless remain indicative of the chronological and cultural evolution in the reception and understanding of the work in question. Limiting the area of investigation to the cultural universe of the English-speaking world is also a way of establishing the types of cultural transfer that have been at work over the years, and assessing the way the cultural climate has influenced various translations in a complex and multi-faceted process that inevitably combines, at varying degrees, fidelity to the original and adaptation to the expectations of a target-culture.

In his article on the challenges of operatic translation, Gottfried Marschall once mentioned the perpetual dilemma experienced by a special category of translators having to choose between preserving the spirit and authenticity of the original text, by sticking as closely as possible to the initial words, or adapting the text to the needs and requirements of a target-audience whose horizon of expectation may have little to do with the origin of the work in question:

> As a mediator between several cultures and ways of thinking, the translator has to make a fundamental choice that will be fraught with consequences: should the translated text suggest the original world of the source-text (background, atmosphere), with all the ingredients that are involved, and thereby give the receiver a pleasant feeling of strangeness and otherness? Or should it create a universe adapted to the environment of the target-reader by providing him with keys of understanding through a form of 'artificial familiarity'? How can the translated text capture a maximum of authenticity while being open to the new receiver's culture? Does transposition mean preservation or transformation?
>
> This dilemma is further reinforced when it comes to operatic translation, with the appearance of new parameters rich in social, geographical and mainly musical, practical and physiological considerations. Should the target-language spectator have the feeling that he is confronted to the translation of a foreign work desperately striving to preserve its own identity, or should opera in translation assume a new identity so as to flatter, in its new garb, the habits of the public it aims to conquer and win over? (Marschall 2004, 13–14, my translation)[1]

Marschall further illustrates his point by referring to Friedrich Ludwig Schröder's well-known translation of *Don Giovanni*'s so-called champagne aria. The text, with its geographical references to German and Austrian provinces, does indeed trans-

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1. The concept pair 'domestication / foreignisation' is also discussed in Apter and Herman (2016, 31–56).

form Mozart's supposedly Spanish protagonist into a Teutonic hero more likely to be identified with, and recognised as their own, by German-speaking audiences.

The present article therefore proposes to examine the various English translations of Mozart's most popular opera so as to highlight the evolution of cultural transfers throughout the centuries and to ponder on the way English-speaking countries have encountered, absorbed and adapted the various contexts of a work which, however fascinating and appealing it still is, is not without its problems and imperfections. One of the leading threads of the article will be the investigation of how such issues – whether on a structural, generic or axiological plane – have been handled. For reasons of space, pride of place will be given to the social, sexual and cultural implications of the treatment undergone by Mozart's controversial yet ever-fascinating character, a hero or anti-hero seen as both detestable and admirable, a contemptible cynic who rapes, murders, cheats, lies, blasphemes and insults the dead, while remaining throughout a lively and seductive rebel determined to live his life to the full even if it means defying human and divine laws.

A few initial observations are in order:

1. Only singing, or music-linked translations (MLT), will be considered here (see Golomb 2005), however tempting it would have been to take into account Lorenzo Da Ponte's own translation of his libretto. That text, a literal translation written in collaboration with Da Ponte's son, also called Lorenzo, was meant to be used and read during performances of the work in Italian, although it also contains a few pieces that, owing to their prosody, could easily lend themselves to musical rendition (see Müller and Panagl 1991).

2. Adaptations containing music by composers other than Mozart will not be discussed, their literary status being more akin to downright rewritings than to actual translations. Such is the case of the first English version of the opera, given at Covent Garden in May 1817 in the wake of the Haymarket Italian performances of the same year. Translated as *Don Juan; Or, the Libertine*, with a text by Isaac Pocock and music adapted by Henry Bishop, this "perversion of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*" (Northcott 1920, 33) actually contains fairly little music by Mozart (Mozart [1818]).[2] The same can be said for the adaptation by John Baldwin Buckstone and William Hawes given at the Adelphi in July 1830 (Buckstone 1828), or for the version given in 1833 at Drury Lane in a translation by Samuel Beazley (Da Ponte 1833). Similarly, the various sequels to Mozart's opera such as extravaganzas like William T. Moncrieff's *Don Giovanni in London; Or, the Libertine Reclaimed* (1817) or Charles Dibdin's *Don Giovanni;*

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2. The date does not appear on the printed text, hence the square brackets.

Or, a Spectre on Horseback (1817), both put on as other responses to the famed King's Theatre performances of 1817, will only be considered indirectly.

3. This article will also leave aside texts that rank poorly in terms of musical prosody, something which is unfortunately the case for early 19th-century translation such as Thomas H. Reynoldson's version given in Edinburgh in 1830 (Mozart 1830) or even Jacob Wrey Mould's translation given at The Princess's Theatre in 1849 (Mozart 1850). Such translations, usually adequate from a semantic point of view and fairly faithful to the original – a feature that seems to have begun in the second half of the nineteenth century, as Klaus Kaindl has also observed about translation practices in Germany (see Kaindl in this volume) – tend to be deficient from a musical perspective, at least in terms of syllabic count, rhythmical accuracy, vowel lengths, phonic adequacy or musical rhetoric (Tråvén 2005). A competent and experienced translator like Jacob Wrey Mould, usually aware of the issue as textual authenticity, repeatedly voiced his difficulties in finding for his translations the right rhythms and metres: "For ourselves, we beg indulgence, having been hampered and tied in by ungainly metres and irregular lines in many places" (Beethoven [1851], Introduction, unpaginated). Awkward translations such as those all give credit to the statement by the famous baritone Charles Santley who, when in his prime, had notoriously turned down several offers to sing Don Giovanni in English, a role that had been a signature part of his when he had sung it in Italian at the Haymarket, or elsewhere: "If you [the manager of the Gaiety Theatre that had engaged him] want me to play Don Giovanni, you must […] have the opera properly translated, as I decline adopting any translation I have yet seen" (Santley 1893, 316, my addition). Whether or not Santley would have approved of the translations we are going to examine remains of course an open question.

2. Natalia Macfarren's Victorian translation (1871)

Even if history does not tell what Britain's premier baritone thought of Natalia Macfarren's elegant translation – he was past his prime when it came out –, the performing career of this stylistically and musically impeccable text lasted well into the first decades of the 20th century, as several audio recordings testify. Made by a professional singer and competent musicologist – Natalia Macfarren was also the wife of the eminent composer George Alexander Macfarren –, this translation is the first to sacrifice literal faithfulness and verbal accuracy to the benefit of musical adequacy: "*Don Ottavio, son morta*" is thus rendered as "Don Octavio,

oh help me" (85),[3] "*temerario*" as "Fool, how dare you" (30), syllabic count and dramatic effect being prioritised over word-for-word equivalence. Macfarren also shows her concern for phonic resemblance when she translates "*fredde le membre*" as "cold, cold as marble" (21), "*tutto*" as "traitor" (146), "*trema*" as "tremble" (150), etc. Stylistically, modern listeners will find Macfarren's text outdated, as evidenced by her use of Miltonic inversions – "heaven relenting" (28), "that voice impetuous" (38), "monster perfidious" (73) – or other syntactic contortions, such as "From her to part" (96) or "makes me quite of thee ashamed" (81).

Macfarren's use of swear-words remains mild and 'respectable' throughout – "miscreant" (14, 50, finale), "vile betrayer" (12), "caitiff and coward" (16), "rash old man" (17), "dishonorable villain" (177) – as befits the type of audience to which the text was targeted. Published in the Novello vocal scores series, Natalia Macfarren's translations were part of an editorial policy meant to introduce the operatic repertory into the Victorian drawing-room, far from the turpitudes of the theatrical stage. In that respect, no one will be surprised at the moralising attitude towards Don Giovanni's crimes, the moral message of the opera indicated by the subtitle of the work, *Don Giovanni, ossia il dissoluto punito*, being slightly overemphasised. Macfarren's translation of the opera's final words – "*Questo è il fin di chi fa mal*" (Act 2, Scene 16) – makes even more explicit the exact nature of those who will eventually be punished: "Libertines, ye thus shall end" (293). One can note in passing the phonic similarity between "*fin*" and "Libertines", Macfarren displaying once again her concern to match sounds from one version to the other. Similarly, the final allusion to "*Proserpina e Pluton*" has been replaced by a more transparent formula – "Let him in flames atone, / Who no mercy e'er has shown" (291–292) – a translation which again shows its author's obsession with preserving the rhyme-schemes of the original. Generally speaking, it is the manner and not the nature of the offence that is diminished, Don Giovanni being presented as a well-bred and polished "gentleman" (57), sending off Leporello to show Masetto and Zerlina his "pictures" (56) and "furniture" (56), exactly as an English country squire would have done in a similar context. Sexually speaking, the Don's sexual exploits are slightly understated, as Donna Anna's narrative of her failed seduction seems to indicate: "*Tacito a me s'appressa, e mi vuol abbracciar*" (Act 1, Scene 13) is thus euphemistically translated as "Silently he drew near me, and my hand would caress" (87).

More striking in Natalia Macfarren's English version is the way the translator tones down and polishes up Da Ponte's presentation of the female parts. This is particularly true of Elvira, a character which critics have often found problematic on account of her mixed nature, halfway between tragedy and comedy. In that respect, it has often been noted that Elvira's excessive and extravagant behaviour

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3. For reasons of commodity, page numbers will appear in the text within parentheses.

does not befit the nobility of her social status, the mixture of sincerity and ridicule that marks both the character and her music being likely to overtax the interpretative capacity of an audience for whom nobility of character and *buffo* comedy are hardly compatible (Noiray 1996; Dent 1947, 158–159). One can note, for instance, how the parodic dimension of Elvira's entrance aria is considerably weakened by the deletion of the young woman's indecorous intention to, literally, "make a horrible carnage" and "tear out Don Giovanni's heart", a transformation that turns the passionate character of the original version into a pathetic and ladylike Victorian counterpart:

(1)   Trio "*Ah! chi mi dice mai*".   (Act 1, Scene 5)
    Ah! chi mi dice mai
    Quel barbara dov'è,
    Che per mio scorno amai,
    Che mi mancò di fé?
    Ah se ritrovo l'empio,
    E a me non torna ancor,
    Vo' farne orrendo scempio,
    Gli vo' cavar il cor.

    Where shall I find a token
    To guide my love to thee?
    My love is nearly broken,
    The world is dark to me.
    Ah if he stood before me
    Fiercely his vows I'd spurn
    The love he once bore me
    Can never more return.   (32–37)

One might also argue that there is less violence at the end of her second aria – another supposedly parodic aria (Noiray 1996, 42–43) – where the words "*il labbro è mentitor, / fallace il ciglio*" are rendered as "While yet there's time, retreat, / Or woe befall thee" (70–71), thus reinforcing Elvira's protective dimension and diminishing her own vindictive, unladylike nature. In a similar vein, one can note that Elvira's straightforward and therefore inelegant accusation in the middle of the Act 1 quartet – "*è un traditore*" – is translated as yet another form of lament: "O heed my prayer" (80). In such a vision of the play, where submission and passivity are implicitly extolled as the epitome of femininity, it is little wonder that when the original Don Giovanni simply criticises a lack of prudence – "*siate un poco piu prudente, vi farete criticar*" (Act 1, Scene 12) – the English Don Giovanni is made to deplore Elvira's supposedly "unwomanly" conduct: "thy unwomanly behaving makes me quite of thee ashamed" (81).

Unsurprisingly, the treatment of Zerlina also confirms the translator's tendency to chasten what, to a Victorian audience, might also look like an unseemly way of presenting womankind. In the young peasant girl's first aria, any indication that a member of the fair sex could be beaten has been prudishly removed:

(2)   "*Batti, batti, o bel Masetto*".   (Act 1, Scene 16)
       Batti batti, o bel Masetto,
       La tua povera Zerlina:
       Starò qui come agnellina
       Le tue botte ad aspettar.

       Canst thou see me, unforgiven,
       Here in sorrow stand and languish?
       O Masetto, end my anguish
       Come and let's be friends again.   (106)

Needless to say, the erotic, physical connotations in Zerlina's second aria are also deleted – "*toccami qua*" (Act 2, Scene 6) being rendered as "'tis all thy own" (184–187) –, to say nothing of the bawdy allusion of the previous recitative, with the *double entendre* of the sequence "*non è gran mal se il resto è sano*" prudently translated as "if that's the worst, there is no great harm done" (184). Twentieth-century translations, as will be seen later, were to be less squeamish about the sexual elements in Da Ponte's libretto.

3.   Edward J. Dent's translation for London suburban audiences (1921, 1938)

Even though she is not named, it is no doubt Natalia Macfarren who is alluded to in Edward Dent's preface to his translation of *Don Giovanni*, a text published in 1938 but performed as early as 1921: "Far be it from me to speak ill of my predecessors: Thomas Oliphant's version of *Fidelio* (1933) is a model of good style. Unfortunately it sounds too elegant for the present day" (Da Ponte 1938, vi). As a matter of fact, Dent's text deliberately sacrifices stylistic elegance to conversational clarity, an aesthetic option that he accounted for when he related his experience at the London Old Vic, a then suburban theatre with a view to 'educating' the lower and lower-middle classes to whom the operatic repertory had yet to be made accessible (see Dent 1945 and 1979; Westrup 1946). The words in his translation are thus deliberately short, simple and monosyllabic, and his syntax and language are sometimes on the fringe of colloquialism: "But the lady, what was she after" (3); "Don't be hysterical", "what's that you say?" (37); "Will you beat me black and blue" (26), "Stir your stumps and get to business" (27), and the list could continue.

Compared to those in Macfarren's version of the opera, Dent's expletives and derogatory slurs also have a more realistic flavour, even though they still retain, to a modern audience, a kind of voluntary 18th-century feel: "Pretty wenches" (11), "my pretty lass" (12), "such a bumpkin" (14), "comely wenches" (24), "you minx, baggage" (25) "hussy" (26). As usual with Dent's translations, the deliberately pedestrian nature of the dialogue is enhanced by the musicologist's capacity for witty punning, as evidenced by his handling of the reference to Giuseppe Sarti's opera *I due litiganti*, clarified to the average listener by explicitly mentioning the composer's name. Dent also takes this opportunity to pass some scathing comment on the reputedly poor quality of Sarti's music:

(3)   Extract from the Act 2 finale.   (Act 2, Scene 13)
Leporello
Servo. […] *E vivano* I litiganti.
Don Giovanni
Versa il vino!
(Leporello versa il vino nel bicchiero.)
Leporello
Eccelente Marzimino.

Leporello
Yes, sir. […] Ah! That's from the *Litiganti.*
Don Giovanni
Take the wine round.
(*Leporello pours wine.*)
Leporello
Extra dry, like Sarti's music.   (64)

In his translation of the incipit of Giovanni's champagne aria, Dent jocularly quotes from the accepted translation of Johann Strauss's world-famous waltz "*Wein, Weib und Gesang*" (in English, "Wine, women and song"), the intertextual dimension of the famous hendiatris no doubt widening the scope of the opera in the eyes of the targeted public:

(4)   Aria "*Finch'han dal vino calda la testa*".   (Act 1, Scene 15)
Fin ch'han dal vino
Calda la testa
Una gran festa
Fa' preparar.

Song, wine, and women
Who'd be without them.

I'll have my pleasure,
Morn, noon and night.   (24)

Structurally speaking, Dent's translation of Mozart's opera is the only one to offer three versions of Don Ottavio's aria "*Il mio tesoro*" (51, 60, 62), depending on whether the aria should be sung in Act 1, Scene 10 or Scene 12, with or without the final recitative of Scene 12. This most intriguing option, no doubt motivated by Dent's concern for dramatic efficiency, also reveals his special interest in a character often considered dull and dramatically inept, "always faithful, always virtuous", undersexed, "impotent" in all senses of the word (see Hocquard 1978, *passim*; Hocquard 1979, 64 and 100; Jouve 1942, *passim*). Somewhat surprisingly, the English version overstates the supposed friendship between Ottavio and Giovanni, a feature that can be traced in the literary source of the libretto, Tirso de Molina's *El Burlador de Sevilla y convidado de piedra*, but hardly developed by Da Ponte in his libretto (Noiray 1996, 50). The following passage does indeed underline, far more explicitly in the translation than in the original, Ottavio's conflict of loyalty between his friend and his fiancée:

(5) Extract from Don Ottavio's recitative.   (Act 1, Scene 14)
Come mai creder deggio
Di si nero delitto
Capace un cavaliere!
Ah di scoprire il vero
Ogni mezzo si cerchi, io sento in petto
E di sposo, e d'amico
Il dover che mi parla.
Disingannarla voglio, o vendicarla.

'Tis indeed past believing that a crime so
atrocious was the act of a man of breeding!
I must relax no effort till I know what the
truth is. To my belovèd I've a duty, I've
a duty to my friend Don Giovanni; yes I
must undeceive her, or else avenge her!   (22)

More than that, the syntactic organisation of the sentence, with two clauses separated by a mere comma, might also imply that "my friend" and "my beloved" are one and the same person, the English phrasing of the text thereby suggesting an openly homoerotic relationship between Ottavio and Giovanni! Should one accept such a reading – the idea of Don Juan's latent homosexuality has been a pet theme of recent study and staging –, one realises that Dent's translation is teeming with oblique allusions and innuendos. Among those, one might perhaps underline

Leporello's invitation to the three masqueraders to join the ball at the end of Act 1. In the English version, the invitation is exclusively addressed to Ottavio:

(6)   Extract from the Act 1 finale.   (Act 1, Scene 19)
      Zi, zi, signore maschere […]
      Al ballo se vi piace
      V'invita il mio signor.

      Hallo, my pretty gentleman! […] My
      master sends his compliment and bids you
      to the dance.   (30)

Furthermore, Don Giovanni's greeting to a party in which two men, Masetto and Leporello, are seen to be dancing together, also lends itself to a certain amount of *double entendre*. The translation offered by Dent for Don Giovanni's toast "*Viva la libertà*" thus takes up a meaning the connotations of which certainly make more sense today than in Dent's time: "I'm for a life that's *gay*" (32, my emphasis). Yet, when the term 'gay' was used in the sense of 'dissipated' in the 1930s, the homosexual connotations could already be understood in a euphemistic way. At all events, the meaning did not go unnoticed when this version was used for student performances at Cambridge in 1975: "Dent's 'life that's gay' […] was thought to need tactful amendment" (Forbes 1975, 80). Anyway, in such a context, Leporello's statement "He stole my innocence away" (50) in his Act 2 aria certainly acquires in Dent's translation a meaning that no doubt was never intended in Da Ponte's original "*L'innocenza mi rubò*" (Act 2, Scene 9).

To those who might find this interpretation far-fetched, if not downright outrageous, one might retort that Dent was in the habit of carrying out such schemes (Degott 2014). An academic close to the Cambridge Apostles – a secret society having, in his lifetime, militant members like Rupert Brooke or Lytton Strachey –, Dent was also a close friend of E. M. Forster, a novelist reputed for introducing resolutely homosexual subtexts in his novels. Modern scholarship maintains that Edward Dent himself served as a model for Philip Herriton, the protagonist of *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (Forster 2001, 7–16), a character having, if one is able to read between the lines, a covert homoerotic relationship with his brother-in-law Gino Carella. In other words Dent, who never made any secret of his own personal leanings (Carey 1979), was perfectly aware of the existence of literary and in this case translation strategies meant to introduce hidden messages, no doubt undecipherable to the majority of readers or spectators. In any case, Dent's version can be read as the very opposite of the previous moralising version by Natalia Macfarren, if only in the sense that it advocates alternative ways of living and for which no moralising, definitive dénouement is given. To Macfarren's downright doom and

condemnation – "Ye thus shall end" (293) – corresponds for the sinner an unexpected possibility of redemption:

(7)   Extract from the Act 2 finale.   (Act 2, Scene 16)
Questo è il fin di chi fa mal:
E de' perfidi la morte
Alla vita è sempre ugual.

Sinner, pause, and ponder well,
Mark the end of Don Giovanni!
Are you going to Heaven or Hell?   (72)

Needless to say, Dent's slightly tendentious, biased reading was to be, consciously or not, 'corrected' in subsequent versions.

4.   Ruth and Thomas Martin's middle-class translation (1950)

When, in the late 1940s, Ruth and Thomas Martin's operatic translations began to come out in the United States, Dent's translations were still currently heard in Great Britain, even at Covent Garden where the post-war period encouraged the use of opera in translation for certain popular works (Rosenthal 1958, 553–669); *The Magic Flute*, as Lucile Desblache demonstrates within the present volume, was of course a case in point. Widely performed throughout America, including at the Metropolitan (Kozin 2000), the Martin translations were usually praised for their clarity and singability but also for their pedagogical content. Destined for a public to whom opera as an art form was unfamiliar, they were all based on a praiseworthy effort to clarify what, to the uninitiated, was likely to remain vague or obscure. Their version of *Don Giovanni*, a model for dramatic flair, syntactic astuteness and linguistic inventiveness, is of course no exception. Organically speaking, it departs from the preceding versions in the sense that it systematically avoids repetition, the two translators making it a point to expand the English text so as to make Da Ponte's meanings more explicit: 53 lines, for instance, are needed for Leporello's catalogue aria instead of the original thirty. From a semantic point of view, it is miles apart from Dent's semantic distortion and uninhibited reinterpretation. Obviously, Ruth and Thomas Martin's translation was intended for audiences that were also likely to have conservative views in terms of societal behaviour or sexual mores. This is evidenced by the two translators' effort to highlight some of the characters' concern with moral respectability, especially when it comes to the almost obsessional issue of marriage:

(8) References to the issue of marriage in the Martin text.

Elvira

In casa mia
Entri furtivamente; a forza d'arte,
Di giuramenti et de lusinghe arrivi
A sedurre il cor moi;
M'innamori, o crudele,
Mi dichiari tua sposa, e poi mancando
Della terra e del ciell al santo dritto
Con enorme delitto
Dopo tre di da Burgos allontani.   (Act 1, Scene 5)

Leporello

V'han contesse, baronesse,
Marchesane, principesse.   (Act 1, Scene 5)

Giovanni

Là ci darem la mano,
Là mi dirai di sì.   (Act 1, Scene 9)

Ottavio

Fia domani, se vuoi, dolce compenso
Questo cor, questa mano…
Che il mio tenero amor […]

Anna

Oh Dei, che dite?…
In si tristi momenti…   (Act 2, Scene 12)

Elvira

One fatal night you entered my house in
secret, and you succeeded, by means of
flattery and by promising marriage, in
seducing my virtue. Like a fool I believed
you, when you said we would marry and
then, you scoundrel, since no rites had
sanctioned our union, you felt free to
desert me after three days and went away
from Burgos.   (7)

Leporello

From Toledo to Gibraltar
Without blessing from the altar.   (8)

Giovanni
Give me your hand, my sweetheart,
Promise to be my wife.   (11)

Ottavio
If you give your consent, we shall be
married, and my heart, my devotion will
atone for your grief. […]

Anna
Oh God, how can you speak of marriage at
this moment?   (31)

In its open, downright condemnation of Mozart's protagonist, the Martins's text actually marks a return to Lady Macfarren's Victorian views, as the translation of the final moral – printed in capital letters in the version we have consulted – clearly indicates:

(9)   Extract from the Act 2 finale.   (Act 2, Scene 16)
      Questo è il fin di chi fa mal:
      E de' perfidi la morte
      Alla vita è sempre ugual.

      Wicked men shall be condemned.
      He who leads a life of evil,
      Always meets a dreadful end.   (36)

In the lyrics of Zerlina's first aria, biblical elements are even brought to the fore, the young peasant girl attaining (or pretending to attain) a degree of passive submissiveness that Natalia Macfarren herself would probably never have considered:

(10) "*Batti, batti, o bel Masetto*".   (Act 1, Scene 16)
      Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,
      La tua povera Zerlina:
      Starò qui come agnellina
      Le tue botte ad aspettar.
      Lascerò straziarmi il crine,
      Lascerò cavarmi gli occhi;
      E le care tue manine
      Lieta poi saprò baciar.
      Ah lo vedo: non hai core;
      Pace, pace, o vita mia,
      In contenti ed allegria
      Notte e dì vogliam passar.

I am sorry, dear Masetto,
I behaved so very badly,
I will take a scolding badly,
Mild and patient as a lamb.
I was in the wrong completely,
So no matter how you treat me,
I will kiss the hand that beat me,
Kiss your dear beloved hand,
I am sorry, dear Masetto,
Go ahead, I will not grumble!
Here I am, resigned and humble, –
Your Zerlina, tame and meek.
Oh please Masetto, hurry, hurry, –
Beat me hard,
Then I'll turn the other cheek.
Ah, I see it, come admit it, –
You are not angry any longer,
Thank you, thank you, dear Masetto,
I'm so happy you relented!
From now on, we'll live contented,
You and I forevermore!   (16, my italics)

In the same vein, sexual innuendos are duly removed – "no bones broken" (26) for
"*se il resto è sano*" (Act 2, Scene 6) – and allusions to physical details considerably
softened. In the Act 2 finale, Da Ponte's precise intertextual self-referential allu-
sions to contemporary operas, which are naturally bound to be lost on an uniniti-
ated public, are conspicuously simplified (Sarti's *I due litiganti*), clarified (*Le nozze
di Figaro*) or completely neutralised (Martin y Soler's *Cosa rara*):

(11)   Three extracts from the Act 2 finale.   (Act 2, Scene 13)
       Leporello
       Bravi. Cosa rara.
       […]
       Servo. […] E vivano I litiganti.
       […]
       Questa poi la conosco pur troppo.

       Leporello
       That is from an opera!
       […]
       Yes, Sir! This music's by Paisiello.
       […]
       That's the *Marriage of Figaro* by Mozart.   (32–33)

In the early 1960s, Ruth and Thomas Martin's pedestrian yet highly accomplished version was to be supplanted by the more poetical translation by W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman, an elaborately aesthetic version commissioned for an NBC Opera Theatre production of Mozart's opera.

5.   W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman's poetical translation (1961)

Owing to the celebrity of one of its two authors, the Auden / Kallman text has received more critical attention than the other English versions of *Don Giovanni* (Kerman 1954; Weisstein 1970; Spiegelmann 1982). Auden himself made abundant comment on his translation, thereby not only displaying his technical expertise and stylistic awareness, but also advocating the translator's right to trust his own sensibility by adapting poetical inspiration to his perception and response to music. About *Don Giovanni*, he explained that "[g]iven the character of the music, […] the natural English equivalent was not something late-eighteenth-century like Da Ponte's Italian, but Elizabethan pastoral" (Auden 1962, 491). His aesthetic option was therefore to translate, in the sense of to transpose, the cultural universe of the original work to the world corresponding to his listener's sensibility. In so doing, he introduced a form of *Gefühlsdistanz*, an aesthetic distance more likely to remind English-speaking audiences of their own cultural references than to Mozart or Da Ponte's. This is what happens at the beginning of Act 1 Scene 7, a passage deliberately transposed into the world of English pastoral poetry:

(12)   Duet and chorus "*Giovinette, che fate all'amore*".   (Act 1, Scene 7)
Zerlina
Giovinette, che fate all'amore,
Non lasciate che passi l'età;
Se nel seno vi bulica il core,
Il rimedio vedetelo qua.
Che piacer, che piacer che sarà
La ra la, la ra la, la ra la.

Zerlina
Pretty maid with your graces adorning
The dew-spangled morning,
The red rose and the white fade away
Both wither away, both fade in a day.
Of your pride and unkindness relenting
To kisses consenting,

> All the pains of your shepherd allay
> As the cuckoo flies over the may.
> La ra la, la ra la, la ra la. (50–52)

Further occurrences in the dialogue confirm the pastoral dimension of Don Giovanni's world, especially when the protagonist ironically introduces himself, as is the case right before the champagne aria, as a loving "shepherd" dutifully caring for his "nymphs of pasture and meadow" (99).

Auden also takes the example of Ottavio's "*Dalla sua pace*" to explain the importance of taking into account cultural elements likely to affect stylistic characteristics: "an English poet writing a love lyric tends to express his feelings in terms of imagery and metaphors. […] To an English sensibility, Ottavio's exclusive concentration upon himself […] is a bit distasteful" (494). If Auden chooses to comment on his translation of Ottavio's first aria – for which the poet contrives to avoid repetition, more concrete diction and less self-pity on the part of the character –, I would like to examine his rendition of the same character's aria from Act 2:

(13)   Aria "*Il mio tesoro*".   (Act 2, Scene 10)
      Il mio tesoro intanto
      Andate a consolar,
      E del bel ciglio il pianto
      Cercate di asciugar.

      Ditele che i suoi torti
      A vendicar io vado,
      Che sol di stragi e morti
      Nunzio voglio tornar.

      Fly, gentle notes, to aid her,
      Sweet music, as my herald, swiftly.
      Go to my love, persuade her
      Those flowing tears to dry.
      Sweet music attend her
      Of whom your grace is born.
      Console her, fly, O fly.
      Say she is not forsaken,
      Ever shall I defend her
      Even till death defend her
      My solemn vow is taken
      Never to be forsworn
      Soon shall her wronger die.   (218–222)

Here, instead of addressing Elvira, Zerlina and Masetto – something which, dramatically, makes little sense – Ottavio launches into a paean to music, developing the age-old topos that only musical notes can bring solace and consolation to human grief. In so doing, Auden posits Ottavio as a figure of the poet and of the artist, thereby endowing this problematic and dramatically flat character (see Dent 1947, 160–161) with a new, original and fairly convincing dimension. More importantly, in presenting Ottavio as the transmitter or issuer of music, he establishes a thematic link with the lyrics of Anna's Act 2 aria, when the young woman believes she hears the heaven-sent music that enables her to overcome her present predicament. Auden's considerable expansion of the text clearly thematises the issue:

(14) Aria "*Non mi dir*".   (Act 2, Scene 12)
   Anna
   Non mi dir, bell'idol mio,
   Che son io crudel con te;
   Tu ben sai quant'io t'amai,
   Tu conosci la mia fé.
   Calma, calma il tuo tormento,
   Se di duol non vuoi ch'io mora;

   Forse un giorno il cielo ancora
   Sentirà pietà di me.

   Anna
   Let yonder moon, chaste eye of Heaven
   Cool desire and calm your soul;
   May the bright stars their patience lend you
   As their constellations roll,
   Turn, turn about the Pole.
   Far, too far they seem from our dying,
   Cold we call them to our sighing;
   We, too, proud, too evil-minded,
   By sins are blinded.
   See, how bright the moon shines yonder,
   Silent witness to all our wrong:
   Ah! But hearken! O blessed wonder!
   Out of silence comes a music,
   And I can hear her song.
   "God will surely, surely, wipe away thy tears, my daughter,
   On thy dark His light shall break,
   God is watching thee, hath not forgotten thee,
   On thy dark His light shall break."

> God will heed me, sustain me, console me,
> On my dark His light shall break. (252–256)

In his conclusive recitative, Ottavio establishes another link between the completion of his innermost desires and the effect of the sacred harmony of the spheres, a theme completely absent from the original version:

(15) Extract from Don Ottavio's recitative. (Act 2, Scene 12)
Ah si segua il suo passo: io vo' con lei
Dividere i martiri;
Saran meco men gravi i suoi sospiri.

Ah! The heavens have spoken!
That sacred harmony seemed to me a token,
A sweet promise of marriage, not to be broken. (256)

Here Auden and Kallman's complete rewriting of Da Ponte's text, again considerably expanded, gives the libretto a meta-musical dimension in the sense that music, while remaining the essential ingredient of the opera, also becomes its subject matter. In their article on opera translation, Auden and Kallman specified that their idea to "write something quite new" (497) had been motivated by the presence of stage musicians in the next scene. There, they incidentally alter Da Ponte's famous quotations – "*Questa poi la conosco pur troppo*" translated as "*Figaro*, that is *so* overrated" (262) –, just as they resort to Johann Strauss's famous song (an allusion to Dent?) in Giovanni's final defiance. They thus translate "*Vivan le femine, viva il buon vino*" as "Honour and glory, to Song, Wine and Women" (268–269), jocularly referring both to Dent's version of the same passage and to a well-known, commonplace association. At all events, one cannot but note how an element only embryonically present in the original finds itself exploited to the full, to the point that it radically alters the text, transforming Da Ponte's libretto into a highly original and personal text endowed with its own semantic networks. Such a rewriting also gives new relevance to Anna and Ottavio, *seria* characters whose role in the economy of the opera has often been considered problematic (see Noiray 1996). Be that as it may, Auden and Kallman's subtle mixture of lyricism and pedestrianism – "hardly time to snatch a bite" (8), "we're in a pretty pickle" (13), "Pride forbids me to draw on greybeards" (15), "do not stand there gaping" (22), "the final straw" (72) – also paved the way for the next translations to come. The slightly satirical tone of this highly stimulating text is thoroughly examined in this volume thanks to Lucile Desblache's illuminating analysis of Auden's musical poetics of translation.

6.   The ENO pedestrian versions (Norma Platt and Laura Sarti, Amanda and Anthony Holden, Jeremy Sams)

Even though it has never been formally defined, the notion of 'house style' occasionally emerges when talking about the type of translation currently performed at the London English National Opera (ENO). A synonym of daring and creative innovation, the phrase was used, for instance, when Edmund Tracey translated a line from *La Traviata* as "The time will come when making love no longer will excite you" (Milnes 1975). Without being necessarily aggressive or shocking, the idea of an ENO house-style usually connotes such features as clarity of elocution, musical appropriateness and, most of the time, fidelity to the original. As far as *Don Giovanni* is concerned, these qualities are all combined in the first version to have been heard in London after Dent's, the translation by Norman Platt and Laura Sarti performed by Kent Opera at the London Sadler's Wells in 1983 (see Jacobs 1983, 106). After the semantic peregrinations of previous translators, reading this fairly literal version has the almost refreshing effect of going back to Da Ponte's original text, even though it is no match to others in terms of phonic similarity; one can note, however, that the incipit to Leporello's aria "*Madamina, il catalogo è questo*" (Act 1, Scene 5) is translated as "Little lady, here's a list of his <u>conquests</u>" (Da Ponte 1983, 57). As such, this most efficient version certainly lacks its own distinctive characteristics, and it was probably only replaced because, as Edward Dent once wrote, "owing to changes in literary convention translations, like accompaniments to folk-songs, must sooner or later become out of date, and have to be rewritten" (Da Ponte 1938, vi).

Performed at the London Coliseum as early as December 1985, Amanda and Anthony Holden's "brilliant new translation" (Rosenthal 1986) can still be heard on the Chandos recording of 2001. Another model for semantic fidelity and rhythmical accuracy, this version is characterised by further updating in the use of insults, swear-words or apostrophes: "bastard" (90, 117, 124) for "*briccone*", "*indegno cavaliere*" or "*maledetto*"; "prostitute" (104) for "*perfida*"; "little bitch" (105) for "*questa strega*"; "bitch" or "little tart" (108) for "*briccona*", "old grandpa" (88) for "*il vecchio*", etc. Among colloquialisms that previous translators no doubt would have avoided, one can quote such phrases as "shut your mouth" (100), "you'll make him into mincemeat" (118), "wife or whore" (93), "I'll knock your head off" (108). Needless to say, in such a context Zerlina's bawdy allusion is adequately rendered: "if the rest is working" (119). The relative flaw of this version possibly lies in its little regard for rhyme-schemes, often ignored or reduced to mere assonance – "vice / ice / life", for instance –, and generally speaking for its little concern for what Drew Minter once called the libretto's "verbal music". It is on such a ground

that the famous countertenor gave the Chandos recording a devastating review when it came out (Minter 2001).

Disregard for rhyme is certainly not the hallmark of ENO's latest version to date, the translation by Jeremy Sams performed in November 2010. Quite significantly, it was published under the name of the translator, with no mention of Da Ponte, in 2013 (Sams 2013). Highly imaginative in its verbal associations, it jocularly resorts to words that would have had no existence to previous generations: "skinny / mini" (45), "choosy / floozy / Jacuzzi" (60–61), "shally / ally / pally" (84–85), etc. Based on present-day colloquialisms, it thus confirms most translators' tendency to adapt the text to the current language of contemporary listeners: "What's your problem?" (39), "Brilliant" (58–59), "get them all plastered" (61), "Ladies and gents" (90), "your boyfriend" (92), "just a sec, let me check" (102), "Jesus" (105), "he has a prior engagement" (107), etc. In the banquet-scene, Leporello's checking that the food served to his master is not "kosher" (102) partakes of the same anachronistic dimension. The same can be said about the Don's appetite for "Swedish au pair girls" or "Norwegian" and "Nigerian" (44) women, as Leporello tactlessly informs Elvira in the catalogue aria.

If swear-words, expletives and strong words could hardly be more explicit or up-to-date than in Holden's version, the novelty now lies in the choice of the character that utters them. In that respect, one has good reasons to believe that Lady Macfarren would have raised an eyebrow at Elvira's calling Giovanni a "louse" (91), "a filthy liar" (55) or "a lying bastard" (54). Unsurprisingly, the figure of the Commendatore also finds itself the object of irreverent treatment: "a granddad" (35), "the old bloke" (37), "a zombie" (105). Sams' version also gives explicit interpretations to parts of Da Ponte's subtext, Leporello's reluctance to change clothes with his master at the beginning of Act 2 – "*Signore… per piu ragioni…*" (Act 2, Scene 1) – being accounted for in the following manner: "I've nothing under" (78).

Needless to say, explicitness is brought to the fore when it comes to sexual matters. This can be achieved through mere punning, as is the case with Leperollo's complaint that he should act "as a sentry" while his master, intent on seducing or raping Anna, is "trying to force an entry" (33). Sexual explicitness is also at the core of Jeremy Sams' two major show-pieces, his translation of the catalogue and champagne arias. The former, an account of the monthly charts and graphs of Giovanni's sexual activity (see Desblache 2013), culminates in a reference to the Don's flowing "juices" and to the parts of his body that simultaneously manage to "glow" and to "grow". The rhyme with "as you know" (45) is an apt reminder of Da Ponte's original "*Voi sapete quel che fa*" (Act 1, Scene 5). Incidentally, another reference to the flowing of Giovanni's juices is to be found in the recitative directly preceding the champagne aria: "Those luscious country-girls set my juices flowing, and how the night will end… well, there's no knowing" (59). The champagne

aria also elaborates on a quotation from "Wine, women and song" (60), thereby establishing a link with previous translations of the opera. To those readers / spectators who might be disappointed by Sams' rather bland translation of "*Se il resto è sano*" (Act 2, Scene 6), the translator offers more titillating perspectives when he has Zerlina say "And if anything's still swollen, I'll kiss it better" (87), in lieu of "*Io ti guarirò, caro il mio sposo*" (Act 2, Scene 6). The rest of the aria, especially when Masetto is invited to inspect Zerlina "a wee bit lower" (87) and to explore the young woman "further down there" (87), is a further confirmation that the two lovers will "both feel fine" (87) and that their reconciliation is now complete. Needless to say, such a translation can hardly be considered definitive.

7.   Concluding remarks

In her analysis of Lucy Vestris's assumption of the character of Don Giovanni in 1820, in the extravaganza *Don Giovanni in London*, Rachel Cowgill once demonstrated how having Da Ponte and Mozart's protagonist played by a woman was a devious way of taming and emasculating the Don (see Cowgill 1998). According to Cowgill, such an effort at domesticating Giovanni was a strategy meant to contain and to control the exuberant male sexuality that early English viewers of *Don Giovanni* had found both repulsive and distasteful. It seems to us that the later translations of the opera all offer, in some way or other, a type of response to the past attitude of the English-speaking public towards Mozart and Da Ponte's ambivalent and versatile character. From Natalia Macfarren's fairly chastened and gentlemanly, yet highly blameable protagonist to Jeremy Sams' unbridled, uninhibited and oversexed stallion, via Dent's ambiguities and the Martins' attempts at middle-class respectability, all versions have suggested their own vision and interpretation to an operatic work that, whatever solution has been put to the fore, still testifies to the fascination exerted by Da Ponte and Mozart's indomitable character. Whether such an attitude is an Anglo-Saxon specificity is of course beyond the point of the present study. Suffice it to say that no version of *Don Giovanni*, apart from the interesting sequel mentioned just above, has been explicitly set in Great Britain or America. Incidentally, only Auden and Kallman have taken the liberty to extend the scope of Don Giovanni's sexual exploits to the other side of English Channel. The line from the catalogue aria "*In Allemagna due cento e trent'una*" (Act 1, Scene 5) has thus been translated as "Down for England a hundred eleven" (43).

Whether or not the various translations of the opera actually correct or quote from one another, one cannot but notice that all depart, each in its own way, from the original version. Not only do they testify to the richness and profundity of

the original work, but they also attest the validity and liveliness of the translating process itself, a process involving not only technical skill and understanding, but also creativity, inventiveness and imagination. No doubt translations to come – assuming there will be further music-linked translations considering the evolution of operatic practice throughout the world – will be as exciting and stimulating as those that have been produced to date.

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The voice of the translator

A case study of the English translations of *The Peony Pavilion*

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There have been discussions about the concept of the translator's voice, and the visibility of the translator in the practice of translation. However, questions relating to what actually makes the translator visible and visibility as a strategic act remain under-explored. This chapter examines the impact of the translator's assumptions about visibility, and the translation strategies adopted. Special attention will be paid to opera translation from Chinese into English, using *The Peony Pavilion* as a case in point. Through text-based comparison and analysis of paratexts, it is revealed that the translator's voice emerges as a result of the translation strategy used, and is underpinned by the translator's assumptions.

Keywords: translator's voice, translation strategy, ideology, visibility, *The Peony Pavilion*, classical Chinese opera

1.   The translator's voice: An overview

The concept of 'voice', which was first documented in Plato's *Republic*, is widely discussed in narratology; often, it is taken to mean the narrator's identity. Chatman refers to voice as "the speech or other overt means through which events and existents are communicated to the audience" (1978, 153), and which "belongs uniquely to the narrator" (1990, 76). Booth (1961) views voice as rhetorical means, while Phelan (1996) describes it as the fusion of style, tone and values. These points of view complicate our understanding of voice in the process of translation, since in translation various voices emerge and co-exist.

The concept of the translator's voice features prominently in Venuti's *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995). In his book, Venuti argues that the translator's presence and intervention are usually masked in the translated text. The translator will only become 'visible' when he or she produces a foreignized text in non-fluent,

non-standard and heterogeneous language (O'Sullivan 2003). Venuti takes a pioneer role in discussing the translator's role in the translation process. However, his work mainly emphasizes "the role played by translations in the centering or standardizing of languages, since there is indeed the peculiar convention that our target language should be as neutral as possible" (Pym 1996, 174). This conventional view about the translator's invisibility or transparency is also corroborated by other researchers in the field (e.g., Baker 2000; Millián-Varela 2004). Nonetheless, translation scholars have increasingly been calling for a recognition of the active and strategic role of translator plays in the translation process (e.g., Schiavi 1996; Hermans 1996; Baker 2000; Millán-Varela 2004).

Building on Chatman's (1978) model of narrative communication, Schiavi (1996) creates a diagram that highlights translators' interpretation of the original text. Through the term "implied translator" (1996, 15), which she coins, she identifies the various voices and presences involved in the translation process at different stages. As Sullivan (2003) points out, according to Schiavi's model, the translator's voice is a strategic representation of himself or herself in the translated text.

Hermans (1996) takes a similar philosophical stance to Schiavi. He refers to the translator's voice as the "the translator's discursive presence in the translated text" (1996, 23), and suggests that "the degree of visibility of the translator's presence depends on the translation strategy that has been adopted, and on the consistency with which it has been carried through" (1996, 29). His study focuses mainly on the discernibility of this discursive presence and the cultural and ideological constructs that undermine the importance of a translator's visibility.

Baker (2000) shares a similar view on the translator's voice as a "translator's choice of the type of material to translate" and "his or her consistent use of specific strategies", (245). Subsequently, she regards the voice of a translator in terms of the notion of the translator's style. In her 2004 study, Millán-Varela calls special attention to the creative role of the translator in the translating process (2004, 38).

To sum up, all these studies highlight the active role and presence of a translator in translation, challenging the traditional perspective of the translator reproducing a "controlled" and transparent translation from which he or she is absent (Hermans 1996, 44). It is precisely the question of what makes a translator visible, and what makes their visibility a strategic act, which the present chapter will delve into.

Hermans (2014) identifies an essential, intrinsic element that makes the translator visible, stemming from his or her beliefs and values. He argues that the level of translator visibility is associated with the ideological gap between author and translator (289 and 292), reflected through agreement or disagreement about values and beliefs. Aixelá (1996), on the other hand, puts forward a number of supratextual factors that may contribute to the visibility of the translator in a translated

text. These factors include: "working conditions, training and social status of the translator", "nature and expectations of potential readers [including audiences]", and the "nature and aims of the initiators" (Aixelá quoted in Álvarez and Vidal 1996, 66–67), which refer to readers' and audiences' needs, and publishers' preferences. Figure 1 summarizes the intrinsic and extrinsic factors contributing to the strategic role of the translator, based on Schiavi (1996), Hermans (2014) and Aixelá (1996).

Figure 1. The voice of a translator and its driving factors in the narrative process

Taking as a starting point the postulate that a translator's beliefs and value are a crucial factor that contributes to the visibility of the translator through their choice of translation strategies, I aim to investigate the level of translator visibility in Chinese to English opera translation, taking as a case in point the classical Chinese opera *The Peony Pavilion* and three English translations of the written text of this opera. I use a combination of text analysis and paratext-based analysis, in an attempt to explore the translation strategies employed, and their impact on translator visibility.

2.　*The Peony Pavilion*

2.1　The importance of *The Peony Pavilion*

The Peony Pavilion (also known as *Mudan Ting*) is one of the jewels in *The Four Dreams of Linchuan* (also known as *The Four Dreams*) written by Tang Xianzu in the 16th century. Tang Xianzu, as eulogized by the eminent Chinese opera scholar Cheng Pei-kai, is "undoubtedly the greatest dramatist nurtured by the Chinese culture, a dramatist that could be compared to Shakespeare (1564–1616) in England"

(2004, 19, translation mine). The analogy between Tang and Shakespeare was first suggested by Aoki Masaru in 1933, and was widely accepted by scholars among which Zhao Jingshen in 1946 and Xu Shuofang in 1983, as observed in Huang's study of Chinese Shakespeare (Huang 2009).

Tang was highly acclaimed for his philosophical ideas (Hsia quoted in Barroll 2003), expression of love (Hua 1992; Shen 1998; Santangelo 2003; Zeitlin 2007), and the innovative language (Huang 2009), in particular in his extremely influential quartet *The Four Dreams of Linchuan*, and especially the masterpiece *The Peony Pavilion* (Zeitlin 1993, 136). The remaining Dreams, including *Zichai Ji* (Purple Hairpin), *Handan Ji* (Dream of Handan), and *Nanke Ji* (Dream of Nanke), are critically renowned for their poetic and artistic style of writing, and have made inroads into receiving widespread popularity (Yu 2011).

As Shen Defu, a leading writer in the Ming Dynasty, points out, the popularity and literary value of Tang Xianzu's *The Peony Pavilion* almost outweighed *The Western Chamber*, one of the remarkable pieces of work during the Yuan dynasty (1998, 99). Similar remarks have also been made by Western scholars, for example Santangelo, in whose words

> [a]nother example is from *The Peony Pavilion*, a literary work that has contributed remarkably to the development of the love myth in China. The play's enormous success attests to the popularity of the new attitude among readers as well as spectators. In fact, the drama has almost become the result of a collaborative effort as it has been filled with comments and annotations.   (2003, 73)

Along the same lines, Zeitlin, a distinguished scholar in Chinese literature and East Asian languages, appraises the distinctive characteristics and influence of *The Peony Pavilion*:

> It is no coincidence that *Peony Pavilion*, the most important work to champion *qing* expressly, was a play, or that the height of the southern drama, when new plays were being produced in greatest number, was also the era when the cult of feeling was, ideologically speaking, at its hottest.   (2007, 140)

Considering the enormous significance of Tang's *The Peony Pavilion* and the daunting challenges of translating into English the passages filled with lyric poetry, double entendre, Chinese metaphors and other rhetorical devices (Roy 1982), the opera is an ideal candidate for the researcher who would like to gain insights into how and why a translator's beliefs, assumptions and values shape the translation strategies employed.

2.2   The 'duality' of Chinese opera

Before I embark on the analysis, however, it is important to define a number of key terms such as 'opera text', 'written text' and 'stage text'; I will do so drawing on literature on opera translation leading to the text-based comparisons, such as Snell-Hornby (2007).

The field of opera translation has witnessed a heated debate about the definition of opera text, given that such a text is produced by a number of distinct agents including playwrights, translators, directors or performers (Bassnett 1991). One of the factors giving rise to the debate originated in the very duality of the opera text, which involves written text created for reading and / or stage performance. Of course, Chinese play texts are also characterized by such a duality (in the sense of Bassnett 1991, 111), and this goes back a long way. Thus, in the golden era of Yuan opera (*zaju*) and Ming opera (*chuanqi*), most of the play texts produced were for reading and stage performance, including the world famous operas *The Western Chamber* and *The Peony Pavilion*. These dual-function texts contain "prose dialogue, intoned verses, arias" (Birch 1980, xv), "explicit stage directions" (Birch 1980, xiii), and spoken dialogue to facilitate stage performance (Ngai 2012). Consequently, these classical Chinese play texts incorporate the function of both written text and stage text. Nevertheless, in practice, the playwrights, translators, directors or performers needed to adapt or even rewrite the texts in order to enhance the stage effect of the performance. For instance, despite the fact that Tang Xianzu created the *The Peony Pavilion* as a dual-function text, prominent playwrights during the Ming dynasty including Shenjing (1553–1610), Feng Menglong (1574–1646) and Zang Jinshu (1550–1620) adapted and rewrote the text for a better theatrical effect. In fact, the argument between Tang and Shen on the performability of *The Peony Pavilion* became a matter of contention in the history of Chinese literature (Ngai 2010).

3.   The three English translations

Taking these complications into account, I use the term 'written text' to refer to a play text primarily created for reading, but which also has the quality that it can be transposed on stage, as is the case with Tang Xianzu's *The Peony Pavilion*; I also use the term to designate the translations of such a text. The term 'stage text', on the other hand, will be employed in this study to designate texts primarily produced or adapted for stage performance. For example, Tang's written text of *The Peony Pavilion* was widely adopted by performers in Ming China and has also been used in modern China, whereas Cyril Birch's translation of *The Peony*

Pavilion was adopted by Peter Sellars for a stage production at the Lincoln Center Festival in 1998.

From the early 1990s onwards, there have been several English translations of *The Peony Pavilion* for reading purposes, by translators in China and world-wide, for example Harold Action's translation of *Chun Hsiang Nao Hsueh* (1939), Lily Tang Shang's *The Four Dreams* (1975), Wang Hui's *The Peony Pavilion* (1990), and Chen Meilin's *The Peony Pavilion* (1999b). These are mostly translations of selected scenes from the original play, often highly adapted and rewritten. For the purpose of this study, I chose three translations in which all the fifty-five scenes of *The Peony Pavilion* are rendered into English: Cyril Birch's 1980 translation, re-printed in 2002; Zhang Guangqian's version, first published in 1994 and reprinted in 2001; and Wang Rongpei's 2000 translation.

In what follows, I conduct comparisons between the original written text and the three translations, complementing text-based analysis with a discussion of relevant paratexts (prefaces and introductions, mainly), in an attempt to unearth traces of the translators' presence.

4. Discussion of the three English translations of *The Peony Pavilion*

Love is a key theme in *The Peony Pavilion*. However, the text, which draws on supernatural elements and has considerable philosophical depth, is not about pla-tonic love, and it comes as a surprise that very few studies have been conducted on the erotic dimension of the opera, which contains sexual descriptions of extremely explicit nature. These sexual descriptions convey the passionate love between the two protagonists (Lee and Ngai 2012), while the supernatural dimension pro-vides "avenues to psychological truth and philosophical depth" (Birch 2002, xi). Three typical examples of sexual and supernatural descriptions (from Scenes 10, 23 and 32) are discussed below. Two further examples come from Scene 7, *Gui Shu,* the major comedic scene in *The Peony Pavilion*. Indeed, in the Preface to his translation, Birch remarked that *The Peony Pavilion* is a "romantic comedy" (1980, xii) with staple figures of Ming comedy; *Gui Shu* is a key comedic scene depicting the interaction of two prominent and vibrant characters, Chen Zuiliang and Chunxiang.

The examples contain the original excerpts in Chinese, followed by transliterations, glosses, and the three translations (Birch, Zhang, and Wang). Example (1) narrates the romantic encounter in Du's daydream of the two lovers, Du Liniang and Liu Mengmei.

(1) Sexual description in Scene 10.

    a. Original text

        "緊相偎，慢廝連，**恨不得肉兒般團成了片**，逗的個日下胭脂雨上
鮮"   (Tang 1999a, 2099)

        *jin xiang wei, man si lian, hen bu de rou er ban tuan cheng le pian, dou de
ge ri xia yan zhi yu shang xian*

        tightly both lean, slowly link together, to itch to meat like become slice,
make a under the sun rouge rain above fresh

    b. Birch's translation

        "how close I clasped you

        and with what tenderness,

        longing only to make

        of our two bodies one single flesh

        but bringing forth

        a glistening of rouge raindrops in the sun."   (Tang 2002, 50)

    c. Zhang's translation

        "Don't forget

        so close we hugged each other to the heart

        that we could hardly tear ourselves apart!

        How fervently we wished our bodies fused,

        and how your cheeks glowed as if freshly

        rouged!"   (Tang 2001, 72)

    d. Wang's translation

        "Please never forget the day when we

        Lie together side by side,

        Make love for hours and hours,

        And hug as man and bride,

        With your face red as flowers."   (Tang 2000, 107)

The source text depicts the sexual desire of the lovers to 'mesh their flesh and become one'. In his translation, Birch renders the line as "to make of our bodies one single flesh", using a naturalization strategy, while Zhang uses the expression of "hugged each other to the heart" and chooses not to refer to *rou* 肉 ['flesh'], by employing the sentence "we could hardly tear ourselves apart". Wang, on the other hand, renders the meaning of the sentence in plain and direct English language.

Important information about the translators' thoughts and intentions can be found in the paratexts. Thus, in the Introduction to his translation, Birch elaborates on the characteristics of the Ming *chuanqi*, including *The Peony Pavilion*, and states that these are "[…] plays, or rather opera, of great length, with a large cast and many scenes, offering a kind of cavalcade effect as shifting groups of players paraded and sang their way through the leisurely days of some protracted

celebration." (1980, ix) His understanding of these texts is that they were written for elite audiences and were performed on private occasions. Therefore, he deliberately retained the poetic expression of the original text, as evidenced in Example (1). At the same time, he intentionally used euphemized expressions in his translation, to avoid creating explicit erotic images.

Where Zhang's translation is concerned, as is made clear in the Preface to the 2001 edition of his translation, he values the "preservation of the tempo and rhythm of the verse" (2001, i). Although Zhang has no intention to "sacrifice the accuracy of meaning for an elaboration on the sound effect" (2001, i), he makes a "conscientious effort to improve the rhythm and rhyming of the verse" (2001, i) and to keep the original line division (2001, ii). In doing this, he places emphasis on the rhyming of the intoned verse: the word 'heart' rhymes with 'apart', and also serves to conceal the sexual undertones of *rou* 肉 ['flesh'].

Finally, the purpose of Wang's translation is to disseminate Chinese culture to other parts of the world by retaining the meaning of the original text and preserving its musicality (Wang 2000, 848–849). According to the Introduction and one of the chapters included in his translation of *The Peony Pavilion*, Wang aims to translate and even "recreate" (2000, 848) the prose dialogue and intoned verse into plain and direct English (2000, 848), to show the "splendour and beauty of the play" (2000, iv) through a "faithful translation of the meaning of the original text" (2000, 847, translation mine). Consequently, he rendered the extended meaning of 恨不得肉兒般團成了片 as "Make love for hours and hours, / And hug as man and bride".

My next example is an excerpt from the conversation between the Infernal Judge and the Flower God, about the death of Du Liniang, who died for love.

(2) Supernatural elements in Scene 23.
    a. Original text
       "(淨)**花神**，這女鬼說是後花園一夢，為花飛驚閃而亡。可是？"

                                                      (Tang 1999a, 2147)

       (jing) hua shen, zhe nu qui shui shi hou hua yuan yi meng, wei hua fei jing shan er wang. Ke shi?

       Flower God, the female ghost said she was dreaming in the garden. She died of shock caused by the fallen petal. Right?
    b. Birch's translation
       "Judge: **Flower Spirit**, this ghost maiden claims to have died of a shock she received when flower petals disturbed her dream in the garden. Is this true?" (Tang 2002, 280)

c. Zhang's translation
"Judge: **Flower God**, this female ghost claimed she died of a fright caused by a fallen flower in her dream in the back garden. Is that true?"

(Tang 2001, 183)

d. Wang's translation
"Infernal Judge: **Flower God**, she says that she had a dream in the back garden and died of a startle caused by a fallen flower. Is that true?"

(Tang 2000, 280)

The translators' interpretation of *shen* 神 ['God'] in the translated texts is noteworthy. The Chinese expression *hua shen* 花神 literally means the god of flowers. The word *shen* 神 has multiple connotations. Essentially, it refers to the creator of all creatures in heaven and on earth, but it can also be extended to designate the spirits of saints or remarkable people who have passed away. It can even be used to describe the spirits residing in nature, such as those of water, river, mountains, fauna and flora.

As mentioned in their respective introductions, prefaces and chapters, Zhang values accuracy in translation while endeavouring to preserve rhyme, while Wang believes that a faithful translation is necessary (Wang 2000, 848). Both Zhang and Wang decided to render *hua shen* 花神 as "flower god", a literal translation of the original. By contrast, Birch does not employ the word 'god', presumably because, in the Western Christian tradition of his target audience, this word is reserved for the single absolute being who created and preserves the world. Instead, he naturalized *hua shen* 花神 into "flower spirit" in English (see Ngai 2016) to reduce the religious implications of a predominantly literal translation and produce a version with "a slightly deceptive clarity and fluidity in English" (Roy 1982, 692). Though Birch's alleged intent is to "add very little" (1980, xiii) in translation, he made a number of changes where he deemed them necessary; obviously, his choices are grounded in his values and assumptions, not least about what a good translation of a text such as *The Peony Pavilion* entails.

Like Example (2), Example (3) illustrates aspects of the translation of supernatural elements in the opera. However, where the former mainly involves the translation of a religious term, the latter presents a more complex situation: the mysterious, romantic entanglement between a supernatural being (Du Liniang) and a mortal (Liu Mengmei).

(3) Supernatural elements in Scene 32.
a. Original text
"今宵不說，只管**人鬼混纏**到甚時節？" (Tang 1999a, 2180)
jin xiao bu shui, zhi guan ren gui hun chan dao shen shi jie?
Not telling tonight, how long could the man ghost entangle?

b.   Birch's translation
"But if I do not speak out tonight, how long can we continue this
masquerade between mortal and ghost?"   (Tang 2002, 181)

c.   Zhang's translation
"I must tell him all this tonight, or what will come of this **jumble of
human and ghost**?"   (Tang 2001, 255)

d.   Wang's translation
"[…] therefore, if I don't tell him about it tonight, what good will come
of a **rendezvous between man and ghost**?"   (Tang 2000, 397)

By his own admission, Birch admired Tang Xianzu's literary skills (1980, xiii). He
valued highly the poetic expression in the original text and endeavoured to "match
his levels of diction in English to those in the original", to preserve the "quality of
the lyric poetry" (Roy 1982, 694). Therefore, in his translation of the phrase *ren
gui hun chan* 人鬼混纏 describing the relationship between ghost and mortal, he
naturalized *hun chan* 混纏 as "masquerade". This evokes the aesthetics of early
European Gothic literature (Morgan 1998), a period contemporaneous with the
production of *The Peony Pavilion*, also characterized by a fascination with mystery
and the presence of the supernatural in fiction.

True to his intention to produce a faithful, accurate translation (2000, i), Zhang
rendered the lexical item *hun chan* 混纏 literally as "jumble". His literal translation
represents the relationship between Du Liniang and Liu Mengmei as a confused
and disordered one. This translation choice greatly attenuates the dimension of ro-
mantic love in *The Peony Pavilion*, not to mention the chaotic atmosphere created
by the liaison between the ghost and the human being.

Wang also believed that a "faithful translation on the meaning of the original
text" (2000, 847, translation mine) is essential. But, at the same time, he valued the
poetic expression of the text and wanted to show the "splendour and beauty of the
play in the English language" (2000, iv). He therefore used the word of French ori-
gin, *rendezvous*, to depict the secret meeting between lovers in a specific time and
place. His diction is slightly deceptive, but he did manage to express the romantic
relationship between Du and Liu.

Examples (4) and (5) below are both excerpts from the comedic scene that
depicts the interaction of the characters Chen Zuiliang and Chunxiang. They il-
lustrate the challenge of translating sensitive elements such as offensive language
and slang expressions.

(4) Offensive language in Scene 7.

   a. Original text

   "〔贴上〕**害淋的**！〔旦作恼介〕劣丫头！那里来？"

   <div align="right">(Tang 1999a, 2085)</div>

   [tie shang] Hai lin de! [dan zuo nao jie] Lie ya tou! Na li lai?
   (second actress enters) damned clap! (leading actress feeling annoyed)
   Bad girl! Where have you been?'

   b. Birch's translation

   "Fragrance (enters): **Clapping like that – I'll give him the clap!**
   Bridal (annoyed): What have you been doing, silly creature?"

   <div align="right">(Tang 2002, 27)</div>

   c. Zhang's translation

   "(Re-enter Chunxiang)
   Chunxiang: **Damned rogue!**
   Liniang (angrily): Naughty girl, where have you been?"   (Tang 1994, 34)

   d. Wang's translation

   "(Re-enter Chunxiang)
   Chunxiang: **Old rascal!**
   Du Liniang: (Angrily) Where have you been, nasty maid?"

   <div align="right">(Tang 2000, 60)</div>

Birch's translation of *Hai lin de* 害淋的 as "Clapping like that – I'll give him the clap!" is a clear case of intervention making the translator's presence visible. The original text contains a swearword uttered by the pert abigail Chunxiang to tutor Chen. The meaning is that of cursing someone to contract gonorrhoea. Birch's addition of the line "clapping like that" highlights the pushiness of tutor Chen; this is followed by the sentence "I'll give him the clap", a pun for Chunxiang's response. Birch makes strategic use of register, opting for "clap", which means gonorrhoea, to depict the vulgarity of the character and, furthermore, to create a pun, for added "comic effect", as mentioned in his "Note on Layout" of *The Peony Pavilion* (1980, xv).

Zhang and Wang, on the other hand, opt for a different strategy altogether, translating the Chinese swear word as "Old rascal" and "Damned rogue", respectively. It is not surprising to see Zhang and Wang employ such a strategy aiming to facilitate the readers' understanding of the text.

In a similar vein, Example (5) illustrates the different ways in which the translators tackled the issue of slang translation.

(5) Slang language in Scene 7.

  a. Original text (Scene 7)
  "〔贴笑介〕溺尿去来。原来有座大花园。花明柳绿，好耍子哩！"

  (Tang 1999a, 2085)

  [tie xiao jie] ni niao qu llai. Yuan lai you zuo da hua yuan. Hua ming liu lu, hao shua zi li!

  Has been peeing. There is a big garden with blossoming flowers and green tress. Has lots of fun!

  b. Birch's translation
  "Fragrance (laughing): **Peeing**. But I found a lovely big garden full of pretty flowers and willows, lots of fun."   (Tang 2002, 27)

  c. Zhang's translation
  "Chunxiang (grins): **Pissing.** I happened to have discovered a huge garden, with lush trees and bright flowers. A very nice place indeed."

  (Tang 1994, 34)

  d. Wang's translation
  "Chunxiang: (Smiles) **I've been to the toilet**. I went by a big garden overgrown with flowers and willows. It's fun over there." (Tang 2000, 60)

The lexical item 溺尿 is essential for the comic effect of the text and the depiction of the character of Chunxiang as a waggish and huffy maid. Wang's English translation deliberately euphemizes the action of urinating, and opts for the more polite "I've been to the toilet". Birch employs the informal word "pee", while Zhang uses the more vulgar "piss". Clearly, Chunxiang comes across differently, in the three translations.

5. Conclusion

Taking as a starting point the hypothesis that the translators' presence is revealed through their choice of translation strategies (Hermans 1996; Baker 2000) and that their degree or level of visibility is correlated to the difference between the author's and the translator's beliefs and values (Hermans 2014), this study has aimed to observe the discursive presence of three translators into English of the Chinese opera *The Peony Pavilion*. Text-based comparison and paratext analysis reveals a number of interesting differences.

Birch made his standpoint clear to the readers in his "Introduction" and "A Note on Layout" included in his translation of *The Peony Pavilion*. As a translator, he greatly admired and valued the literary skills of the original author, as well as the poetic merit of the text, created for an elite audience and performed on private occasions during the Ming dynasty. In his translation, he employed a naturalizing

strategy and strove to retain the poetic quality of the original. Birch paid particular attention to rhyme, especially for comedic effect. His translation choices mainly resulted from his understanding of "the structure of the Southern-style opera which served both musical and dramatic ends" (1980, xii), and the need for a "staple figure in Ming romantic comedy" (1980, xii), as he explains in the "Introduction" of his translation of *The Peony Pavilion*. Birch is a British scholar who was born, raised and educated in England, and spent thirty years teaching at a number of prestigious institutions in the UK and the US, as well as in Hong Kong. He thus had the opportunity to develop excellent cultural sensitivity, and he understood his target readers perfectly. Undoubtedly, as Aixelá (1996) points out, the working conditions, training, and social status of a translator serve as extrinsic factors affecting the translation strategies adopted.

Zhang also expressed his stance in a "Preface" to his translation. He believed that the recreation of rhyme in translation is of utmost importance. Although he endeavoured to deliver an accurate translation, he also admitted that "accuracy is not always achieved because the associative meaning of the text is sometimes so rich, especially when literary allusions are involved" (2001, ii). As a result, a number of allusions are euphemized, omitted, or over-translated in his version.

Finally, as reflected in the paratexts of his translation of *The Peony Pavilion*, Wang aimed at embodying "all the splendour and beauty of the play in the English language" (2000, 848) as a medium which could make it accessible internationally. He wanted to preserve the meaning of the original text, and also to reproduce its musical delivery. His strategy was to translate the prose dialogue and verses into plain and direct English. In other to do this, he employed translation strategies such as addition and omission to ensure that his readers understood the extended meaning of the text, and resorted to euphemism when the source text uses vulgar vocabulary.

The three English translations of *The Peony Pavilion* are as many records of the translators' voices, made visible through the strategic choices which shaped the texts. These strategic choices are underpinned by the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that modulate the visibility of the translator, especially in the case of a 17th-century Chinese poetic drama rendered into 20th-century English.

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"Ordne die Reih'n"

The translation of the Mozart-Da Ponte operas in the Third Reich

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The aim of this study is to investigate the translation politics in the field of opera in the Third Reich with a special focus on the three Mozart-Da Ponte operas. Mozart was considered as a central part of the German culture. His collaboration with the Jewish librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte and the fact that the most popular German translation at the time came from the Jewish conductor Hermann Levi forced the Nazi authorities to create a new translation. In the first section of the article I will analyse the various front lines in this translation war, drawing on Bourdieu's field theory. The second part of this paper investigates the strategies adopted by a committee which Goebbels established in order to create a new translation of the Mozart operas. The last section of the article is then dedicated to Georg Schünemann, the translator who was nominated by the committee, and his translatorial habitus.

Keywords: Mozart, Third Reich, Schünemann, Anheisser, field, habitus, opera, libretto

Overture

In November 2013 Mozart's *Così fan tutte* directed by Alvis Hermanis premiered at the Komische Oper in Berlin. The reviews were mixed but the opera's translation caused concern: in its 7 November issue the newspaper *Berliner Morgenpost* featured the headline "Komische Oper plays Mozart's *Così* in Nazi translation" (Blech 2013).[1] *Die Welt* suspected the performance to be a "glitch" and stated: "the German translation by the wicked Nazi Georg Schünemann […] is absolutely inappropriate" (Brug 2013). In contrast, Pavel Jiracek, the dramatic advisor in charge

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1. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from German are my own.

at the Komische Oper, defended the choice of translation, saying that it was the best fit for the stage production (see Blech 2013).

Given the long tradition of Schünemann's translations of the three Mozart-Da Ponte operas *Don Giovanni, Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Così fan tutte*, mainly but not only at the Komische Oper, where Götz Friedrich adapted them in the 1960s, it is surprising that their use is criticised so harshly only now. Its legendary artistic director Walter Felsenstein also referred to Schünemann's version when translating *Le Nozze di Figaro* in 1950 (cf. Gschwend 2006, 129), and such versions have been used time and time again at other German-speaking opera houses as well.[2] Moreover, Schünemann's translations have been reprinted regularly as textbooks or piano reductions since the Second World War, and piano reductions are even available with his translations in English-speaking countries, with the latest new edition of *Così fan tutte* having been published in 2013 by Dover Publications (see Mozart 2013).

Then again, it also seems illogical that the dramatic advisor at the Komische Oper chose Schünemann's translation "for artistic reasons" (cf. Spinola 2013), since for many years the artistic qualities of the Schünemann translations have repeatedly earned criticism. As early as 1963 the dramaturge Heinrich Creuzburg resignedly stated that the translation has to be "accepted as a relatively harmless legacy of the Third Reich" (1963, 587), despite the fact that the translations by Hermann Levi (published at the end of the 19th century), which were replaced by Schünemann's, are musically much better from today's perspective. This has been the prevalent opinion, which is consistently found in the literature of the post-war period. In the 1960s, even the head dramaturge at the Komische Oper, Horst Seeger, as well as the opera translators Kurt Honolka and Christof Bitter, called for new translation practices when it comes to Mozart (cf. Seeger, Honolka and Bitter 1967).

This study, however, does not aim to provide a qualitative assessment of the translations by Georg Schünemann of the three Mozart-Da Ponte Operas. Rather, I will trace their complex and intricate history in order to point out the diverse socio-political factors, which eventually led to Goebbels declaring them "legally binding" German versions (Molkenbur 2001, 187). In the course of the analysis it will emerge that quality issues were merely a superficial concern. In fact, the

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2. An example is the production of *Don Giovanni* at the Nordhausen theatre in the 2008–2009 season, for which Peter Brenner, Walter Felsenstein's son, used Schünemann's text. Immediately after the Second World War, however, the Schünemann translations often continued to be used unedited, e.g., according to the Vienna State Opera archives, *Così fan tutte* was played with Schünemann's translation between 1945–1954, whereas *Le Nozze di Figaro* was again staged with Hermann Levi's translation from 1945 (cf. Repertoire Archive of the Vienna State Opera 2015).

translation of Mozart's operas was used as a political instrument in two different ways: to eliminate the customary Jewish translations and also to win internal disputes in various National-Socialist cultural institutions about the interpretation of the works of an important opera composer. The analysis of Schünemann's translational approach will clarify to what extent these translations are "a harmless legacy" or the "Nazi translation of a wicked Nazi".

The conceptual framework for this paper will be Bourdieu's concepts of field and habitus. By revealing the various field-specific factors that led to the emergence of the translations in the Third Reich and the ways in which the translator Schünemann developed his own translational habitus through his (professional) socialisation and field-specific conditions, which he pointed out in various articles and prefaces, I will go beyond the conventional textual analysis with its comparison of source and target text[3] and present in detail the sociological and political implications of these translations.

Act 1: The diversity of Mozart translations before 1930

The history of the Mozart-Da Ponte Operas in German-speaking countries is also a history of their translations. The musical-theatrical field with its institutions (opera houses, music publishers, music magazines) and agents (directors, conductors, librettists, composers, critics and of course also translators) significantly shaped the form and content of the translations. The political field obviously also exerted some influence in the form of censorship, however, it only becomes a dominant authority on translation matters in the Third Reich.

The first translation phase, which began immediately after the debut performances, was influenced by the large number of different translations and their adaptations.[4] All forms were characterised by a very free handling of the originals with changes in dramatisation as well as in music and content. This was mainly due to the structure of the musical-theatrical field, in which translations were produced in a highly decentralised manner and customised for the respective opera houses. Nevertheless, some of these early translations gained national importance and were subsequently taken as the basis for later translations. Numerous passages of the *Don Giovanni* translation from 1791 by the head of the Hamburg theatre,

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3. Such translation analyses, which were often rooted in translation criticism, can be found in, e.g., Freisauff (1887), Oehl (1952), Bitter (1961), Brandstetter (1982), Dieckmann (1993) and Giannini (2015).

4. For the various intertextual relations between translations of Mozart operas, see Giannini (2015).

Friedrich Ludwig Schröder, became winged words, which were also adopted in new translations in the following century. The same applies to the translation of *Figaro* by Friedrich Freiherr von Knigge (1791) as well as the translation of *Così fan tutte* by Christoph Friedrich Bretzner (1794). Since German-speaking opera performances were mainly intended for bourgeois audiences, whereas the nobility listened to the original Italian versions, the originals and the translations also took different positions in the field. The German lyrics, which were intended for a general audience, took the public taste into account by adding or deleting scenes, thereby adjusting the plot and characterisation of the then popular form of the Singspiel.[5]

In the 19th century, the translations of the three operas were initially romanticised. First signs of this approach emerge as early as 1794 in the translation of *Figaro* by the German novelist and dramatist Christian August Vulpius. The most successful versions of *Così* were created by the theatre director and librettist Georg Friedrich Treitschke (1805) and the singer and theatre director Eduard Devrient (1860). *Don Giovanni* then became a prototypical romantic opera in the translation by the German writer Johann Friedrich Rochlitz (1801). The general practice of applying changes to the dramatisation as well as the music and content, which had been followed since the early days of Mozart translations, was maintained, which Rochlitz emphasised in the preface to his translation: "But I alone bear responsibility for the occasional digression from the Italian – not only in words but also in meaning" (1801, ii).

In the second half of the 19th century, the next phase of Mozart translations began, in which the original became increasingly important as a benchmark for the translation. In addition to the romantic notion of the uniqueness of the artwork and also of the prominent position of the author, or in the case of the opera, of the composer, Wagner's aesthetics and his vision of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* also contributed to a return to the original. In 1883 a commission chaired by the director of the Munich Court Opera, Karl Freiherr von Perfall was established, which had the task of creating a translation of *Don Giovanni* that was close to the original and would be binding for all German theatres, but failed because the members could not find a common denominator. Only Hermann Levi succeeded in producing translations of the three Mozart-Da Ponte Operas, which would dominate German stages until the 1930s. Since Georg Schünemann copied Levi in many respects, the following will provide a short outline of Levi's translation approach.

Hermann Levi had been employed as court conductor in Munich since 1872 and conducted at the premiere of *Parsifal* in Bayreuth, which meant that he had ties with the Wagner clan. His deep admiration for Richard Wagner led him to endure

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5. For a more detailed account see Kaindl (2006).

numerous anti-Semitic humiliations by Richard and Cosima Wagner.[6] After his retirement from conducting in 1896, he worked intensively on the translation of the three Mozart-Da Ponte Operas. This project was mainly driven by idealism, which is evidenced by the fact that he refused any remuneration and carried out the translations for the Munich Court Opera free of charge. Royalties that resulted from the acquisition of his translations by other opera houses were donated to the Bayreuth scholarship fund, which he supported regularly (cf. Haas 1995, 270).

In 1923–1924 Abert notes in his comprehensive book on Mozart (quoted here from the English version 2007, 1114) that Levi together with Ernst von Possart, the director of the Munich Opera at the time, implemented "Wagner's ideas on the reform of opera". Firstly, the original score was now taken as a basis for the stage production and the translation and secondly, it was also worded and staged, taking into account the scenic realisation, the proportions of the auditorium and the scope of the orchestra. The translation itself was done in several steps and was a collaborative effort as outlined by Possart in his description of the new production of *Don Giovanni*, which he initiated (cf. Possart 1896, 21–22). To begin with, he commissioned the Italian language teacher Gustav Maly-Motta to produce a literal prose translation. Then, the most customary translation at the time by Franz Grandaur was referenced.[7] All passages of the Grandaur translation that differed from the literal translation were deleted. Hermann Levi transformed the prose text into a text that was compatible with the music and vocals and submitted it in 1896. Levi also referenced previous translations when translating the other two operas: *Così* was influenced by those of Eduard Devrient and Carl Niese (1898), while he states that *Figaro* (1899) was: "partly revised and partly adapted", when, in fact, the version by Knigge served as the most important template.

In his memoirs of Levi, Possart (1901) vividly recalls that Levi's work as a conductor was characterised by open and lively discussions and relied heavily on the exchange with all participating musicians and singers. Levi applied the same approach to his translation work. For example, Haas (1995, 272–273) reported that Levi corresponded extensively with Possart to discuss detailed issues regarding translation. He also frequently exchanged letters with Cosima Wagner during the translation of *Figaro,* asking the Lady of Bayreuth for advice on translation matters. In her replies (cf. Wagner 1980, 458–463), she criticises his suggested translations, corrects them and expresses her anti-Semitic attitude when she insinuates

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6. Heer (2012, 257–280) discusses in detail Levi's difficult relationship with Bayreuth.

7. This version from 1871 was again based on the earlier translations by Rochlitz, Bischoff, Bitter, Kugler, Viol, Wolzogen as well as the recently published versions of Gugler and Epstein (cf. Grandaur 1871, IV–V).

that "the colourful potential of our language […] does not flow through your veins and into your pen." (1980, 461)

Levi's translations, which were primarily based on the original score, but also took into account the traditional translations as well theatrical and vocal requirements, did not only become very successful in Munich but were also performed on many opera stages across German-speaking countries and enjoyed great popularity with the audience. Nevertheless, there were continued efforts in the 20th century to create binding translations for all theatres,[8] which would, however, only become a reality in the Third Reich.

Act 2: Each against all: Translation as war

In contrast to the translations from the Nazi period examined by Kate Sturge (2004), the Mozart translations were not foreign works to be imported to Germany, but were part of the German cultural heritage. As such Mozart's works were assigned a special place in the National-Socialist music policies. The inclusion or exclusion of composers and their works was basically carried out along constructed musical opposites (e.g., tonal vs atonal music), national opposites (German vs foreign music) and racial opposites (especially Aryan vs Jewish music).

While Richard Wagner fulfilled the Nazi ideal in all three categories and was thus used as an ideological figurehead, Mozart was only 'flawless' in musical terms and had to be made Nazi-compliant as far as nationality and race were concerned.[9] For example, in 1935 the renowned musicologist Ludwig Schiedermair emphasised in an article for the newspaper *Kölnische Zeitung* that Mozart was "by blood" Swabian-Salzburgish, but "artistically German". By declaring his music intrinsically German, an attempt was made to compensate to some extent for the stigma of being of non-German origin. It was more difficult, however, to make his Freemasonry and above all his collaboration with the Jewish librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte acceptable. For this purpose followers of the National-Socialist ideology such as the Mozart translator Siegfried Anheisser employed a threefold strategy: firstly, Mozart was, in a sense, portrayed as a victim, who was forced to accept Da Ponte as a librettist in order for his works to be put on stage. Secondly, the

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8. In 1912 the German Theatre Association organised a competition for the best *Don Giovanni* translation with the aim of creating a binding version. Although a prize was awarded, the translation by Karl Scheidemantel did not gain popularity (see Kaindl 2006, 740).

9. Some National Socialists like Alfred Rosenberg even called for Mozart to be banned from German theatres due to his Masonic connections and probably also because of his collaboration with the Jewish librettist Lorenzo da Ponte (cf. Melograni 2007, 251).

quality of Da Ponte’s work was denigrated as inferior, and finally it was argued that Mozart’s ingenious music permeated the text of the ‘inferior’ Da Ponte to such an extent that the libretti became alive with Mozart’s – and therefore the German – spirit (Anheisser 1938, 204).[10]

Although, in spite of the Nuremberg racial laws, which prohibited collaboration between Jews and Aryans, Mozart could be issued the “Aryan certificate” (Loeser 2007, 73), he did not lend himself as a symbol of Nazi ideology, as was the case with Richard Wagner and his operas. Instead, he was made into a “Volkskünstler”, a people’s artist, as Goebbels put it in his speech at the opening of Mozart Week 1941 at the Vienna State Opera (cf. Anon. 1941, 4). This positioning as a popular composer would also have influence on the translation policy.

The translation policy resembled, to put it in the words of the National-Socialist Mozart translator Siegfried Anheisser, a “war” (1938, 2). The frontlines ran on different levels and across the journalistic, musical and political fields, with the agents being driven by diverse interests, which could be ideological, pragmatic and political. The fields involved represented, in Bourdieu’s words, arenas (cf. 1982, 46). The battles were fought both within the respective fields as well as between the actors of the different fields over the interpretation of a good Mozart translation and over who was entitled to carry out such a translation.

A total of four lines of conflict can be distinguished: firstly, the fight of Nazi publicists against the Jewish Mozart translators, especially the most popular of them: the conductor Hermann Levi. Secondly, the dispute between Nazi-friendly translators and agents in the musical business, particularly opera directors and conductors. Thirdly, the struggle among Nazi translators to gain the most prominent role on the stage, and finally, the political conflict between rivalling Nazi cultural authorities. The respective agents were not limited to activities in their own field, but also acted across different fields. For example, agents in the journalistic field used publication media of the musical-theatrical field, opera directors interacted with politicians, politicians intervened via the media of the journalistic field etc. Thus, translation policies pervaded different fields and can only be analysed as a transversal activity.

A first front against the Mozart-Da Ponte translations by Hermann Levi was supported by journalists, writers and translators in newspapers and journals of the journalistic field as well as in publication media such as programme guides and textbooks of the musical-theatrical field, with Siegfried Anheisser being the central figure. He worked for the Westdeutsche Rundfunk in the opera department and from 1924 devoted himself to the fight against the “eternal eyesore” of the

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10. For a more detailed account on the different Aryanisation strategies for Da Ponte see Levi (2006).

German Mozart translation (1934, 4). The nature of his criticism reflects – seismographically – the rise of National Socialism. Prior to the Nazi takeover, Anheisser analyses Levi's translations objectively in a series of articles and prefaces to his translations (1926, 1929, 1930, 1931), and his criticism is at times also positive and appreciative. For example, Anheisser concedes in one of his first articles about the Mozart translation in the newspaper *Kölnische Zeitung* (1926) that Levi did manage to convey the "overall mood" quite well, but that from today's perspective the text did not represent a satisfactory solution anymore since it was thirty years old and the concept of translation had changed due to new findings. He produces similar arguments in the preface to his translation of the Mozart opera *Il Re Pastore* where he praises Levi's *Don Giovanni* translation saying that he had found the right style except for a few passages (cf. 1930, vi).[11]

After the Nazis came to power the tone changed. In an article in the newspaper *Völkische Beobachter,* the party organ of the Nazi Party, whose editor-in-chief was Alfred Rosenberg, Anheisser labels him a "poor poet" (1934, 3), who made several translation errors. A year later, Anheisser criticises in his preface to his own *Don Giovanni* translation not only the musical liberties that Levi took in his translation, but also his disregard for the vocal qualities of the original and in particular for the "Roman and Germanic idiom" (1935), in other words the nationalist element. The attacks on Levi eventually culminate in his book *Für den deutschen Mozart*, where Anheisser dedicates an entire chapter to "Levi and the other Jewish translators" (1938, 203–209).[12] The Jews and especially the Jewish translators would have liked to turn Mozart into "their personal Jewish composer" (1938, 204) in order to use him as a counterpart to Wagner. In addition, Levi used his translation work to create the impression that he was a "promoter of German Art" (1938, 208). Now, the real reason to reject Levi is no longer the alleged translation errors, but the fact that the use of the Levi translations would support "only the well-calculated business of his racial comrades" (1938, 208).

The magazine *Die Musik*,[13] the official organ of the National Socialist Cultural Community (NS-Kulturgemeinde), headed by Alfred Rosenberg, launched a similar campaign to Anheisser's. In 1936 the editors published an article in which they

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11. He also further praises Da Ponte, calling his libretto, based on Beaumarchais' play, an "entertaining plot" (1930, vi).

12. This book was reprinted in 2013 by dearbooks publishers and is thus available in its original form.

13. There were, of course, also polemics in other music journals regarding the use of Levi's translations, e.g., in the journals *Allgemeine Musikzeitung* (Brust 1936) and *Bausteine zum deutschen Nationaltheater* (Ramlow 1936). They did not, however, take on the form of a campaign as they did in *Die Musik*.

vehemently argued against the use of Levi's versions (cf. Anon. 1936, 279). This was triggered by a performance of *Così fan tutte* in October 1935 at the Berlin State Opera and *Don Giovanni* in December 1935 in Dresden. In addition to the "disposal of the corpse of the Levi version", the editors call on the opera managements to break a possible resistance of singers "in the interest of the German cause" and to use the new translations by Siegfried Anheisser. These are judged favourably in numerous reviews (e.g., Jung 1935; Simon 1936; Killer 1936), albeit with some restrictions. For example, the music critic Richard Litterscheid advises Anheisser to have his translations checked by like-minded professionals in order to address any weaknesses that could give rise to criticism (Litterscheid 1936, 280).

While there was no support for the Levi translations in the journalistic field, the reality in the music-theatre business was quite different. The fact that Levi's translations were used up to the second half of the 1930s had less to do with an opposition to the Nazis, but rather with pragmatic considerations: working with new texts meant more rehearsals for the singers as well as the conductors and directors. Since Levi's translations were established versions, which had prevailed over a number of other translations since they appeared in the late 19th century, they continued to be used at first. However, with the help of journalistic and later also political pressure, Siegfried Anheisser's Nazi-compliant translations were eventually enforced in the music-theatre business. The fact that Anheisser did not enjoy great popularity on the German stage was, however, not due to attacks from Jews and their supporters as was presumed by the *Völkische Beobachter* in the article "Gleichgeschalteter Mozart" (Anon. 1937), but to the assessment of his translation by directors and conductors that were otherwise loyal to the party line. They often refused to perform Mozart-Da Ponte operas with his translations, which Anheisser himself lamented (1934, 4). Joseph Keilberth, who at the time was the chief musical director in Karlsruhe, reports in his memoirs how he used to avoid these operas because of Anheisser's translations, whom he calls a "*perverser Schmutzfink*" ['perverted dirty fellow'; Keilberth 2007, 491]. And in his study *Mozart and the Nazis* (2010) Erik Levi also demonstrates, with the support of documents that the director of the Berlin State Opera, Heinz Tietjen, was vehemently against the Anheisser translations as was the conductor Clemens Krauss, who worked in Berlin and Munich. Richard Strauss, who was otherwise on very good terms with the Nazi regime, also deviated from the general assessment of the Levi translations in the press and in 1935 speaks of "quite an exemplary translation by Hermann Levi" in the programme booklet for a series of performances of *Così fan tutte* at the Berlin State Opera, which Herbert Gerigk, a music expert, critically noted in his review (Gerigk 1936, 150).

But Anheisser was not only faced with rejection from the opera business, he also was in competition with two other Mozart translators, both of whom were

declared Nazis: Hermann Roth and Willy Meckbach. The music critic Hermann Roth produced a translation of *Don Giovanni*, which was performed at the Hamburg State Opera in 1936 and the poet and playwright Willy Meckbach competed with Anheisser and his rendition of *Figaro* and *Così fan tutte*. A fierce dispute erupted between the three translators, in which Anheisser in particular repeatedly publicised and put forward arguments of an anti-Semitic nature. When Anheisser's *Figaro* translation was published, Roth paid tribute to the *Figaro* translation by Karl Wohlskehl – a Jew – in an article in the newspaper *Hamburger Nachrichten,* which Anheisser considered an affront (cf. 1938, 213). He criticised Roth's "shambolic German, where German words are obediently put in places where the Jewish poet laureate has left a hole for them" (1938, 221). The clash between him and Willy Meckbach was even fiercer. In 1936 the magazine *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung* published a non-polemical article by Willy Meckbach, in which he expressed – based on a translation comparison of an aria from *Figaro* – that he considered not only his own, but also some passages of Hermann Levi's translation to be better than Anheisser's. This was followed by a vehement exchange of words between the two translators in various journals.[14] Ultimately, Anheisser had the upper hand in this translator dispute. He had secured the support of the National Socialist Cultural Community, whose publishing house also published his *Don Giovanni* translation. The official organ of the cultural community, the journal *Die Musik*, praised his translations, whereas Roth and Meckbach were either criticised or ignored.

How Anheisser got his contacts to the National Socialist Cultural Community of Rosenberg can only be assumed. Anheisser was employed by the Westdeutsche Rundfunk and in 1933 was appointed to the office of provisional director after Ernst Hardt was dismissed by the Nazis. However, shortly afterwards Goebbels appointed someone else as a director and Anheisser was dismissed without notice. This may have been related to the fact that Anheisser had previously spoken favourably about Ernst Hardt and his very liberal work as a director (see Anheisser 1930, v). In the following years, Anheisser turned to Rosenberg and the institutions that were headed by him as well as to the National Socialist Cultural Community, who tried to promote his work actively by publishing his translations alongside positive reviews.

In 1934, Anheisser also called on the Reich Theatre Chamber to enforce his translations in German opera houses (1934, 8). It was directly connected to the Ministry of Propaganda and was thus under the sphere of influence of Joseph Goebbels. The Reich Theatre Chamber had the task of bringing all German stages into line, a goal which had also been pursued by Alfred Rosenberg's National

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14. Anheisser polemically describes the dispute with Meckbach in detail in his book *Für den deutschen Mozart!* (1938, 214–220), see also Levi (2010, 70ff.).

Socialist Cultural Community. This resulted in a competitive relationship between Goebbels and Rosenberg, which was known to be characterised by mutual antipathy. The fact that Anheisser's appeal was published in the *Völkische Beobachter*, whose chief editor was Alfred Rosenberg at the time, may have been a reason why it went unheeded.

Goebbels did, however, react to an intervention from the musical-theatrical field. An entry in Goebbels' diaries from 2 October 1936 shows that he had a meeting with the director of the Berlin State Opera, Heinz Tietjen, about issues regarding the translation of Mozart (cf. Goebbels 2001, 200). Due to the different positions and because of a possible impending conflict with the institutions under the directorship of Rosenberg, Goebbels was initially cautious: "As far as the Mozart translations are concerned, everything will remain the same for the time being. The positions have not been sufficiently clarified yet." (2001, 278) In view of the fierce clashes between journalists, translators and representatives of the opera business, which led to anything other than a uniform solution to translation matters and given the importance of Mozart for the Nazi regime, an intervention on the part of the Nazi regime was ultimately inevitable.

Act 3: Enforced conformity of the translation

In 1937 talks took place on this matter in the Reich Theatre Chamber, which was under the authority of Goebbels' Ministry of Propaganda (cf. Elftmann 2001, 229–230). With the help of the musicologist Georg Schünemann a new approach was adopted: after a thorough review of the Levi translations it was concluded that he had to a large extent relied on previous translations, which were acceptable from a racial point of view. If the portions by Levi were removed from the translations, it would be possible to keep a large part of the text which was familiar and popular with the people while simultaneously, as the letter states, creating a "norm for the Reich" (quoted in Elftmann 2001, 230). The popularity of the existing translation, which correlated with the position Mozart was assigned in National Socialism, was therefore more important than Anheisser's ideologically compliant translation. Despite strong recommendations from the press, Anheisser was not accepted in the musical field. This may also have been due to his connections to the circle of Alfred Rosenberg, which made a promotion by Goebbels' rivalling cultural institutions unlikely.

After the Reich Theatre Chamber had issued a letter to the German opera houses in early 1938, in which the Levi translations were explicitly prohibited from the 1938–1939 season (cf. Fetthauer 2004, 279), a committee was convened in the Office for Music Adaptations, which was under the authority of the Ministry of

Propaganda. Chaired by Clemens Krauss, its task was to regulate the Mozart translations. Schünemann, who served as deputy of Krauss on the committee, was commissioned for the translation. To my knowledge, no written documents exist about the work of the committee, but it is likely that there were disagreements over the basic approach since Clemens Krauss advocated a translation philosophy that was not compatible with the result presented by Schünemann.

Clemens Krauss, who served as chief music director at the Munich State Opera, took the view – as did Anheisser – that a translation loses its validity after thirty years and, therefore, a complete retranslation would be necessary (quoted in Sch. 1940). He also implemented a similar translation policy in Munich, where he published and staged several retranslations in collaboration with Hans Swarowski. Schünemann's translations, however, are not retranslations, but are – as is noted on the cover page of the piano reductions – adaptations "according to tradition and the original text"[15] (Schünemann 1939, 1940a, 1940b). Thus, they seem to follow his proposed approach from 1937 not to re-translate the text, but to retain as many of the famous and popular passages as possible. However, the translations deviate from the original project on a crucial point: Schünemann did not consistently delete Levi's contribution to the translation, but adopted (especially in the aria texts) a large number of his passages.

It seems plausible to assume that Levi's passages were not adopted by mistake. Firstly, Schünemann was known to be a philologically accurate researcher and secondly he had demonstrated in an article that other Nazi translators had erroneously assigned certain lines of text to Hermann Levi, which actually were from non-Jewish translators (cf. 1941, 67). Could this have been an act of resistance or were these adoptions carried out with the knowledge of the committee and thus also Goebbels? In the absence of any written decisions of the committee, I will try to answer this question by analysing Georg Schünemann's professional habitus.

Bourdieu's concept of habitus (1984, 135), which represents an internalisation of objective external social structures, provides us with a kind of personality structure, which manifests itself in social actions. Simeoni notes that a translation habitus is – due to the lack of a separate translational field – ultimately the result "of diversely distributed *social* habituses or, specific habituses *governed by the rules pertaining to the field in which the translation takes place*" (1998, 19, emphasis in the original). This applies all the more in the present case: Schünemann was not a full-time translator, but primarily socialised in the academic field. He applied his acquired scholarly habitus, the way he acted as a researcher, to his translation work.

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15. When Schünemann's version of *Figaro* was performed at the Munich State Opera in 1940, it was reported by a reviewer that "numerous changes had to be made since Schünemann's work was not always singable" (cf. Sch. 1940).

Schünemann came from a liberal middle-class home and continued his family's musical and pedagogic traditions as well as maintaining an open mind to new forms of music, which was encouraged by his social environment (see Elftmann 2001, 12–13). His professional habitus was – according to his own statements – heavily influenced by his musicology teachers, especially Hermann Kretzschmar and Johannes Wolf (cf. Schünemann 1908, 40). From the former he learned the importance of connecting scholarly analysis to musical practice and the latter taught him philological accuracy. Schünemann joined these two aspects in a kind of synthesis – historical-philological meticulousness, which was, however, not carried out for its own sake, but was to be reflected in the musical practice. This approach is evident both in his thesis *Zur Geschichte des Dirigierens* [*On the History of Conducting*] (1913) and in his work as a music critic, which he commented on in a lecture in 1919:

> The work of art is analysed and developed according to its own laws, is understood by the mind and the spirit of its author, is compared to similar phenomena and brought into connection with them. […] It will be the greatest feat to apply this criticism to the general, to reveal the ties that link the single work of art with life and society […].   (quoted in Elftmann 2001, 22)

The larger historical context and the connection of the work to a social context, the meticulous analysis and comparison with other works as well as the attention to practical benefits are all aspects that are evident in his translation work which, as we will see later, Schünemann also commented on in the prefaces to his translations.

Later in his career, Schünemann focused on comparative musicology. In his habilitation thesis entitled *Das Lied der deutschen Kolonisten in Russland* (1923) he compared the songs of Russian Germans with German folk songs and meticulously worked out the detailed differences and variations in both music and language. His comprehensive editorial work of Schumann, Schubert, Bach, Beethoven and others also demonstrates his working methods: meticulous, comprehensive source studies, whose ultimate goal was always practical application. In her thorough biography, Heike Elftmann succinctly summarises his approach: "He [Schünemann] was an unusual character, who knew how to take a variety of influences and fruitfully combine them without losing sight of their practical application" (2001, 270).

His relations with the Nazi regime were, as Prieberg (1982, 253) states in his study on the role of music in the Third Reich, ultimately based on political (i.e., national-socialist) reliability. On the one hand, Schünemann worked closely together with Jewish colleagues such as Leo Kestenberg and Alfred Einstein and was also open to New Music, which ultimately led to his dismissal as director of the Academy of Music in Berlin. On the other hand, however, he did not hesitate when it seemed opportune to distance himself from his Jewish colleagues (cf. Elftmann

2001, 137) and he also joined the trade union of civil servants of the Nazi party. Nevertheless, he described himself as "unpolitical" (Elftmann 2001, 121).

After the Nazis dismissed him as director of the Academy of Music,[16] he was appointed head of the music department of the Prussian State Library in 1935. In this capacity he also had direct access to the original scores of Mozart's operas. From 1940, after completing his translations, he worked for the Office of Rosenberg as a musical expert. As part of this role he was responsible for incorporating stolen music supplies into the Third Reich.

As for Schünemann's handling of the Nazi ideology in his musicological works, he did not oppose the common practices. Although no anti-Semitic statements can be found in his writings, he did subscribe to the arguments of the racial theory, as confirmed by Prieberg (1982, 253), when it came to the question of what was typically German in music. Similarly, he scattered – albeit few and far between – elements in his Mozart translation, which reflected the spirit of the time such as "ordne die Reih'n" ("order the lines"), which is cited in the title of this article, in Don Giovanni's so called champagne aria. While in the original Don Giovanni lets all the characters dance around wildly to shake up the social order, he constantly repeats in Schünemann's translation that they should organise themselves.

The prefaces to the three translations and the accompanying articles that Schünemann published (1939, 1940a, 1940b, 1941) reflect his scholarly endeavours and his political manoeuvring in many ways. First, Schünemann provides a historical outline of the performance and translation history. He distinguishes three phases: the time of the translation of the Singspiel, the time of adaptation, and the time of a critical philological approach (1941, 62). He not only notes the weaknesses of old translations, he also emphasises the importance of pointing out their positive aspects (1941, 63).

Among the philological translations mentioned by Schünemann are those of Anheisser, Roth, Meckbach and Wolfskehl; after the name of the latter, Schünemann writes "[Jd]" – *Jude* ['Jew'], in brackets. Schünemann accuses them of being difficult to sing, of a prosaic style and of ignoring the many solutions that have proved effective over the centuries. It may seem surprising that the meticulous philologist Schünemann did not evaluate this approach in a more positive way. However, as I pointed out previously, philological accuracy was never an end in itself for Schünemann, but always a tool that served some practical application. It is this aspect that he sees neglected in the philological translation approaches, so they must remain "lifeless" (1941, 67).

On the other hand, Schünemann considered Hermann Levi as an adaptor. When he refers to him, he always adds "Jew" between parentheses, thereby

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16. The exact reasons for this can be found in Elftmann (2001, 131–142).

complying with the convention of the time. Apart from that, Schünemann abstains from anti-Semitic commentary and evaluates Levi's translation according to the same standards as all the other texts. He gives him credit for having had practical experience in the field and admits that his translations were indeed up-to-date at some stage (cf. 1941, 66). Schünemann focused his criticism of Levi exclusively on the design of the recitatives, which according to him were too close to Richard Wagner's idiom and in which he did not remain faithful enough to Mozart's score. Levi had indeed changed some of the note values or inserted a number of notes in the recitatives in order to achieve a natural flow of the German text, which Schünemann corrected throughout his entire translation.

Schünemann emphasises repeatedly that he preserved established passages and that the translation "must retain the old lyrics with their good and popular idioms as they have been sung in German lands for a century" (1940a). He also repeatedly points out that all text books were consulted and that "the best version was always matched with the notes" (1939). At the same time he subtly tries to dispel the impression that he also used Levi in his translation. He repeatedly acknowledges translators, whose texts he used particularly frequently; Levi, however, is never mentioned. And when Schünemann writes immediately after his criticism of Levi's recitative translations "What has remained is what German translators, poets, directors and editors have handed down to posterity" (1939), he creates the impression that the translations of a Jew are not a part of it.

Finale: Wicked Nazi or harmless legacy of the Third Reich?

When it came to Mozart, the translation policies of the Nazi regime were the result of diverse, often contradictory interests and characterised by violent conflicts. This caused the original goal of the National-Socialist regime, namely to eliminate the Jewish translators from the opera stages, to recede into the background. Instead, procedures were negotiated between the political, musical-theatrical and journalistic fields, with which all participating actors could live. It is without a doubt that experienced music journalists as well as opera lovers must have noticed the similarities to the Levi translation. But they were never mentioned in the largely positive reviews of the Schünemann translation. There was only very general talk of "merging all the best existing translations" (Heifer 1939), of retaining "phrases that have been popular for a long time" (Laux 1940) and of preserving "naturalised classic aria lyrics" (Fuhrmann 1940).[17]

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17. Only the newspaper *National-Zeitung* is sceptical about his translation after the *Figaro* performance in Munich (cf. Sch. 1941). Interestingly, Schünemann's translations are not mentioned in reviews in this newspaper again.

The music-theatre business was satisfied with the new "norm of the Reich", since it made it possible to "smuggle in plenty of Levi" as the conductor Joseph Keilberth put it (2007, 491). That way opera goers could hear their popular phrases and singers were mostly singing their familiar texts. And the National-Socialist regime had also achieved its main goal: Hermann Levi's name disappeared from the programme notes and was therefore no longer visible – even though passages of his translations could still be heard on stage.

Schünemann was undoubtedly the right man for this compromise: as a philologist he always worked meticulously, as a political person he never opposed the regime and always proved to be a reliable conformist. It is exactly these two aspects, philological precision while working with the text and a necessary degree of adaptation to political realities that characterise his translation work. We can assume that the decision to adopt Levi's texts in the new Mozart translation, which was considered the new "norm of the Reich", was made and approved by the committee. The task of presenting this to the public was taken on by Schünemann, in his prefaces, articles, and of course in his translations.

In 1941 Heinz Tietjen prophetically proclaimed in a letter to Schünemann that the translations will "make their way" and "thus your name will be closely associated to the art of the German opera" (quoted in Elftmann 2001, 233). Georg Schünemann died in January 1945 – his translations live on to this day.

"Harmless legacy" or "Nazi translation of a wicked Nazi"? Schünemann's adaptations are Nazi texts, as far as their time of inception is concerned, but not ideologically. Schünemann did not try to charge his translations ideologically, he merely used and combined existing translations. In the process, he did not, as originally intended, eliminate, Levi's contributions, which were compared to translations of Shakespeare by Schlegel and Tieck among others (Keilberth 2007, 261); on the contrary, he made use of them. And yet, he fulfilled a declared goal of the Nazis: he erased the name of their author, Hermann Levi. And that is far from harmless.

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The migration of Madama Butterfly

Otherness in the creation and translation of Puccini's opera

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This paper looks at the role that translation has played in depicting Butterfly as Other. The first part examines the translation processes that intervened in the transposition of Butterfly's tale from short story and play to opera. The second part provides an analysis of the earliest French and English translations of the libretto using Lance Hewson's approach to literary translation criticism. By taking a text-based approach, this study puts into question the notion that modifying the meaning of a libretto is acceptable as long as the words conform to the music. It also seeks to challenge the way in which Butterfly has sometimes been regarded as the archetype of the Asian woman in Western imaginations.

Keywords: Puccini, Madama Butterfly, opera, exoticism, otherness, translation criticism, literary translation

1. Overture

This study examines the representation of Butterfly as Other and analyses the role that translation has played in shaping the audience's interpretation of her character. The first part delves into the translation processes that took place before and during the creation of Puccini's opera. I then look at how translation intervened again after the premiere of the opera and provide an analysis of the earliest French and English translations of the libretto of *Madama Butterfly*, using Lance Hewson's approach to literary translation criticism.

Butterfly has been transported from one continent to another, and from one genre to another. She first took prosaic form in a short story penned by American writer John Luther Long. Her character then took flight in a two-act play by David Belasco, before falling into the hands of Puccini and his librettists.

Notably, in order to metamorphose from an American short story to an Italian opera, Butterfly had to undergo various processes of translation – interlingual, intralingual and intersemiotic (in Jakobson's sense, 1966) – that have had a profound effect on the way in which audiences may interpret her character. Between 1904 and 1934, *Madama Butterfly* was performed in Hungarian, French, English, Spanish, German, Polish, Slovene, Czech, Swedish, Norwegian, Croatian, Danish, Russian, Finnish, Romanian, Serbian, Bulgarian and Lithuanian (Pazdro and Ravier 1993, 132). As she migrated from one language to another, Butterfly inevitably continued to transform.

By tracing the evolution of Butterfly's Otherness, the objectives of this study are twofold. First of all, it showcases the role a detailed literary analysis can play in libretto translation. It also attempts to present Puccini's Butterfly in a new light and challenge the reproach with which she has sometimes been regarded as an embodiment of the Asian female stereotype.

It is easy to reduce Butterfly to her stereotypical features: she is meek and gentle, eager to submit to her husband's every demand. Sheridan Prasso claims that she is "the mother of all Asian stereotypes" (2005, 11) while Globe and Mail critic Robert Harris calls her "a sexual exotic wrapped in a kimono, the ultimate Other to be derided, manipulated, eventually pitied" (2015, unpaginated). Yet a closer look into the background of Puccini's opera reveals a more complex image. Ralph Locke brings to light a certain contradiction in Butterfly's character. While he admits that she may be "the most complete, most famous embodiment of the archetypally beautiful, loving, gentle, submissive Oriental female", he claims that she also "displays certain qualities that are almost the opposite of this archetype" (2009, 186).

2. Critical approach

Despite the literary features of opera, many critics seem to agree that when it comes to translations that are intended to be sung, music must take precedence over the words. According to Gérard Loubinoux, "*la traduction d'opéra* […] *bat en brèche toute conception étroitement sémantique de la traduction*" [opera translation […] destroys any semantically-restricted notion of translation][1] (2004, 56). Edward Dent, highly acclaimed for his translations of Mozart's libretti, openly admits that his own translations are less rich than the original, claiming that "it does not matter […] that the words are so simple as to be flat […] because the factor

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1. All English translations are my own, unless otherwise specified.

that produces the real emotion on the stage is Mozart's melody and the sound of a beautiful voice" (1939, 10).

If musical considerations are to prevail over literary considerations, it seems reasonable to expect a higher degree of deviation between source libretto and target libretto compared to other types of translation. But to what degree will that affect the audience's interpretation of an opera? By taking a literary approach to libretto translation criticism, the intention of this study is not to downplay the significance of musical factors, but merely to demonstrate that a close literary analysis can be as important as a musical analysis when it comes to developing one's own interpretation of an opera. Such an exercise can be extremely valuable for a libretto translator.

In *An Approach to Translation Criticism* (2011), Hewson provides the translation critic with a method to determine "where the text stands in relation to its original by examining the interpretative potential that results from the translational choices that have been made" (2011, 1). His approach involves examining the effects of translational choices on three different levels: the micro-, meso- and macro-level. Hewson uses the term "effect" to refer to the possible impact of a translational choice on an audience (2011, 53); that term will be applied in the same way throughout this paper.

Before embarking on an analysis, a critical framework must first be established based on the major stylistic characteristics and possible avenues of interpretation in the source text. This groundwork allows the critic to identify elements to look for when examining the target text. The effects of translational choices at the micro-level can then be observed by breaking down both the source and target text into units, from a single word to a sentence. The next step involves identifying the potential effects created by these micro units and comparing the effects of the source text to those of the target text.

Observations made at the micro-level form the building blocks for the next step of the analysis, which allows the critic to move from the individual word or sentence to an entire passage. Taking into account the cumulative effect of the translational choices observed at the micro-level, the critic considers their impact on the meso-level. Hewson divides translational effects at the meso-level into two different categories: voice effects, which refer to the way in which characters speak, and interpretational effects, which "[correspond] to the way in which translational choices are seen to affect potential interpretations of the passage" (2011, 85). The table below summarises the various types of interpretational effects at the meso-level:

Table 1. Interpretational effects at the meso-level according to Hewson (2011, 85–87)

contraction	The target text reduces interpretational paths from the source text.
expansion	The target text enriches interpretational paths from the source text.
transformation	The target text provides interpretational paths that have no clear link to the source text.

Observations made at the meso-level in turn become the building blocks to determine the effects of translational choices at the macro-level. Once again, Hewson divides them into voice and interpretational effects. An overview of the different types of interpretational effects at the macro-level can be seen below in Table 2.

Table 2. Interpretational effects at the macro-level according to Hewson (2011, 173–175)

Interpretational effect observed at meso-level	Effect on macro-structural level	Description
contraction	shrinkage	The interpretative potential of the text has been impoverished.
expansion	swelling	The interpretative potential of the text has been enriched.
transformation	transmutation	The translation encourages new interpretations of the text, but changes are not consistent.
combination of effects	metamorphosing translation	There is a mixture of the interpretational effects described above, resulting in a blend of interpretations or interpretations that cannot be found in the source text.
combination of effects	ideological translation	The translation favours one particular interpretation of the text, excluding other possible interpretations.

The scope of this paper will only allow the critic to begin drawing conclusions at the macro-level. The focus of this study will be on translations that are intended to be sung. Some may argue that this is a form of translation that is no longer relevant, given the popularity of surtitles today. Nevertheless, certain opera companies still perform operas in translation, most notably the English National Opera.

3.   Variations on a theme

Developing a critical framework involves looking beyond the actual libretto to elements such as paratexts (Hewson 2011, 25). The programme notes for each production of *Madama Butterfly* are a rich source of this material. Although the notes vary

from one production to another, they almost inevitably include some information on the texts that inspired the opera: Pierre Loti's novel *Madame Chrysanthème*, Long's short story "Madame Butterfly", and Belasco's play *Madame Butterfly*.

After watching the 1906 production of *Madame Butterfly*, music critic Pierre Lalo declared, "*C'est un titre tout à fait saugrenu que celui de Madame Butterfly. Dans un ouvrage traduit en français, dont l'original est italien et l'héroïne japonaise, que nous veut ce mot anglais ?*" ['The title of *Madame Butterfly* is utterly absurd. What is that English word doing in a work that has been translated into French, was originally written in Italian and has a Japanese heroine?'] (Groos 2005, 501). What seems to trouble Lalo is the linguistic – and by extension, cultural – incoherence of the opera. Without a doubt, there is a certain incongruity inherent to opera. Lucile Desblache asserts that "[o]pera, a hybrid genre […] offers a type of entertainment that defies homogenization" (2012, 12). While Lalo may be quick to dismiss the title as pure nonsense, it in truth reveals a great deal about the cultural and literary ancestry of the opera.

In the published editions of *Madama Butterfly,* Long's short story and Belasco's play are always credited as being the inspiration for the opera. But there is one earlier work that also warrants mentioning: Pierre Loti's *Madame Chrysanthème*. Loti's autobiographical novel recounts brief episodes from the fleeting marriage of a French naval officer to a Japanese girl. While the title bears Chrysanthème's name, the entire story is written from the first person perspective of the naval officer. It is only through his eyes that we see Chrysanthème. He refers to her as a "*poupée*" ['doll'] (1996, 54–55 and 64) and an "*enfant*" ['child'] (1996, 195). His wife exasperates him; he cannot understand her. He is most pleased with her when she is asleep; "*elle est très décorative présentée de cette manière*" ['she is very decorative when presented in this way'] (1996, 90). On the rare occasions that Chrysanthème actually speaks, it is in monosyllables. She comes across as childish and trite as she points out the insects and mice that sporadically break into the monotony of their married life.

Madame Chrysanthème's influence on Puccini's French public comes through in Lalo's review. The French critic goes so far as to suggest that the short story, play and opera are mere adaptations – and terribly inferior ones at that – of *Madame Chrysanthème*: "*Voilà ce que* Madame Chrysanthème *a gagné à devenir* Madame Butterfly, *voilà ce que font d'une fine et gracieuse oeuvre française des arrangeurs italiens et anglo-saxons*" ['Here is what *Madame Chrysanthème* has gained by becoming *Madame Butterfly*. Here is what those Italian and Anglophone arrangers have done with an elegant and graceful French work'] (Groos 2005, 503).

To a certain extent, Lalo's indignation is justified. Long claimed to have been inspired to write "Madame Butterfly" after his sister, Jenni Correll – who had lived in Nagasaki as a missionary – told him the story of a Japanese teahouse

girl abandoned by her American lover. But the characters, scenes and details in "Madame Butterfly" resemble those of *Madame Chrysanthème* to such a degree that there can be no doubt that Long was equally as influenced by Loti's novel (see van Rij 2001, 66–67). And yet what seems to escape the French opera critic is that there is a key difference between Chrysanthème and Butterfly, one that makes it hard to classify the short story, play and opera as mere adaptations of Loti's novel. With Long's short story, the European, male narrative voice in Loti's novel gives way to the voice of the Japanese woman – and a remarkable voice it is indeed. Critics have been quick to point out its inaccuracy: Jan van Rij curiously compares it to a "southern US accent" (2001, 68), while Julian Budden describes it as "a primitive, phonetically rendered jargon that bears no relations to English as pronounced by the Japanese" (2002, 230).

If indeed, as van Rij theorises, Long wrote this story with the aim of "shak[ing] the conscience of American readers and [raising] sympathy for the victims [of American naval officers]" (2001, 74; my additions), Butterfly's overly exaggerated speech undermines this goal. Long alienates her from his readers through her distinctly foreign manner of speaking. While he may have discredited some of the stereotypes propagated by Loti, he just as successfully creates new ones. Nevertheless, Long's short story was a great success at the time, and American playwright David Belasco immediately picked up on its dramatic potential.

It is clear that Belasco borrowed elements of Butterfly's mangled pronunciation and odd turns of speech from Long. And yet his Butterfly speaks in a manner that is decidedly less garbled than that of Long's. No doubt this linguistic shift results in part, if not entirely, from the verbal demands of theatre. As Marina Madeddu remarks, "*La lingua di Butterfly non doveva più essere semplicemente letta, ma doveva essere pronunciata e udita veramente*" ['Butterfly's language no longer simply had to be read; it had to be articulated and heard'] (1998, 45–46). But by mellowing Butterfly's voice, Belasco inevitably alters the audience's perception of her. While her manner of speaking still marks her as exotic, it does so to a lesser degree than Long's Butterfly.

While her voice is subdued, her tragedy is, conversely, heightened. Unlike Loti and Long, Belasco establishes Butterfly as the protagonist from the moment the curtain rises. Pinkerton's role is in general greatly reduced. He only physically appears near the end of the play, leaving the spotlight to Butterfly. And unlike Long, whose story features two scenes in the American consulate, Belasco keeps the entire action of the play in Butterfly and Pinkerton's home. That decision heightens the symbolic value of the house, and strengthens the link between Butterfly and her home – an aspect that will be explored in more detail later on.

Finally, no true tragedy would be complete if it did not culminate in the ultimate tragic act: in this case, Butterfly's suicide. Long's Butterfly merely attempts to

commit suicide; the newfound *joie de vivre* her husband has given her keeps her from going through with it. Belasco's Butterfly performs the fatal, ritualistic act without hesitation.

While Butterfly's stilted speech remains a feature of the play, one of the most poignant scenes – one in which the audience can feel the full weight of Butterfly's anguish – plays out in silence. For fourteen wordless minutes, the audience watches as Butterfly, immobile, awaits the return of her husband. The lapse of time is simulated through an innovative use of lighting effects: day darkens into starry night, then night transitions into dawn. Belasco's audience was captivated by this scene. Among them was one Giacomo Puccini.

Puccini, deeply struck by that visually rich scene, barely understood the words of the play at all. Puccini's librettist, Luigi Illica, pointed this out to publisher Giulio Ricordi.

> Certo che sono [i dettagli di scena di Belasco] che lo hanno sorpreso a tutta prima (non comprendendo una parola) e colpito […] visti da Puccini su teatri italiani, con parole nostre, non gli avrebbero fatta l'impressione avuta in inglese. [Evidently it was the [details of Belasco's staging] that first surprised and struck him (not having understood a word) […] Had Puccini seen them on an Italian stage, in our language, they would not have made the same impression on him as in English.]   (Gara 1958, 211)

Budden concurs, claiming that had Puccini known more English, "he might well have been defeated by the pidgin variety in which so much of the dialogue is couched" (2002, 228).

Indeed, in the opera, Butterfly's language bears no trace of the mispronunciations, odd vocabulary and awkward syntax featured in Long and Belasco's works. That change in her manner of speaking can no doubt be attributed in large part to the vocal and musical nature of opera. For an art that is already so often accused of being incomprehensible, purposely rendering the language unclear would be undesirable. However, it is also important to remember that an American short story and play were being transformed into an Italian opera. The linguistic shift required the intervention of a translator. A question therefore emerges: did Illica, his libretto-writing partner Giuseppe Giacosa, and Puccini merely smooth out Butterfly's speech for the sake of vocal clarity? Or could they have formed a different impression of Butterfly based on the translations of the short story and play they worked with?

On 7 March 1901, Puccini sent Illica an initial Italian translation of the short story (Groos 2005, 33). The translation is, to put it lightly, problematic. To make matters more complicated, the translation delivered to Puccini and his librettists was carelessly transcribed (Groos 2005, 34). It is difficult to determine whether

the translator or the transcriber is more to blame. On the one hand, there are structural issues in the translation. Paragraph breaks are not respected and lines spoken by different characters are fused together. Entire phrases and sentences disappear for no apparent reason. Furthermore, there are a large number of spelling and grammatical mistakes. Had the translator been trying to reproduce the effect of Butterfly's broken English, those mistakes would have been justifiable; that they should appear in the narrative voice, however, is perplexing. These issues may be the result of a sloppy transcription. But there are also deeper problems with the translation.

At times, the translator's grasp of English seems tenuous, for instance when it comes to false cognates. In Long's story, Butterfly recounts how she did not want to marry Pinkerton at first because she thought he was a barbarian and a "beas'" ['beast'] (1898, 56). The translator mistakes the word for "bees" and translates it as "*vespa*" ['wasp']. That detail may not have been significant but for the fact that the word "*vespa*" also appears in the Milan edition of the libretto (Groos 2005, 35); during the love duet, Butterfly admits that she initially thought of Pinkerton as "*Un barbaro! una vespa!*" (Groos 2005, 240).

Puccini seems to have been aware of the poor quality of this initial translation, as he had Long's story translated not just once, but three times. Nevertheless, the impact of that first translation remains significant, considering that it was the first source used by Illica and Giacosa during the drafting stage, and some of its details made their way into the published editions of the libretto.

Puccini and his librettists did not get a hold of an Italian version of the play until April 1902 (Groos 2005, 36). While that translation is not littered with as many mistakes, there are still significant structural differences between source and target text: certain lines and stage directions are eliminated in the translation, while others are added in; in a few passages, stage directions have mysteriously migrated into the spoken dialogue. By far the most significant change in the translations of both the short story and the play – one that cannot merely be blamed on a careless transcription – is a drastic change in Butterfly's manner of speaking. Arthur Groos claims that "many difficult passages in Butterfly's imagined dialect were beyond the [translator of the short story's] abilities" (2005, 34). A similar statement can be made about the translator of the play.

In order to illustrate the extent to which Butterfly's voice is altered in translation, a particular episode from the short story, play and opera will be examined. Butterfly tells her maid Suzuki what she is planning to do upon the return of her husband. In the opera, this corresponds to the aria "*Un Bel Dì*", a highlight of Puccini's work. The fragility and raw emotion reveal just why the composer was sometimes accused of being too sentimental. The original scene from the short story and play has a somewhat different effect:

(1)   Butterfly's plan in the short story, play and opera.

Long's short story	Belasco's play	Illica and Giacosa's libretto
An' also, what you thing we bedder doing when he come? […] Aha, ha, ha! You dun*no*? Of course you dunno whichever! Well – I go'n' tell you […] Jus' recomleck 't is a secret among you and me. We don' tell that Mr. Trouble. Hoash! He don' kin keep no secret. *Well*, listen! We go'n' watch with that spying-glass till his ship git in. Then we go'n' put cherry blossoms aeverywhere; an' if 't is night, we go'n' hang up 'bout 'mos' one thousan' lanterns – 'bout 'mos' one thousan'! Then we – *wait*. Jus' when we see him coing up that hill – so – so – so – *so* […] then! We hide behine the shoji, where there are holes to peep […] Then we lie quiet lig mice, an' make believe we gone 'way. Better n't we leave liddle note: 'Gone 'way foraever. Sayonara, Butterfly.'	Suzuki, w'en we see that ship comin' in – sa-ey – then we goin' put flowers aevery where, an' if it's night, we goin' hang up mos' one thousan' lanterns – eh-ha? […] Wael, twenty, mebby; an' sa-ey, w'en we see him comin' quick up path – so – so – so to look for liddle wife – me – me jus' goin' hide behind shoji an' watch an' make believe me gone 'way; leave liddle note – sayin': 'Goon-bye, sayonara, Butterfly.'	*Un bel dì, vedremo levarsi un fil di fumo dall'estremo confin del mare. E poi la nave appare. Poi la nave bianca entra nel porto, romba il suo saluto. Vedi? È venuto! Io non gli scendo incontro. Io no. Mi metto là sul ciglio del colle e aspetto, e aspetto gran tempo e non mi pesa, la lunga attesa. E uscito dalla folla cittadina un uomo, un picciol punto s'avvia per la collina. Chi sarà? chi sarà? E come sarà giunto che dirà? che dirà? Chiamerà Butterfly dalla lontana. Io senza dar risposta me ne starò nascosta un po' per celia e un po' per non morire al primo incontro* […].
(Belasco 1928, 15)	(Long 1898, 23–24)	(Illica and Giacosa 1907, 184–188)

In the passage from short story to play, Belasco smooths out Long's imaginary pidgin. Long's Butterfly has a tendency to contract words: in the excerpt above, for instance, "and" becomes "an'"; going becomes "go'n'"; and "most" becomes "mos'". While still maintaining certain contractions, Belasco often restores a vowel, making the language more natural: "go'n'" becomes "goin'", and "'t" becomes "it". Furthermore, Long's Butterfly has a habit of stacking up adjectives and adverbs, as she does in the phrase "'bout 'mos' one thousan' lanterns"; Belasco eliminates an adverb, turning the phrase into "mos' one thousan' lanterns". While still unidiomatic, Butterfly's lack of linguistic proficiency is less exaggerated. There is an even more marked contrast between Long and Belasco's texts and Puccini's libretto. The libretto is not merely written in impeccable Italian – it is poetic. While this quality can in part be attributed to libretto-writing conventions and vocal considerations, the content is also presented in a very different light.

In the short story, Butterfly concocts a plan that she believes will amuse her husband. Her tone is mischievous and playful, and it is all little more than an elaborate joke. That spirit is carried over to a certain extent to Belasco's text, most notably through the little note Butterfly intends to leave. However, her exuberance is significantly toned down. While Long's Butterfly gleefully repeats "'bout 'mos' one thousan' lanterns" twice, Belasco's heroine only says it once before being struck by the reality that she will never be able to afford so many.

In the operatic version, what Butterfly describes is no joke. Certainly, there is a note of playfulness with the word "*celia*" ['jest'], but the events are transformed into a vision: "*Vedi? È venuto!*" ['See? He came!'] says Butterfly to her maid, as though she truly is living in that future moment. Her words convey a mixture of hope, longing and desperation. Gone is the whimsical character with her fanciful ploys and absurd manner of speaking; instead she appears as a woman pining for her lover – could there be a more classic literary theme? While the change may be jarring, it is one that was mediated by the process of translation. Consider the translations commissioned by Puccini and his team:

(2)   Butterfly's plan in translation.

Italian translation of Long's short story	Italian translation of Belasco's play
E poi, cosa dici che potremo fare di meglio quando arriva? […] Aha ah, ah! Non lo sai? È naturale che tu non sappia niente! Bene… te lo dirò io […] Ricordati però che è un segreto fra te e me. Non lo diremo al Sig. dolore. Ché! Lui! Non sa tenere un segreto! Ebbene senti! Noi guarderemo con quel dei fiori di ciliegi dappertutto; e se è sera appenderemo almeno mille lanterne… forse anche più di mille. Poi… ASPETTEREMO. Al momento che lo vedremo salire la collina… così… così… così… così […] allora! Ci nascondiamo dietro il shosi, dove ci sono dei buchi per guardare fuori […] Poi staremo quiete come topolini per far credere che ce ne siamo andate. Meglio ancora, lasceremo un bigliettino: 'Partite per sempre – Sayonara Butterfly'?	*Suzuki quando vedremo entrare in porto quel bastimentio – di – allora metteremo dei fiori dappertutto – e se è di notte – allora appenderemo più di mille lanterne, nevvero? […] Ebbene – venti, forse – e di' un po' quando lo vedremo salire rapidamente il sentiero così – così – così – in cerca della sua mogliettina – io – io mi nasconderò dietro al Shosi a osservare e farò credere che me ne sono andata – lasciando una letterina con scritto 'Addio – Sayonara – Butterfly…'*
(in Groos 2005, 47)	(in Groos 2005, 79)

The translator of Long's short story into Italian does manage to capture Butterfly's enthusiastic tone with an abundance of exclamation marks and the use of capital letters. However, in the translations of both the short story and the play, virtually every linguistic blunder, whether pronunciation, grammar, syntax or vocabulary,

has been ironed out. Her language, a supposed mark of her "Japanese-ness", is standard and unremarkable. There are a few minor grammatical and spelling errors in the translation of the short story: "*il shosi*" as opposed to "*lo shosi*"; "*como topolini*" instead of "*come topolini*". But did these truly result from the translator's efforts to preserve Butterfly's unique voice? Or were they merely mistakes on the part of the translator or transcriber? The latter theory seems more likely, given how little effort is made to carry over the quirks of Butterfly's speech. The turn of phrase "'bout 'mos' one thousan' lanterns – 'bout 'mos' one thousan'!" is rendered into standard Italian: "*almeno mille lanterne… forse anche più di mille*". Besides ignoring the outlandish accumulation of adjectives and adverbs, the translator does not even preserve the repetition.

Had the translators been more successful at recreating Butterfly's voice, Puccini's librettists would certainly still have been obliged to standardize her language for the sake of clarity. Nevertheless, it can be suggested that the impression they might have gotten from reading the two translations was very different to the one presented by Long and Belasco. While Butterfly's droll character in the short story and play is created in part by the things she says, *how* she says them is an even more defining feature. Liberated by the translators from that stilted speech, Butterfly comes across as a much more dignified and empathetic character. Evidently, a critic can only speculate as to what extent the translations did affect their interpretation of her character. Nevertheless, it is clear that the operatic Butterfly brings a more universal dimension to the story.

Erica Lifreddo claims that "*fu con [Puccini] che Butterfly volò verso la sublimazione a grande eroina tragica*" ['it was with [Puccini] that Butterfly flew towards sublimation, becoming a great tragic heroine'] (2005, 7). The shift in Butterfly's use of language helps elevate her to that status. She goes from being a speechless object to be observed, to a protagonist who is outspoken, but distinctly foreign, before finally being transformed into a woman who, regardless of nationality, bears the marks of a true tragic heroine. According to William Ashbrook, "the literate and graceful Italian […] adds aesthetic distance to increase Butterfly's stature as a dramatic figure" (1968, 116). Yet it would be naïve to claim that Puccini's Butterfly transcends all question of race or ethnicity. No doubt that is why she is an object of fascination and controversy. As Locke points out, she "does not seem *entirely* alien but someone with whom we in the audience can identify across the chasm of culture" (2009, 206, emphasis in the original). While she may be a bearer of stereotypes, she also represents an evolution in the literary portrayal of the Japanese woman.

4. Analysis of the French and English libretti

In an attempt to observe the way in which the dynamics of otherness and universality have been handled in translation, I have selected three passages that are key to understanding the different facets of Butterfly's character.

Between 1904 and 1907, several editions of the opera were published in Italian, French and English (see Schickling 1998). This analysis will be looking exclusively at the 1907 Italian edition of the opera, as this is the version favoured by opera houses today and the one most likely to be used for future translations. This edition corresponds to the first French production of the opera, which was put on by Paris' Opéra-Comique in 1906; for that occasion, the libretto was translated by Paul Ferrier. The 1907 Italian edition took into account revisions and changes that were incorporated into Ferrier's libretto – a fact that is evidently problematic for a critical approach that seeks to determine how the target text diverges from the source text. This study therefore seeks to avoid passages in which the target text may have brought about changes in the source text. The 1907 edition of the English libretto by R. H. Elkin will also be examined. While Elkin's translation was originally published in 1905, changes made for the Paris production were integrated in the 1907 edition.

The first two passages contain descriptions of Butterfly's house. The association between Butterfly and her home is first made apparent by Pinkerton, who displays the same flippant attitude towards his marital and rental obligations. From the first act to the second, the audience can trace a development in the image of the house. It becomes not only the external backdrop against which Butterfly's tragedy plays out, but also a representation of Butterfly's psychological and emotional condition.

The third excerpt is from the love duet at the end of the First Act. The duet signals a turning point in the opera. As Mosco Carner observes, it is at this moment that "[Butterfly] becomes purely and simply a woman in love" (1992, 439). In the opening act, the spectator's attention is drawn to the exotic subject of the opera by a comical supporting cast of Japanese characters and by Pinkerton, who revels in his wife's foreign features. By the second act, Butterfly has been rejected by her Japanese entourage and abandoned by her husband. In this new, solitary state, her tragedy becomes more universal.

4.1 A house of paper walls

The audience first sees the house through Pinkerton's eyes. He is given a tour by Goro, the marriage broker, who centers his sales pitch on the house's ability to adapt to Pinkerton's whims. The American lieutenant examines his new home with a mixture of contempt and amusement, which hearkens back to Loti's derisory

look upon the Japanese. The house is flimsy and compliant; the spectator cannot help but draw a parallel between the qualities Pinkerton is seeking from his home and from his wife.

(3)   Pinkerton visits his new home.

Illica and Giacosa's Italian libretto	Elkin's English translation	Ferrier's French translation
Pinkerton [*sorpreso per quanto ha visto dice a Goro:*] *E soffitto… e pareti…*	**Pinkerton** [*surprised at all he has seen, says to Goro:*] And the walls – and the ceiling…	**Pinkerton** *Ces légères murailles ?*
Goro [*godendo delle sorprese di Pinkerton*] *Vanno e vengono a prova a norma che vi giova nello stesso locale alternar nuovi aspetti ai consueti.*	**Goro** [*enjoying Pinkerton's surprise*] They will come and will go, just as it may suit your fancy to exchange and to vary new and old in the same surroundings.	**Goro** *Des parois à coulisse. À votre guise tout glisse, et sans autre artifice l'aspect change selon votre caprice.*
Pinkerton [*cercando intorno*] *Il nido nuzïal Dov'è?*	**Pinkerton** [*looking around*] The marriage chamber, where is it?	**Pinkerton** [*cherchant autour de lui*] *La chambre nuptiale, où donc?*
Goro [*accenna a due locali*] *Qui, o là… secondo…*	Goro [*pointing in two directions*] Here, or there!… according…	**Goro** *À gauche, à droite !*
Pinkerton *Anch'esso a doppio fondo! La sala?*	**Pinkerton** A wonderful contrivance! The hall?	**Pinkerton** *À double fond, la boîte ! La salle?*
Goro [*mostra la terrazza*] *Ecco!*	**Goro** *[showing the terrace]* Behold!	**Goro** [*montrant la terrasse*] *Là !*
Pinkerton [*stupito*] *All'aperto?…*	**Pinkerton** [*amazed*] In the open?…	**Pinkerton** [*étonné*] *En plein air?*
Goro [*fa scorrere la parete verso la terrazza*] *Un fianco scorre…*	**Goro** [*makes the partition slide out towards the terrace*] A wall slides outward…	**Goro** *On peut la clore*
Pinkerton [*mentre Goro fa scorrere le pareti*] *Capisco!… capisco!… Un altro…*	**Pinkerton** [*whilst Goro is making the partitions slide out*] I see now!… I see it!… Another…	**Pinkerton** [*pendant que Goro fait glisser les parois*] *Compris ! très simple ! pratique !*
Goro *Scivola!*	**Goro** Runs along!	**Goro** *Surtout*
Pinkerton *E la dimora frivola…*	**Pinkerton** And so the fairy dwelling…	**Pinkerton** [*descendant dans le jardin*] *Un vrai joujou d'architecture !*
Goro [*protestando*] *Salda come una torre da terra, fino al tetto.* [*invita Pinkerton a scendere nel giardino*]		**Goro** [*protestant*] *Ferme comme une tour, du sol à la toiture !* [*invita Pinkerton a scendere nel giardino*]
		Pinkerton *Un palais à soufflets !*

(*continued*)

Illica and Giacosa's Italian libretto	Elkin's English translation	Ferrier's French translation
Pinkerton *È una casa a soffietto.*	**Goro** [*protesting*] Springs like a tow'r from nowhere, complete from base to attic. [*invites Pinkerton to go down into the garden*] **Pinkerton** Comes and goes as by magic!	
(Illica and Giacosa 1907, 6–10)	(Elkin 1907, 5–8)	(Ferrier 1906, 5–7)

In the Italian text, after seeing the bedroom, Pinkerton exclaims, "*Anch'esso a doppio fondo!*" ['This too has a false bottom!']. Gottfried Marschall suggests that this alludes to the deception upon which the marriage is founded (2004, 19). Elkin erases this potential path of interpretation, instead conveying Pinkerton's admiration: "A wonderful contrivance!". Indeed, in this first English translation of the libretto, Pinkerton appears to be enchanted by his new home – quite literally so, for he refers to it as a "fairy dwelling". There is no trace of that magical association in the Italian text; the adjective "*frivola*" ['frivolous'] instead conveys Pinkerton's belief that his house is empty of substance. From a phonetic perspective, "*dimora frivola*" and "fairy dwelling" do begin with the same consonants; but from an interpretative point of view, there is no clear importance attached to this effect.

The image of an otherworldly home is also supported by Goro's reply that the house "springs like a tow'r from nowhere". While that translation alone may not necessarily have magical associations, as Hewson asserts "it is only a pattern of accumulated effects that can be seen to influence the way the translated text is read and interpreted" (2011, 87). By contrast, the house in Illica and Giacosa's text – "*[che] salda come una torre da terra*" ['that rises from earth like a tower'] – is anchored to the ground. In fact, the stage direction "*protestando*" ['protesting'] suggests that Goro wishes to persuade his client that, in spite of its frivolous appearance, the house is indeed solid. Although that stage direction is preserved in English, it no longer makes sense. What exactly might Goro be protesting since, far from contradicting Pinkerton's impression of the house, he seems to be supporting it?

At the end of the passage, Pinkerton describes his house as "*una casa a soffietto*" ['a house of bellows'], evoking an accordion, which can expand and collapse like Pinkerton's home. It underlines the malleable nature of the home and Pinkerton's ability to control it. Elkin's translation instead declares that the house "comes and goes as by magic!". The word "magic" falls into the same semantic field as "fairy dwelling", thereby reinforcing the idea of an enchanted house.

Is there any hint of this magical, fairy dwelling in the Italian text? The one line that could support such a reading comes many bars later, when the American consul arrives and Pinkerton refers to the house as "*una casetta che obbedisce a bacchetta*" ['a house that obeys the wand / baton'] (1907, 23–24). A "*bacchetta*" may indeed be a wand, which would be consistent with Elkin's interpretation, but it can also be a conductor's baton. Combined with the preposition "a", it forms an adverb signifying "*con piena e assoluta autorità*" ['with full and absolute authority'] (*Lo Zingarelli* 2012, 225–226. All three possible interpretations place the person wielding the "*bacchetta*" in a position of power. Regardless of which interpretation the librettists may have wanted to favour, their choice of that word emphasizes the control Pinkerton has over his house and, by extension, his wife. Curiously, Elkin again chooses to associate the house with magic: "This is a dwelling which is managed by magic" (1907, 19).

Ferrier's translation into French also seems to alter the audience's impression of the house, though not nearly as dramatically. In Pinkerton's opening line, the adjective "*légères*" ['light'] is added. Interestingly enough, there is an earlier reference to the "*légères parois*" ['light walls'] in the stage directions (2006, 4) – a detail not mentioned in the original libretto. Then there is the transformation of "*la dimora frivola*" ['the frivolous home'] into "*un palais à soufflets*" ['an expendable palace']. While a palace may seem grander than a simple home, in the larger context, it creates a stronger paradox than the original. Ferrier therefore appears to strengthen certain characteristics of the house. It is important to remember that he was translating specifically for Albert Carré's production for the Opéra-Comique – a production that strengthened the symbolic value of the house through its staging (see Girardi 2012). Could Ferrier's decisions in this passage have been influenced by the heightened importance Carré gives to the home?

It is now possible to attempt to draw some conclusions at the meso-level of the text. In Elkin's translation, one possible interpretative path related to the house is completely transformed, while in Ferrier's translation, that path is expanded. Pinkerton's voice also appears to be deformed in the English translation; as opposed to contempt, the spectator is confronted with awe.

4.2 Under lock and key

While the house is subject to Pinkerton's exoticising gaze in the first act, in Act 2, it represents Butterfly's anguish and isolation as she awaits the return of her husband. The heroine draws the audience's attention to one peculiarity of the home: Pinkerton has outfitted it with locks. Just like Butterfly herself, the house becomes a locus of contradictions, with the fragility of the paper walls offset by the strength of the locks.

(4)   The transformation of the house.

Illica and Giacosa's Italian libretto	Elkin's English translation	Ferrier's French translation
Butterfly [*sempre insistendo*] *Perché con tante cure la casa rifornì di serrature, s'ei non volessi ritornar mai più?*	**Butterfly** [*still persists*] And why was he so careful to have the house provided with safe locks, if he did not intend to come again?	**Butterfly** [*toujours insistant*] *Pourquoi fit-il tant clore la cage où son amour constant m'enferme, s'il ne devait y revenir jamais ?*
(Illica and Giacosa 1907, 176–177)	(Elkin 1907, 127)	(Ferrier 1906, 114–115)

Curiously, the French text does not mention the house directly at all. Instead, Ferrier evokes an entirely different metaphor: a cage. In doing so, he eliminates the parallel structure between the openings of the two acts. The paradoxical image of a paper house secured with locks disappears. In fact, the metaphor of the "*cage*" ['cage'] does not indicate to us precisely how Pinkerton has altered the home. It brings with it a whole new set of interpretations. It seems odd that Ferrier would shy away from working with the original metaphor considering that his translation of the opening scene intensifies the characterisation of the house. How can one account for the translator's inconsistent treatment of the house? One possible explanation is that he wished to maintain some of the original alliteration: "*Perché con tante cure la casa* [...]". His text does preserves some of that phonetic effect with the words "clore" and "cage".

Besides changing the symbolic value of the house, Ferrier's translation also changes the audience's perception of Pinkerton's character by referring to his "amour constant". Not once does Butterfly speak of his love in the Italian text. In fact, despite all her illusions and hopes, the motivation she gives him paints a rather less rosy picture: her words, "*gelosa custodia*" ['jealous care'], portray him as selfish and possessive – an image consistent with the traits that come across in Pinkerton's aria, "*Dovunque al mondo*". The word "*custodia*" is also significant as it may be interpreted in several different ways. On the one hand, it may simply mean "care"; on the other, it can also signify "detention", a possibility that becomes all the more interesting when combined with the image of the locks. Ferrier's translation, however, does not favour that interpretation.

Elkin's translation does preserve the image of the locks, but those locks serve a very different purpose: Pinkerton has installed them for Butterfly's protection. Like Ferrier, Elkin provides a more loving portrait of Pinkerton. His affection is reinforced by the adjective "beloved". This is problematic since, as Harris points out, "Pinkerton's not a likeable character, despite the beautiful music Puccini has written for him, and to present him as one displaces the tragedy of the work" (2014).

In terms of potential interpretative effects at the meso-level, both Ferrier and Elkin seem to transform Pinkerton into a more a sympathetic character, while Ferrier also alters the metaphorical significance of the house.

4.3   The love duet

According to Budden, "a love-duet inevitably requires that both parties speak the same musical language" (2002, 236). It is a form of expression that transcends time and culture, and is one of the most musically accessible scenes in this opera. It conforms to both musical and literary clichés: Butterfly and Pinkerton take turns expressing their admiration for one another before their voices join in unison as the music builds to a climax. And yet even the duet is not spared from contradiction. On the very night that Butterfly and Pinkerton are supposed to be united, they express quite opposite emotions: while Butterfly waxes poetic about the night landscape, Pinkerton urges his wife to come to bed. The duet opens with Pinkerton describing his new bride:

(5)   Pinkerton's portrayal of Butterfly.

Illica and Giacosa's Italian libretto	Elkin's English translation	Ferrier's French translation
Bimba dagli occhi pieni di malia, ora sei tutta mia. Sei tutta vestita di giglio. Mi piace la treccia tua bruna fra candidi veli. (Illica and Giacosa 1907, 137–138)	Child, from whose eyes the witchery is shining, now you are all my own. You're clad in lily white raiment. How sweet are your tresses of brown in your snowy garment. (Elkin 1907, p. 104)	*Fée aux grands yeux pareils à deux étoiles, pour moi je t'ai voulue ! D'azur tu me sembles vêtue, et j'aime tes tresses plus brunes dans le vague des voiles !* (Ferrier 1906, 89–90)

In Italian, Pinkerton's description of Butterfly is dominated by the colour white: she is dressed in lily-white ("*vestita di giglio*") and wears a pure white veil ("*candidi veli*"). Besides referring to the colour of the veil, "*candido*" may also signify "*innocento, sincero*" ['innocent, sincere'] (*Lo Zingarelli* 2016, 353). The whiteness of her outfit therefore symbolises both her innocence and purity – two characteristics that are also endorsed by the word "*bimba*" ['child']. "*Bimba*", however, also reveals a great deal about the Lieutenant's own character. According to Steven Huebner, "[Pinkerton] gets most aroused by the fetishized images of smallness, or child-like delicacy" (2008, 120). There is a contrast between the purity of Butterfly's image and Pinkerton's thoughts.

That virtuous portrait of Butterfly is strikingly altered in both the French and English translations discussed here. While Ferrier calls Butterfly a "*fée*" ['fairy'], Elkin evokes the "witchery" shining from her eyes. Those words recall Elkin's

depiction of the house as a "fairy dwelling". Pinkerton is not merely enchanted by his home, but also bewitched by his wife. The one word in the Italian text that could give rise to such an interpretation is "*malia*", which can indeed signify "*sortilegio*" ['witchcraft'], "*maleficio*" ['evil spell'] or "*stregoneria*" ['sorcery'] (*Sabatini Coletti* 2008, 1526). However, it is not the only possible definition of the word: figuratively, "*malia*" has the more earthly meaning of "fascino" ['fascination'] or "incanto" ['charm'] (*Lo Zingarelli* 2016, 1330). In fact, to illustrate the figurative use of the word, one authoritative Italian dictionary provides the example of "*occhi pieni di malia*" [eyes full of charm] (*Lo Zingarelli* 2016, 1330), the very words used by Illica and Giacosa. While both interpretations are possible, Ferrier and Elkin appear to favour the magical sense of the word.

It is also interesting to compare the grammatical function of the words "*malia*", "*fée*" and "witchery". In Italian, "*malia*" modifies the adjective "*pieni*" ['full'], and the two combined modify the noun "*occhi*" ['eyes']. It therefore has the minor grammatical role of an adjective complement in an adjective phrase. By contrast, "*fée*" is treated as a synonym of Butterfly; as the subject of the sentence, it gives her magical character prominence. While "witchery" does not play as important a grammatical role as "*fée*", as the subject of an adjective clause, it still has a more prominent function than "*malia*". The translators therefore emphasize Butterfly's enchanting powers from both a semantic and grammatical point of view.

The 1906 French translation of the libretto makes a radical costume change: instead of being dressed in white, Butterfly is now dressed in "*azur*" ['azure']. This reference to the colour blue is reinforced by the description of her veil as a wave ("*vague*"). This likely has little to do with musical constraints and may instead be attributed to Carré's new staging of the opera. But why might Carré have chosen the colour blue?

As the colour of the Virgin Mary's robe, blue is also associated with innocence and purity. The costume change may also have been a cultural adaptation; perhaps Carré and Ferrier wished to avoid the image of the lily ("*giglio*"), given the particular connotations and historical background associated with the fleur-de-lys in France. It is also interesting to observe that Loti's novel – which, as discussed earlier in this study, played a significant role in introducing the "Japanese" woman into French culture – is populated by images of girls in blue dresses (1996, 35, 51 and 165). Whatever may be the true reason behind that particular costume choice, Ferrier inevitably evokes a different set of associations and interpretations by changing the colour of the dress.

Pinkerton's opening line also provides some insight into his own character: "*Ora sei tutta mia*" ['Now you are entirely mine']. That confidence and possessive attitude are coherent with the Pinkerton who declared that "*la vita [del Yankee] non appaga se non fa suo tesor i fiori d'ogni plaga*" ['the life [of a Yankee] cannot

be fulfilled if he does not make the flowers of every shore his treasure'] (Illica and Giacosa, 1907, 30). In French, he is not so self-assured. Rather than rejoicing in his conquest, he expresses yearning: "*Pour moi je t'ai voulue !*" ['I wanted you for myself'].

Once again transformation may be observed with regard to Butterfly's character: in both translations, she is associated with a fantastical creature. Furthermore, in the French libretto, the audience is presented with a more loving image of Pinkerton.

5. Finale

The aim of this study has been to challenge the notion that modifying the meaning of a libretto is acceptable as long as the text fits with the music. After all, altering the meaning of the text may not only affect an opera on a literary level. It can also influence how singers approach characters and how the stage director interprets an opera, thereby compounding the effect of the words on an audience's interpretation.

Based on the passages analysed above, it is possible to observe similar translational effects operating in Elkin and Ferrier's texts. A high occurrence of transformation may be detected with regard to the portrayal of Butterfly's character – a portrait that is provided both directly, through description, as well as metaphorically, through the house. This may lead to the conclusion that there are likely to be effects of transmutation at the macro-level. Since both translators consistently promote a certain image of Butterfly it may even be possible that these are ideological translations. More passages would have to be analysed to determine whether or not these possible interpretations are maintained throughout the rest of the translations.

Notably, the two translators introduce new female archetypes into the Butterfly story. While there are still traces of the meek, submissive Asian, the audience is also confronted with the magical fairy and the beguiling witch. Although these characters may be regarded as more powerful, Butterfly is once again represented as irreconcilably Other – instead of focusing on her exotic nature, however, the attention of the audience is now drawn to her otherworldliness.

In Puccini's home in Torre del Lago, there is a portrait of Cio-Cio-San. She stares wistfully out at visitors as they walk from the living room to the manuscript room. While her hairstyle is Japanese, her features are distinctly Western. In the right-hand corner, Puccini has scrawled the words *Rinnegata e felice* ['disowned and happy'], emphasising the contradictions that reside in her character.

Opera often takes on subjects and characters that require the audience to suspend its disbelief. But *Madama Butterfly* seems to give rise to a particular cultural discomfort that certain critics feel compelled to express when reviewing the opera. In a review of a production for the 2015 Perth Festival, Alison Croggon characterises Butterfly as "the fantasy of the submissive and infantalised Asian wife, who only attends to her duty, who is long suffering and loyal, who has no agency of her own except her self-destruction" (2015, unpaginated).

Despite these misgivings, it seems that Butterfly is destined to remain "part of our cultural fabric" (Harris 2014) – a fact well-illustrated at the 2013 American Music awards when pop singer Katy Perry alluded to Butterfly by dressing up as a Geisha while singing "Unconditionally". The controversy that followed brought to light the issues associated with Butterfly's character. Jeff Yang wrote angrily in *The Wall Street Journal* about "how deeply anchored the archetype of the exotic, self-sacrificing 'lotus blossom' is in the Western imagination" (2013, unpaginated).

And yet if Western audiences consider the opera in its historical literary context, it in fact succeeded in creating a more empathetic portrait of the Japanese woman. Rather than condemning the opera, it may be more relevant to question why the problematic aspects of Butterfly's character still resonate today. Why does she continue to provoke such outrage, as opposed to being dismissed for outdated views that date from over a century ago? I would venture to suggest that it is because the stereotypes she invokes continue to reflect a certain truth today with regard to the way in which Asian women are perceived in the Western world (see Prasso 2005). Although the opera was a step forward in the representation of Asian women, Western society has perhaps not evolved as much one would have hoped since then.

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From text to stage

The intertwined nature of music, language and culture in Bartók's *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*

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Bartók's *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* is characterized by a unique approach to the relationship between language and music: the latter endeavours to follow the natural flow of the Hungarian language, making the interpretation of its multi-layered meaning easier for the Hungarian audience but nearly incomprehensible for speakers of other languages. The nature of storytelling also follows ancient Hungarian traditions, rendering the translator's task even more challenging.

The paper investigates a number of contextual and musical aspects of opera translation through a case study of five English translations of Bartók's classic. It discusses the multiple layers where music, language and culture are intertwined in this specific genre, and calls attention to often neglected musical and linguistic aspects of opera translation.

Keywords: opera, translation, Bartók, *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*, singability, linguistic and cultural embeddedness

1.   Bluebeard in a nutshell

Bartók's classic, originally written in autumn 1911 but first performed only on 24 May 1918, is not accidentally referred to as a shiny pearl of opera literature. As such, *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* is often performed on various opera stages of the world and translated into many languages – either sung or subtitled. This paper endeavours to offer an answer to the question of whether this culturally and linguistically embedded opera can be translated in a way that reflects the symbology, the multi-layered message, and the feelings surrounding them, for the benefit of a non-Hungarian audience. The libretto of the opera was written by Béla Balázs, friend of the composer Béla Bartók. The harmony of their personal relationship is clearly reflected in the piece, as the extent of unity between music and text they could achieve is truly exceptional.

The basic story, i.e., the surface of the piece is not too complicated: it belongs to the genre of the so-called 'forbidden room' tales that appear in various cultures all around the world. Undoubtedly, Balázs and Bartók used the French version by Charles Perrault as a starting point for their opera, where the 'beast husband' is neither a fairy creature nor an animal, like in some other European versions, but human; thus, the story is not about the relationship or conflict of humans with supernatural, mythic powers, but rather the danger of marrying a stranger (Józsa 2007).

The opera is somewhat longer than an hour, and has only two characters: Bluebeard (basso profundo or basso) and his new wife, Judith (mezzo-soprano, dramatic soprano or alto), who, after getting married, have just arrived at Bluebeard's castle. This is where the plot starts and then advances towards the tragic ending. The story, richly intertwined with symbolism, (light / darkness, day / night, life / death) can be interpreted on several levels, and at the very end of the opera no one is sure who the real victim is: Judith or Bluebeard?

2.   The libretto

In the case of *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*, the libretto was written first – before Bartók composed the music. However, it is obvious that Bartók had his say in the libretto as well, because the entire structure follows his usual train of thought, and is based on his favoured system. The fact that the creators were on friendly terms was very beneficial, as consequently the repeated revising and editing of the opera seems not to have constituted a problem (for either of them). An analysis of the original scores shows that the 1911 version differs from the final version at several points (Vass 2006). The reason for the amendments was to achieve the strongest possible unity of text and music, even if it meant sacrificing some parts or lines.

The structure and style of the text follows the tradition of the Hungarian folk ballads. This feature in itself represents a great difficulty for the translators, as Hungarian folk ballads differ from the ballads from other cultures in several ways:

> Repetition in folk ballads is not merely an old technique, the survival of which would be understandable anyway as an aspect of oral tradition, but it is rather a poetic means of expression and exists for the sake of the message. In the innumerable shades of repetition we can see one of the most significant elements of the formation of Hungarian folk ballads. […] intensification in the ballad is qualitative: repetition (cf. Ilona Görög, wife of Mason Kelemen, Anna Fehér, etc.) makes the situation increasingly dramatic.   (Balassa and Ortutay 1979, unpaginated)

As Hungarian ballads were often sung, it is important to reflect on their musical characteristics as well. It should be noted that Bartók analysed the melodic peculiarities of Hungarian folk ballads, and he pointed out their four-line isometric stanza construction and the largely pentatonic scale, and the symmetry between the historical development of folk ballads and folk songs in the matter of prosody.

The structural and lexical characteristics alone, however, would not result in such a special opera as the *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*. A significant 'experiment' focusing on the rhythm of the text was also required to achieve the final uniqueness, as the rhythm of the opera perfectly follows the natural speech pattern of the Hungarian language by often using dotted rhythm and syncopation. The solution, with its monotonous pulsation of the octosyllabic lines borrowed from Hungarian folk songs, gives an iambic beating to the text (e.g., *Vigyázz, vigyázz a váramra* U – U – U – – –) and, thus it sounds prosaic for the Hungarian audience without depriving the piece of its operatic character. The very fact that the libretto follows the natural Hungarian speech pattern makes the message more suggestive and exerts a deep influence, sort of a gut feeling in the audience, which is vital for how they understand and perceive the opera.

A more in-depth analysis makes it clear that the structure goes further than simply following the arrangement of folk ballads. The text is characterized by a $(2 \times 4) \times 4$ structure, meaning that there is always a rhythm-marked section break within each octosyllabic line, separating them into two four-syllable units, "in perfect relation to the 'ancient eight', so-called because of the common tendency of Hungarian music and poetry to follow that pattern" (Honti 2006, 206). So this structure, again, refers back to folk songs on the one hand, and reflects on an important attribute of Bartók pieces on the other hand, according to which the so-called axis-system, that is the mathematics based proportions of the golden section and the duality of pole and counterpole are always essential elements of musical composition (Kárpáti 2007).

> It is generally held that the ancient structure of Hungarian verse has a strongly accented two-stress line, and has as its oldest structural formula the 'ancient eight' and the subsequent folk songs of 3 to 4 beats, which give the basic elements from which Hungarian verse structure has developed. […] 70 per cent of the Hungarian folk songs were written in this form.   (Balassa and Ortutay 1979, unpaginated)

One of the most characteristic features of Hungarian folk song is the end-of-the-line rhyme. A less frequently occurring form of this is the cluster rhyme, when all four lines rhyme. This is mostly found in historical songs. In a decisive majority of Hungarian folk songs, double rhymes harmonize at the end of the lines, when two lines following each other end in similar rhyme.

The effectiveness of Bartók's until then unknown solution cannot be illustrated in clearer terms than those of Zoltán Kodály, right after the premiere:

> Bartók has set his foot on the way of liberating the language and intensifying natural intonation into music. By doing so he contributed to the birth of the Hungarian recitative style. This is the very first piece of music on the Hungarian opera stage where singers are talking to us in a uniformly smooth Hungarian language.
> (Kodály 1964, 422, my translation)

Repetitions are also highly emphasized in the text, as they refer to the affirmation of intentions and, at the same time, they also act as the instrument of self-conviction (Fábri 1999). Unfortunately, the role of repetition was not always recognized by the translators of the libretti discussed in this paper, although, just like in the case of folk ballads, this qualitative intensification is one of the most important poetic means of expression used in the text.

All of these special textual solutions – together with some musical ones also deeply rooted in Hungarian culture – result in a quintessentially Hungarian opera, in a way which reminds one of *The Bartered Bride*, which Czechs consider as quintessentially Czech, for reasons such as those outlined above (Apter and Herman 2010, 17). It is reasonable that this sense of Hungarian cultural specificity should be preserved in the translated scores as much as possible.

3.   The music

In Buhler's words,

> [a]s everybody knows, music is a language per se, with all the characteristics of an articulated language, its own syntax, grammar, even its own dialects and 'regionalisms'. […] once music has imposed its rules on a text, it becomes the main source language, with which it is impossible to cheat; everything must be literally respected: the musical words and sentences, the general form, the rhythm, the styles, the melodic, harmonic and tonal aspects […].
> (2017, 7)

This also means that, whenever an opera is translated, there are two source languages: verbal language and music; both are to be taken into consideration when the target language text is created.

> In a semantic-reflexive match the translator studies the music perceived meaning, which is expressed through the story told, the mood conveyed, the character or characters expressed, description or word-painting, and metaphor, the totality of which produces a song translation that successfully reflects or explains the words that the music 'says'.
> (Penrod 2017, 70)

Music is a very special language, which can adopt "not only the structures of the *langue* [language] but also the characteristics of all the different national idioms, their general syntax, forms and rules, rhythm, intonation, melodic lines, accentuation and so on" (Buhler 2017, 7). This special ability of music was recognized by Zoltán Kodály in the early 20th century, and the idea was brought to perfection by Béla Bartók in *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* by reforming his musical language so that it could really conform to his mother tongue (Buhler 2017). The deliberate design that is so illustrative of the text of *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* appears in the music as well in a highly accented way. Here, the selection of the voice types and the use of fixed, unchanging keys in connection with certain central motifs (key-symbolism) needs to be highlighted. An audience of opera lovers can foresee the conflicts in the plot simply by being familiar with the musical cast, since a basso / mezzo-soprano couple has been for a long time a sign of conflict:

> Coupling a basso and a mezzo-soprano has been carrying some kind of dissonance since Mozart turned around the original line up just to *épater les bourgeois*. Since then the hero needs to belong to the tenor voice type, whereas his lover, destined by the Gods, must be a soprano. Thus, when Tchaikovsky selected a soprano voice type for Tatiana and a baritone for Onegin, he foreshadowed a relationship conflict. (Ur 2010, 1, my translation)

Beyond the deliberate selection of the voice type, the musical solutions themselves also describe the characters: Bluebeard is the person of tonal order, whereas Judith is characterized by the breaking of conventional style. Thus, the melodies and the musical structures associated with the characters immediately reflect their personal traits. In the pentatonic vocal structures assigned to Bluebeard there are no half steps; his typical intervals are major seconds and minor thirds and, as the most dissonant intervals (the major seventh) are lacking from his lines, it is much easier for the listener to enjoy them. The natural origins of the pentatonic scale can be illustrated by the very fact that many bird species use pentatonality when they sing. The folk music parlando-rubato style also needs to be mentioned in connection with the duke; it is characterized by a free rhythmic pattern, closely following natural speech. Consequently, the music also suggests that Bluebeard belongs to the past, to an old era, unlike Judith, whose central trait is the breaking down of the accepted form.

As opposed to the musical solutions connected to Bluebeard, Judith's utterances convey a rejection of natural, ear-friendly solutions, and the search for new approaches that can often be noticed, for example, in the form of extended triads. The tense musical sounds, chromatism and dissonance, provide a romantic character to the wife's figure, which comes into conflict with the "diatonic and folk music-like, closed character" (Irodalmi Internet Napló, unpaginated, my translation) of Bluebeard in this way as well.

The so-called 'Stefi' or 'Geyer' motifs – after the name of Stefi Geyer, a young musician Bartók desperately fell in love with – also belong to Judith. This leitmotif, first developed by Bartók in his *Bagatelle* (Op. 6, No. 13) consists of the notes C#-E-G#-B#, forming together a hyperminor chord. Bartók often employed the Stefi motif in his compositions, and it appears in *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* too, where it can be found in various forms and transpositions. For example, when Judith utters Bluebeard's name for the first time, the notes are: F-G♭ -A-D♭, as illustrated below:

(1) Musical excerpt
     The first utterance of Bluebeard's name in the opera.

This short utterance is an excellent example not only the Stefi motif, but also of the dissonant musical structures used by the female character in the opera:

> Throughout the opera, Judith's motto-like repetitions of Bluebeard's name respect the stress patterns and intonation of the word in spoken Hungarian. The first syllable is emphasized through longer rhythmic duration and higher pitch, and the metrically unaccented second syllable commences the melodic descent from the initial pitch, often on a weak beat. The remaining syllables of the name then tumble downward stepwise or by larger intervals. (Honti 2006, 213)

The pole / counterpole pairs of the libretto also appear in the musical solutions; the relationship of four poles are present in the scenes of the opera: night / light, flowery garden / the lake of tears; here the "intellectual-spiritual dimension of the main branch" faces "the emotional dimension […] represented by the secondary branch" (Lendvai 1993, unpaginated). As for the specific notes, the main aspect to notice is that the counterpole of F# and C (the highest and lowest notes of the circle of fifths) appear whenever darkness and light are mentioned in the text:

(2) Musical excerpt
     The night and light themes in the opera.

(3)   Musical excerpt
      Example of the night theme in the opera.

The night themes, as illustrated above, are always rooted in the F# pole, while the light themes always start from the C (Vass 2006): "*fehér falon fut a rózsa* […] *táncol a nap*" ('Roses running up the white walls […] sunlight glitters') – A♭ minor (the supplementary key of C major) vs. "*nem kell rózsa, nem kell napfény*" ('Roses, sunshine, I don't need them') (F# minor). It is also interesting that, in the opening night theme, rhythm never varies; there is no ornamentation or change in dynamics. As Honti points out, "[t]he melody moves in unison, in alternating fourths and major seconds, and the symmetry of the phrases is undisturbed" (2006, 207). This opening theme is central for the entire opera, this is made obvious by the fact that the same theme appears at the very end, thus creating a frame for the entire work (Honti 2006).

> The entire tonal plan of Bluebeard's Castle is built up of complementary relations. F-sharp minor is the key of '*Night*' and C major that of '*Light*'. C major can be destroyed by means of the A-flat major key – thus the latter is associated with '*Death*' symbolism. On the other hand, the '*Night's*' F-sharp minor can be defeated by B-flat major – thus it became the symbol of 'Love'.
>
> (Lendvai 1988, 142, my translation)

To sum up, the four central elements or, more precisely, the two central motif-pairs of the opera are: night and light, death and love. As all four elements are systematically attached to a specific key, and these keys have a mathematically precise relationship to one another, the resulting so-called four-pole axis system can be visualized as a circle, which makes it possible to clarify the interesting musical relations among the central elements.

Figure 1. The four-pole axis system (Lendvai 1993, unpaginated)

A similar, deliberate construction also often appears when one of the characters sings: the name of Bluebeard (the person representing darkness) is connected to the F#, and this name motif always has a fixed parlando rhythm, whereas Judith (the character associated with light) is connected to the C with much more freedom in the rhythm schemes. This tonal dichotomy that can be traced between the beginning and the end of the opera underlies its entire design (Honti 2006). According to Lendvai (1964), by choosing the two farthest keys, Bartók gives musical expression to the symbolic opposition of darkness and light. Just like the libretto, the music also has many characteristics that ensure the Hungarianness of the opera, such as "the initial stresses of melodic lines and their propensity to descend as well as a metric centering around 2 / 4 and 4 / 4, with the quarter-note comprising the beat-level of the rhythms" (Honti 2006, 201).

In light of the above, it is obvious that, in *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*, text and music form one coherent unit. The concept according to which certain words, characters, images coincide with particular keys, musical solutions and forms, and the sounds and rhythms of certain words, have a motivic significance is implemented throughout the entire piece. A word-painting technique is used here by Bartók. This unique characteristic of the opera, however, also means that the replacement or exchange of the central words in the translated versions is likely to result in unwelcome interferences, even if the meaning itself of the given sentence remains the same. Because of this, translating *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* is almost impossible; indeed, it is unrealistic to expect to achieve a singing version where the position of the key motifs, words, and names coincides with that in the Hungarian original, and the same number of syllables is used. Nevertheless, a translator that aware of the deliberate structure and design of the opera, of the intertwined nature of music and text, is more likely to produce a more acceptable or optimal solution.

4.   Comparative analysis of the translations

Due to its status as the best-known Hungarian opera, *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* has been translated into English several times, and the majority of these translations are singing ones. In this paper, I investigate five of them, admittedly an ambitious number, considering the scope of a single paper. The criteria which guided my choice are the following: (1) analyze translations used by some of the most prestigious opera houses; (2) discuss translations by native Hungarian speakers, since these translators can be assumed to understand the deeply rooted, not necessarily obvious messages of the libretto as well as the intimate association between music and text; (3) include the most widely used singing translation.

Where the first criterion is concerned, I was able to obtain two translations: the translation by Paula Kennedy, used by the Royal Opera House, and the translation for the Metropolitan Opera by American poet and literary critic J. D. McClatchy. Both translations were made for surtitling purposes. As for the second criterion, I decided to analyze the English translation by Péter Zollmann used by the Hungarian State Opera, and I had the privilege of obtaining from Bartok Records a copy of a translation by Péter Bartók (Béla Bartók's youngest son) with the help of Peter Hennings, published in 2007. Their objective was to replace Hassall's translation, because "it had too many errors and undesirable features" (Bartók 2008, unpaginated); a reason for which might be that "the English translation was done not from the original Hungarian libretto, but rather from the […] German translation" (personal correspondence with Mr Hennings). Finally, the fifth translation I used was the one by Christopher Hassall (1963). This translation was published in the first trilingual (Hungarian, English and German) edition of the opera (Universal Edition, 1963), and it is the most widely used English singing version even at the time of writing.

It may seem surprising that the comparative analysis deals with singing translations and, at the same time, with translations made for surtitling. However, the first part of the texts, namely the opera's Prologue, can be compared without any difficulty as it is performed in prose without any musical accompaniment (except for the last stanza, when music softly begins in the background). Moreover, there are some other aspects (e.g., the use of archaic language, the translation of recurrent sentences) which can be compared in all five translations, irrespective of their uses.

At first sight, the Prologue might appear unusual, with its archaic, folkish style, and the fact that it is delivered by a bard, as Bartók and Balázs intended. However, this solution proves to be a perfect idea, which makes it possible for the folkish elements of the opera (folk song based structure, pentatonic melodies, parlando-rubato style) to be introduced right from the outset, and the ballad-like plot also suits the bard well. This ballad-like approach is further intensified by the entry of

the orchestra, as the musical part of the opera starts with a four-lined monophonic-pentatonic, folk song-based melody.

The prosaic part, the Prologue, raises many translation challenges, although there is no singing, no musical accompaniment, and thus the number of syllables and the other music-linked requirements are not a limitation for the translator. Indeed, there is no problem here if three additional syllables per line feature in the translation, or perhaps too many 'h' sounds, which would obviously be an issue in singing translations. The question then is: what makes the translation of this short introductory part so complicated?

The Prologue is delivered by the *regös*, a kind of bard. However, this Hungarian bard is not identical with a story-telling minstrel of the Middle Ages, because he is closely connected to Hungarian culture. According to the Hungarian Ethnographical Lexicon, "as per linguists and researchers of early Hungarian history, the word *regös* most probably referred to the shamans, magicians, medicine men of the ancient Hungarian tribes" (Balogh 1982, unpaginated, my translation). The etymology of the word itself points to that fact that *regös* originated from the Finno-Ugric based *reg* radical, which can be connected with the Hungarian verb *révül*, which refers to a special technique used by shamans (Lukin and Ugrin 1991).

The idea that Béla Balázs intended to use the original meaning of *regös*, deeply embedded in Hungarian culture, is strongly supported by the fact that the structure of the Prologue reflects the characteristics of the so-called '*regös* songs'. According to the Hungarian Ethnographical Lexicon,

> the basic elements of *regös* songs are two and four-bar units, cadences or lines that are only loosely linked, thus giving enough room for improvisation. The refrain with its unchanged textual and constant musical motifs is always a central element in *regös* songs. It is the refrain that divides the song into verses and ensures the sustaining of an orderly composition by creating rondo like formulae. The rhythm does not conform to the text, it is always a stiff tempo giusto, often with an accelerating tempo.   (Balogh 1982, unpaginated, my translation)

It is important to highlight that a common characteristic of these songs is that they always use the phrase or, rather, incantation "*Haj regö rejtem*" (which has lost its meaning in modern day Hungarian). Most of the above-mentioned elements can be found in Balázs's libretto: the 'obligatory' incantation – right at the very beginning as an 'upbeat', a structure of 4 + 2, 4 + 4 syllables, rhythm forms (♩♫♩♩; ♫♫ ♩♩;♩♩♩♩, ♫♫♫♫) agreeing with those in the *regös* songs, a recurrent refrain – "*Urak, asszonyságok*" ['Gentlemen, Ladies'] – and a text made up of lines that follow each other as if they were the result of some free association in a mysterious atmosphere. This atmosphere is also recalled by the formulaic use of lilting rhythm and alliteration: "*Hol volt, hol nem*", "*Régi vár, régi már*", "*Regénket regéljük*" (Honti

2006). Archaic wording and formulation can also be found in the lines of the *regös*, such as: "*ím, az világ, az mese, tik, haj*". On the one hand, these words ensure the archaic tone of the Prologue but, on the other, they also highlight its folkish character, emphasizing the shamanic roots of the *regös* traditions.

The *regös* is a person returning from the bygone days as a living repository of ancient traditions, with the aim to open people's eyes; his wisdom can make them realize something of vital importance. In order to do so, he makes use of the entire toolkit associated with his function. Although the *regös* as such does not exist in the Anglo-Saxon culture, there were people who fulfilled a similar role, such as the bards, who also used to have a special style of reciting. Within a functional approach to translation, the introductory part of the opera can be shifted to an Anglo-Saxon cultural environment. Since the Prologue is delivered in prose with no accompaniment, the number of syllables (which does not follow the otherwise extremely precise syllable-based structure of the singing part of the opera) does not need to be considered as strictly binding. As a result, the translator may choose a different method from that employed in the original to deliver the message, for example by resorting to a rhyme scheme.

(1) First stanza of the Prologue.

Prologue, 1st stanza			
The original by Béla Balázs	Literal translation	Péter Bartók's singable translation	Christopher Hassall's singable translation
Haj regö rejtem *Hová, hová rejtsem* *Hol volt, hol nem:* *Kint-e vagy bent?* *Régi rege, haj mit jelent,* *Urak, asszonyságok?*	'Haj, regö rejtem' Where, where shall I hide it? Sometimes it was there, sometimes it was not: Outside or inside? An old tale, what might that mean, Ladies and gentlemen?	Once upon a time… Where did this happen? Outside, or within? Ancient fable, what does it mean, Ladies and gentlemen?	Once upon a time… No need to worry when. But as to place, where was it? Here? or there? 'Tis just another legend, you may say And so dismiss it. Ah, but, gentle folk, Should any of you ask me what it means, Alas, there's but a single true reply – The echo of an echo of a sigh.

Of the translators, Hassall took the greatest freedom with the text (thus attracting Péter Bartók's disapproval) by using a totally different structure, rhyme scheme, and rhythm; nevertheless, it seems plausible to suggest that, in doing so, he was able to reflect the atmosphere of the original. The poetic tools, images, and the

wording also deviate from the Hungarian text. Even the recurring line is replaced, while the last line of every stanza, which is "*Urak, asszonyságok*" ['Gentlemen, Ladies'] in the original, becomes "echo of a sigh" in the mouth of Hassall's bard. Nevertheless, this does not seem problematic, since the translation creates an ill-boding atmosphere, very important at the beginning of the opera. In my opinion, the main concern with this recreation of the Prologue is that the text is not as mystical and hazy as the Hungarian original, and consequently there is less room for the audience's imagination and individual interpretations.

As opposed to Hassall, in his translation, Péter Bartók follows Béla Balázs's sentences almost word by word, and he does not apply a uniform rhyme scheme. Bartók knows very well that the starting phrase ("*Haj regő rejtem*") is a special expression in Hungarian, and in order to render it in English he opts for the formula used at the beginning of fairy tales, "Once upon a time". This, however, is not a good idea, as the Prologue should not make the audience think that what they are about to witness is merely a fabled imaginary story; on the contrary, the intention is to indicate that this story about to unfold, or at least the major aspects of it, is an integral part of many people's lives.

(2)   Third stanza of the Prologue.

Prologue, 3rd stanza			
The original by Béla Balázs	Literal translation	Péter Bartók's singable translation	Christopher Hassall's singable translation
Keserves és boldog Nevezetes dolgok Az világ kint haddal tele, De nem abba halunk bele, Urak, asszonyságok.	Bitter and joyous Noteworthy things The outside world is full of with armies, But it is not what we are dying of, Ladies and gentlemen.	Bitter and joyous Are the events around us. But the world's armies do not determine our fate, Ladies and gentlemen.	Life's a strange patch-work Of the grave and gay, The paltry and august; And the teeming world Time and time again is torn apart by wars. But, gentle folk, that isn't what we die of, No, not at all! Of what, then, do we die? The answer is the echo of a sigh.

In a number of ways, it seems that Péter Bartók intends to make more explicit, more accessible, the meaning of the Hungarian lines, for example when the English translation reads "Bitter and joyous / Are the events around us". The Hungarian is far from explicit. It simply refers to 'bitter, joyous and noteworthy *things*', without giving the spectators any real clue, and leaving them to imagine what *dolgok* ['things'] might mean. Where Hassall's translation is concerned, his rendering of

the third stanza of the Prologue – as was the case with the first – is only loosely connected to the original; it is based on the translator's personal interpretation, and does not leave much room, if any, for the audience to make their own.

Interestingly enough, although in his article about the mistakes in previous Bluebeard-translations, Péter Bartók writes that "it is believed beyond doubt that, when Balázs repeated a phrase several times, it was not the result of his inability to find a variety of expressions for similar purpose, but to stress a certain idea by deliberate repeats" (Bartók 2008, unpaginated), he himself fails to respect some of the repetitions, even in the Prologue. Thus, where the Hungarian original reads "***Nézzük* egymást, *nézzük***" (*nézzük* means 'we look' in Hungarian), Péter Bartók's English translation is "We **see** each other". There are other examples of mistranslations in the Prologue. For instance, "*Ki tudhatja honnan hozzuk?*" ['Who could know where we have brought it (the tale) from?'] is rendered as "Wherever we come from". Here, the replacement of a question with a statement is significant in itself, as in Hungarian folk literature questions are used for intensified effect, involving the listeners to a greater extent into the act of story-telling or reciting.

(3)   First and third stanzas of the Prologue.

Prologue, 1st stanza			
Literal translation	**Paula Kennedy's translation (surtitles)**	**J. D. McClatchy's translation (surtitles)**	**Péter Zollmann's translation (surtitles)**
'Haj, regö rejtem' Where, where shall I hide it? Sometimes it was there, sometimes it was not: Outside or inside? An old tale, what might that mean, Ladies and gentlemen?	What does it mean, this tale we are about to hear? How shall we understand it, ladies and gentlemen?	Once upon a time…. Where does it happen? Outside you? Or within you? It's a fairy tale….	This old riddle of mine: where, where shall I conceal it? Once upon a time? Within or without? Ancient fable, what could it mean, ladies and gentlemen?

Prologue, 3rd stanza			
Literal translation	**Paula Kennedy's translation (surtitles)**	**J. D. McClatchy's translation (surtitles)**	**Péter Zollmann's translation (surtitles)**
Bitter and joyous Noteworthy things The outside world is full of with armies, But it is not what we are dying of, Ladies and gentlemen.	It tells of matters both bitter and sweet It tells of the world's conflicts and the soul's mysteries	Bitter and joyous are our lives. The world's armies must not determine our fate.	Bitter and joyful, remarkable things, the world out there is at arms, But that's not what we die from, ladies and gentlemen.

As the examples above reveal, Paula Kennedy, a translator for the Royal Opera House, used more freedom than Péter Bartók, but less than Hassall. For example, where considerations of structure are concerned, all her stanzas have four lines and, although there is no uniform rhyme scheme, the ends of the lines usually accord with each other. In this translation, it is the refrain the audience is missing, and the loss is an important one in view of the role of repetition in this opera, by comparison with others. It is also necessary to point out that both Péter Bartok's translation and Kennedy's rendering fail to represent the archaic style of the original.

Perhaps inevitably, J. D. McClatchy created in his surtitles a very condensed version of the text, by summarising the original five five-line stanzas into two bigger units that do not remind one of a poem at all. There are no rhymes, no refrain, no archaisms, and no ballad-like forms. In such a context, it can only be difficult for the audience to know how to interpret the opera, and any misunderstanding or confusion at this point, in the Prologue, will have an impact on their reception of the opera as a whole.

The surtitles by Péter Zollmann used by the Hungarian State Opera also lack rhymes or archaic expressions; moreover, they contain meaningless or incomplete sentences with no verb ("regale one another with our tales"; "bitter and joyful", "remarkable things"). At a certain point it becomes clear that the translator misunderstood the Hungarian original. To give an example, "*Nézzük egymást, nézzük*" (4th stanza) is rendered into English through an imperative sentence, while the Hungarian contains an affirmative sentence. (The structure of the first part of the sentence in itself could refer to an imperative sentence, but the second part makes it clear that the sentence is indeed affirmative.)

It is only after the introduction of the *regös* that the operatic singing begins and the translator needs to start considering music and the relationship of music and text. Of course, this far from means that all other aspects are to be disregarded. Indeed, one such very important feature is the use of archaic sounding language. Nevertheless, Péter Bartók refuses to render this aspect in his translation, claiming that "[t]here is no indication in the original text that the use of an old style would be required: the Hungarian is modern throughout […]" (Bartók 2008, unpaginated). Hassall, on the other hand, seems to have achieved a delicate balance between archaizing and intelligible language, as illustrated in Example (4):

(4)   The translation of archaic language in Hassall's translation.

The original by Béla Balázs	Literal translation	Christopher Hassall's translation
Nem hallod a vészharangot?	Can't you hear the watch-bell?	Do you hear the bells ajangling?
Anyád gyászba öltözködött,	Your mother dressed in mourning,	Child, **thy** mother sits in sorrow;
Atyád éles kardot szíjjaz,	Your father is strapping a sharp sword,	Sword and shield **thy** father seize**th**;
Testvérbátyád lovat nyergel, –	Your elder brother is saddling horse, –	Swift **thy** brother leaps to saddle.

The Hungarian sentences in this excerpt are not truly archaic, only some of the words used by the librettist sound a little old-fashioned, e.g., *testvérbátyád*, *gyászba öltözködött*, *szíjjaz*. Nevertheless, Hassall's translation clearly reflects his concern to preserve the archaic feel of the opera. The principle of compensation may also be at work: elsewhere in the opera, where the Hungarian contains more archaic words, it might be more difficult to find similarly archaic English equivalents and, consequently, the translator includes them here.

Archaic language is a constant feature of Balázs's libretto, contributing to give the opera a special atmosphere. The conflict between old and new, tradition and change is at the core of the plot. These tension-creating opposites are manifested on the level of the music and text alike. In Bluebeard's lines both the text and the music include archaic traits, whereas Judith's utterances are characterized by innovation, divergence from tradition, in one word, modernity. If the translator intends to maintain this tension, they must use at least some archaizing features, while making sure they do so in the appropriate segments (i.e., Bluebeard's lines). None of the surtitled translations pursue to archaizing language.

Beyond questions of style and register, in the singing part of the opera there are four other aspects to take into account, all of them connected to performance and music: (1) singability, (2) rhyme, (3) rhythm, and (4) naturalness (Low 2005). In *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* it is primarily the rhythm and the beat that represent a challenge for the translator. Béla Balázs, the librettist, used a break in every line (between the two four-syllable elements), which should not appear within individual words, since that would interfere with the natural rhythm pattern, and would create meaningless, unintelligible text. Although, in most cases, Hassall managed to come up with solutions to this rhythmic problem, he also had to make compromises, as is illustrated in Example (5) below.

(5)   Rhythmic and syllable-number related issues in Hassall's translation.

The original by Béla Balázs	Literal translation	Christopher Hassall's translation
A KÉKSZAKÁLLÚ	BLUEBEARD	BLUEBEARD
Nyitva van még fent az ajtó.	The door is still open above.	See, the doorway standeth open.
JUDIT	JUDITH	JUDITH
Kékszakállú!	Bluebeard!	Dearest Bluebeard!
Elhagytam az apám, anyám,	I have left my father and mother,	Mother and fa**ther** beloved,
Elhagytam szép testvérbátyám,	I have left my handsome brother,	brother and sis**ter** devoted.
Elhagytam a vőlegényem,	I have left my fiancé,	– All of them – I left them weeping,
Hogy váradba eljöhessek.	To come to your castle.	all my kindred, to come hither.
Kékszakállú! Ha kiűznél,	Bluebeard, if you dislodged me,	**Darling Bluebeard! If you reject me**
Küszöbödön megállanék,	I would stay on your threshold,	**and drive me out, I'll never leave you.**
Küszöbödre lefeküdnék.	I would lie down to your threshold.	**I'll perish on your icy threshold.**

Usually, in the production of performable opera translations, plus / minus one or even two syllables do not pose a problem, as one syllable can be spread to two notes, or a single note can be split into two, to accommodate an additional syllable. Apter and Herman rightly point out that rules shall not be applied blindly, but in this particular opera the "alteration of musical setting does wreck the musical line" (1995, unpaginated), because the 4 + 4 structure is completely ruined and thus the continuous beat of the music is disturbed (see sentences in bold).

The role of the break in the middle of the lines is important, because the music follows the same structure, meaning that between each set of four there is a sort of momentary musical indication of the break. Consequently, in case of a faulty target language solution, certain words can be torn into two – see Example (6) – and, as a result of the beat of the music (♩.♪♩♩), the accent may end up falling on the wrong syllable, leading to comprehension difficulties.

(6)   Line breaks in the opera.

The original by Béla Balázs	Christopher Hassall's translation
*Most már Judit	mind a tied*	All is thine for|ever, Judith
*Vigyázz, vigyázz	a váramra*	Child, beware, **be|ware** my castle

In these examples the problem is that the words in bold are cut into two; the stress falls on the second syllable, making it difficult for the audience to understand what is being sung (or else the ♩.♪♩♩ rhythm needs to be modified, which is again a central element of the opera). The same applies to the words "father" and "sister" in Example (5).

In his singing translation, Péter Bartók wanted to preserve the original structure, but there are several differences between the number of syllables in the Hungarian original and the English version – indicated between parentheses, after the segments in Examples (7) and (8).

(7)   Syllable-count in the singing translation by Péter Bartók.

The original by Béla Balázs	Péter Bartók's translation
Megérkeztünk (4)	Here we are (3)
Én akarom kinyitni én (8)	I want to open it I alone (9)
Ez itt a fegyvesház, Judit (8)	'Tis the armory, Judith (7)
Ide jöttem, mert szeretlek (8)	I came here, for I love you (7)

These examples are interesting because it would have been easy to keep the original syllable-number. Thus, instead of "Here we are", the translation could be "Here we are now" or "We have arrived" (which, moreover, is the literal meaning of the Hungarian). In the second segment, the personal pronoun 'I' is repeated in the Hungarian, but this repetition can be sacrificed since the word 'alone' replaces the repeated personal pronoun. In the third segment, using "this is" instead of "'tis" would solve the problem, just like in the case of the fourth segment, where the word "because" instead of "for" would result in the desired syllable number.

(8)   Syllable number-related issues in the singing translation by Hassall.

The original by Béla Balázs	Christopher Hassall's translation
Gyere, gyere, tedd szívemre (8)	Come now, place them on my heart (7)
De két ajtó csukva van még (8)	Two doors are still not open (7)

To make the syllables count 8 instead of 7 in Hassall's translation the additional one syllable also could have been easily achieved. In the first segment the word *gyere* ['come'] is repeated in the Hungarian text, which could also be done in English, whereas in the second segment the equivalent of the word *de* ['but'] is missing from the English, although it is a single-syllable word which would fit perfectly into the line.

The differences between the number of syllables have an impact on rhythm, entailing the loss of dotted notes, using two eighth notes instead one quarter, or vice versa. As the music cannot change, the only viable solution is the use of these

kinds of tiny rhythmic modifications. Such solution might remain unnoticed in the case of other operas, or be considered of little consequence, but in *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*, where rhythm works in a strictly controlled way, such a decision may bring about serious confusion and disrupt the audience's interpretation of the message. (The discontinuation of the previously unbroken rhythm takes the audience out of the monotony that otherwise – as in the case of a shamanistic incantation – intensifies the effect of the words and sentences heard throughout the opera.) Of course, adhering strictly to the syllable number of the libretto is a complex task but, as I show above, in some cases it can be achieved very easily.

Where repetition – a tool of the utmost importance in creating the ballad and folk song-like character of the opera – is concerned, the translators' approaches could not be more different. Although Péter Bartók, referring to his own translation, claims that "the author's use of repetitions in the text is retained in the new translation" (Bartók 2008, unpaginated), in actual fact his singing version often unjustifiably omits them, or resorts to synonyms.

(9)   Missing repetitions in the singing translation by Péter Bartók.

The original by Béla Balázs	Literal translation	Péter Bartók's translation
Megyek-megyek	I'm going, I'm going	I am with you
Ne bánts, ne bánts	Don't hurt me, don't hurt me	Do not hurt me
Szegény, szegény Kékszakállú	Poor, poor Bluebeard	You are a poor, joyless Bluebeard
Mi sóhajtott? Ki sóhajtott?	What was sighing? Who was sighing?	What was that sigh? Who was sighing?

The translations in Example (9) are telling: all four lines include repetitions in Hungarian – but none at all in the translations. Although Hassall seems to have focused more on keeping the repetitive words and expressions, he also used synonymous solutions. Thus, his translation of the last segment in Example (9) is "Woe! What was that? Who was sighing? Who was moaning?". The omission of repetitions also concerns the surtitles for the opera, and not always because of the concision requirement:

(10)   Synonyms instead of repetitions in Zollmann's surtitles.

The original by Béla Balázs	The translation by Péter Zollmann
Jövök-jövök Kékszakállú	I am coming, I follow you
Sír a várad, sír a várad	Tearful castle, weeping castle

McClatchy's translation also shows a similar approach: when the same sentence appears a second time, a different translation is attached to it, as illustrated below:

(11)   Missing repetition in the translation by McClatchy.

The original by Béla Balázs	J. D. McClatchy's translation
Judit jössz-e még utánam?	Judit, answer. Are you coming with me? / Judith, are you coming with me?

According to Apter and Herman,

> [r]omance languages such as Italian have far fewer words than English, can accommodate general concepts where an English speaker would be more likely to use concrete details, and can repeat one general concept over and over in a manner that would be boring or silly in English. In these cases the translator must substitute several specific ideas for the one repeated Italian idea.
>
> (1995, unpaginated)

Although this might be true and could account for the translators not using repetitions, the situation differs from classical Italian operas, since here the repetitions concern a small number of sentences which appear again and again. Indeed, in *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* only a handful of key words, expressions and sentences are repeated, because the librettist and the composer wanted to emphasize them and attached repeated musical structures to them.

   Duke Bluebeard's Castle is an opera that lends itself to various interpretations. A good illustration of this is the double production that took place in 2009 in Budapest. First, the opera was played in accordance with its generally accepted interpretation, i.e., Bluebeard is the negative character who murders his wives. The opera was then performed again, developing an alternative interpretation in which the female character played the negative role. These two stage productions clearly revealed the multi-faceted nature of this opera. As opposed to this, the surtitles used by the Hungarian State Opera interpret specific points of the Hungarian libretto, denying the audience the opportunity to reach their personal interpretations:

(12)   Interpretations by Zollmann.

Literal meaning of the original	Péter Zollmann's translation
Would you go back?	Would you leave me?
The door is still open.	You are free, the door is open.
Remember the rumours.	Dark and secret tales are rumoured.

In his translation, McClatchy also intervened in a number of ways which do not always seem justified, such as turning a question into a statement and vice versa, or changing the meaning of certain words or sentences:

(13)   Unjustified modifications by McClatchy.

Literal meaning of the original	J. D. McClatchy's translation
Wouldn't it be better in your spouse's castle?	You should have stayed with your betrothed in his castle.
Dry them with my lips	Dry them with my hair.
Poor, poor Bluebeard.	Must you suffer so, Bluebeard?

McClatchy's translation of the second segment above reads "Dry them [the walls] with my hair", but the meaning of the Hungarian is "Dry them with my lips". The former is a Biblical reference (Mary Magdalene washing Jesus's feet and drying them with her hair), but the latter is not. Thus, the translation introduces a misleading reference, since there are no Biblical references in the libretto at all; the Hungarian text sends back to ancient times when Christianity was not yet present in the life of the Hungarian tribes.

To sum up, with some exceptions – Examples (4)–(6) – Hassall's translation is truly singable, and his English translation is, stylistically, quite close to the original. The only major difficulty was the appropriate placement of certain central words. These are words which, if placed in a different position in the translation (i.e., if they are connected to notes other than those in the original score), by losing their initial musical embeddedness, they are deprived of their strength and cannot play their intended role in the opera. However, in view of the considerable differences between sentence structure, word order and grammar of the English and Hungarian languages, this task most probably would prove to be a mission impossible of sorts, even for a translator familiar with the finest musical nuances of the opera.

Where the translations created for surtitling purposes are concerned, Kennedy aimed to convey the message as clearly as possible, using short and simple sentences while preserving the harmony between the music and the tempo and pulsation of the surtitles. Kennedy, who had studied the text and the music of *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* for years before she decided to translate the opera for the Royal Opera House, explained that her most difficult task was to render the terse nature of the libretto.

As Apter and Herman put it, in opera translation "important ideas should not be eliminated, subsidiary ideas should be retained to the extent possible, and any ideas added by the translators must be consistent with the ideas and music already present" (2012, 41). This, unfortunately, does not always seem to be the case in the translations authored by Zollmann and McClatchy, in which there are, arguably, unjustified modifications and personal interpretations.

5.   Conclusion

Duke Bluebeard's Castle is a complex opera. Achieving a singing translation of it poses considerable challenges even to musically-educated translators with an excellent knowledge of Hungarian. Nevertheless, an achievable aim may be to make a minimum of compromises, in particular where the intertwined nature of music, language and culture is concerned.

According to Apter and Herman (2012, 41), "only when good performable translations of songs are available can a recital or concert provide an immediate communication experience between performer and audience, in which both fully grasp all that the composer intended". Of the translations discussed in this study, Hassall's appears to best fulfil this requirement.

The opera translator must be at the same time a musician and musicologist, and approach the task with an awareness that opera is a theatrical genre, and that intersemiotic transformation is involved in its translation for performance. Nevertheless, "a translator cannot be actor, director, designer", singer, musicologist, playwright, poet "and audience all at the same time" (Bassnett 2010, 99). Collaborative translation may possibly be the best solution, especially when translating for performance.

Surtitling obviously involves a different set of constraints than those which characterize singable translations, but a still relevant question is whether the translator grasps the textual and musical layers of the opera.

As anyone who has attempted to translate Béla Bartók and Béla Balázs's masterpiece or to analyse existing translations knows, opera translation is a separate translation genre in its own right, extremely complex and diverse, and the unity of music and text is of the utmost importance and comes with seemingly innumerable difficulties. Nothing can illustrate this better than the final sentence sung by Bluebeard: 'Darkness will now reign forever'. His words are accompanied by the pentatonic folk song-like melody of the very beginning, in F# minor, so he is returning to the starting point, with a sentence in which the position of the key word is precisely defined. Moreover, as Pintér (2011) points out, this is the only time Bluebeard uses a rhythm scheme different from parlando. In Leafstedt's words,

> [t]he idea of bringing back the opening music at the end was Bartók's own, a gesture inspired perhaps by the stage direction prescribing 'total darkness' for the final moments – a return to the stage lighting of the beginning – and by his firm grasp of the play's inherent symbolic dimension.   (1999, 58)

With the end of the four-line pentatonic melody the curtain falls. One can hear the last sounds of the dissonant blood motif (F#-G), then the music dies away with an imperfect cadence, leaving the audience with the final tragedy.

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Translating Wagner's *Versmelodie*

A multimodal challenge

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Opera is 'other' than the sum of its individual verbal, musical and mimic-scenic parts, and a singable translation of its libretto requires that the translator go beyond copying the original prosody, so that the new words fit the notes, to considering the relationship between musical and poetic meaning, as well as the resulting dramatic action on stage. This study considers how three performed translations of Wagner's *Die Walküre* and *Götterdämmerung*, two of the operas in the tetralogy *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, and my own translation, respond to Wagner's synthesis of verse and music. It reveals how far the translator must consider the way in which musical and verbal meanings converge, and how each contributes to the singer's interpretation.

Keywords: Wagner, *Versmelodie*, intersemiosis, multimodality, alliteration, tonality, interval, accent, mode

1.   Introduction

The translator tasked with providing a singing translation of an opera libretto must consider that the opera, as a *Gestalt,* is 'other' than the sum of its individual verbal, musical and mimic-scenic parts. It requires the translator to consider how the "web of relationships" (Snell-Hornby 1988, 69) is affected when one part, the words, is altered through translation. Such an approach is of particular relevance when translating Wagner's post-romantic libretti, such as *Der Ring des Nibelungen* [The Ring of the Nibelung] (Wagner 1872a, 1872b). Whilst some libretti were mere fodder for the composer (Groos 1988, 12), written in the knowledge that they were "nothing more than raw material" whose own worth would be relinquished when the text was translated into musical form (Lacombe 2001, 147), this cannot be said of the *Ring* libretto. Published as a work in its own right before the score or the opera premiere (Wagner 1863), it is widely considered to be the

realisation of Wagner's aesthetic theories developed in his 1851 treatise *Oper und Drama* [Opera and Drama] ([1852] 1914a; [1852] 1914b). In this long and densely written work, Wagner addresses the problem of setting words to music so that both have equal semantic weight, where, for example, tonal modulations[1] and musical rhythm integrate with alliterative rhyme and the prosody of speech to create meaning that is greater than music or words alone.

Wagner, "perhaps the first composer to think – and create – multimodally" (Hutcheon and Hutcheon 2010, 65), explored the relationship of music and text in opera through his concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*.[2] Its cornerstone is *Versmelodie* (verse-melody), in which, according to Wagner, melody grows organically out of the verse ([1852] 1914b, 103ff), facilitated by the "direct sensory appeal" of alliteration, concision and free rhythm (Stein 1960, 69). Since Wagner laid great store in his aesthetics of word and tone intersemiosis, it is, I suggest, important for the translator of Wagner's *Ring* libretto to understand the semantic dimensions of the integration of verse and music, their semiotic make up and relationship as modes of meaning. This will reveal what is important, or not, in the total complex of word and tone and therefore, worth the struggle to simulate in a translation.

This study examines the semiotic relationships and functional interconnections between words and music and presents a theory of opera translation that has word-tone intersemiosis at its heart. Intersemiosis can, of course, refer to the transposition of one semiotic system into another such as when verbal signs are reinterpreted as music by a composer, however, it can also refer to the relationships between semiotic systems, that is, the way in which verbal signs and music, for example, create meaning together through semiotic integration or contrast. Intersemiosis is about the interplay of different modes of meaning.

The study of word-tone intersemiosis in opera involves understanding how the semiotic functions of different modes, such as dramatic verse and music, are transferred from one to another creating a complex semiotic structure. This means examining the composer / librettist's stylistic choices and the regularities found in them, which are not determined by function or content but constitute a means of self-expression. Such an approach extends Jakobson's poetic function ([1960] 1981a, 21ff) to all semantic modalities to consider how selection is superimposed on contiguity. In the *Ring*, the predominant stylistic choices lie in Wagner's combination of *Stabreim* (alliterative verse) with musical rhythm, tonality and intervallic tensions.

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1. Modulation is the process that changes the tonal centre from one key to another.

2. Wagner was not the first to use the term. It was coined by K. F. E. Trahndorff in 1827 (Koss 2013L, 159). The concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* is introduced in 1849 in the essays *Die Kunst und die Revolution* and *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*.

Much of the available literature regarding opera and vocal music translation is unhelpful when considering word-tone intersemiosis. The field is dominated by Low (2003a, 2003b, 2005, 2008, 2017), Apter (1985, 1989) and Apter and Herman (1995, 2000, 2016), whose primarily pragmatic approach addresses prosody, naturalness, the translation of verbal meaning, the use of rhyme and considerations of vocal production, audibility and comprehension. Only a few studies explore the semantic relationship between words and music, such as those of Gorlée (1996, 1997, 2008, 2009), Franzon (2005, 2008) and Kaindl (1995). Gorlée's approach, informed by Peircean semiotics, demonstrates considerable scholarship regarding signification in song and opera, but is complex and its direct application to opera translation is not always clear. Franzon's concept of "semantic-reflexive match" (2005) between words and music, which requires the translator to observe the meaning in the music and paint an equivalent picture with words, is easier to grasp but it does not go into great detail and is limited to the discussion of musical theatre. Only Kaindl's monograph *Die Oper als Textgestalt* (1995) looks extensively at opera's modal interconnections in which language is just one of several signifiers whose meaning is a function of its relationship with others. It is the most theoretically far-reaching of all the works on vocal music translation but is restricted to those who speak German.

The approach to opera translation described in this study combines pragmatic aspects of vocal music translation with multimodal translational stylistics, which seeks to understand how the stylistic features of verbal and non-verbal semiotic modes in a multimodal source text affect the reader's interpretation and how they are preserved or altered by the translator's choices. This approach considers it essential to understand and exploit musico-poetic intersemiosis in order to create a successful, performable translation (Wilson-deRoze 2017). In the case of Wagner's *Ring*, this involves understanding the modal convergence of *Stabreim* (alliterative verse) and music (both the vocal melody and orchestral harmony), where music and verse multiply each other's meaning through corroboration, elaboration, enhancement or contradiction. Such understanding allows the translator to recognise where their relationship demands preservation to avoid loss or alteration of potential meaning that may deprive singers of all that is necessary for their interpretation and audiences of the fullest experience of the opera. Multimodal translational stylistics relies on concepts found in multimodal discourse theory that facilitate analysis of the nexus or integration of stylistic features that foreground meaning or emotion, such as intersemiotic complementarity and dissimilarity, which I explain in the next section.

2. Opera as multimodal text

The translator of opera must inevitably consider it as a *Gestalt*, an organised integrated 'whole', within which the nature, place, role and function of each part is determined and "understood relative to the nature of the whole" (Wertheimer 1950, 15). Its parts (words, music, movement and décor [stage scenery, lighting, props, costume, and make-up]), though separate, create meaning through reciprocal accommodation or organisation (stylistic choices) delivered in the score by the composer according to his purposes. For the translator, the concept of *Gestalt* means that, despite changes to the verbal 'part', the opera can remain unchanged in its effect as long as the same relationships, interactions and interdependences between the parts are recreated. This requires that the translator understand how each part's mode of signification interacts with and affects the others. A mode can be defined as a semiotic resource that has been developed and used by a community with regularity and consistency to create meaning (see Jewitt 2006, 17; Kress 2010, 88). Every mode represents meaning, construes attitudes towards the content and constructs the text differently according to its own means and limitations, some semiotic and some related to its materiality. As each mode has a different meaning-making potential, rather than simply repeat the message of another mode in a multimodal text, they make it richer and fuller (the concept of "modal affordance").[3]

A mode's semiotic resources are described as having a specific "grammar" (Stöckl 2004, 20). This implies that each mode has an inventory of resources and rules that govern the way it is configured to construct a coherent message. Music has a well-defined grammar of notation, melody, harmony and rhythm. Grammars even exist for theatrical modes as suggested by studies (e.g., Kowzan 1975 and Pavis 1978) that examine the prioritisation and interaction of their sign systems (gesture, costume, proxemics, and lighting). The same can be said for poetry, described by Jakobson as "the most formalized manifestation of language" ([1960] 1981b, 89).

These ideas have been developed in theories of multimodal discourse, which focus on the relationship between different semiotic systems and are helpful to the translator concerned with recreating the convergence of verbal and musical modes found in an original opera score, created by the composer's stylistic choices. The works of scholars such as Kress and van Leeuwen (1996 and 2001), O'Halloran (2008 and 2011), Baldry and Thibault (2006) and Jewitt (2009a and 2009b) provide an agreed definition of multimodal semiosis along the following lines: communication relies on the way in which a number of modes or semiotic resources

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3. The term was coined by Gibson (1977) in his study of cognitive perception.

are organised to create meaning. Understanding how modes organise their semiotic resources to expand or multiply meaning (O'Halloran 2006, 225) lies at the heart of multimodal discourse analysis.

Modal intersemiosis tends to function in two ways: through convergence (relations of parallelism) and through divergence (relations of dissonance) (O'Halloran 2008, 452). This can only occur where modes share at least some semiotic principles. For example, music and poetry share a system of meaning that operates through the syntagmatic axis where word and note combination overrides paradigmatic selection; both share the semiotic mode of rhythm and, to some degree, rhyme. Convergence can be recognised in the way modes extend each other's meaning, often evident in forms of repetition where each mode repeats the content or experience through a synonym, meronym or hyponym or some other collocation (Royce 1998, 26). This communicative correlation of modes can be thought of as a mode's "illustrating function" (Kaindl 2013, 265). There are several reasons why such co-contextualisation of meaning is designed into a text: for emphasis or focus, for elucidation, elaboration or affirmation. Modes are also used to complement each other's meaning. Just as a secondary clause can expand the meaning of a primary clause in language, so too can one mode elaborate (restate, specify, exemplify) another, extending its meaning by adding a new element, offering an alternative or providing some circumstantial or new information.

In the case of music and verse, the shared resources of rhythm and rhyme[4] facilitate convergence and create meaning through their affective use of sound. They also provide compositional cohesion. Just as poetry is characterised by similar or opposed phonological elements structured throughout the text, whose cohesion and intricate relationships determine its quality, music is characterised by its "linear distribution or ordering of elements of a paradigmatic inventory" according to "established rules or principles" (McCreless 1991, 149). The syntagmatic relationships between rhythm and rhyme communicate viscerally and emotionally to the sense of hearing and are the essence of composition. Linguistic changes, which alter the configuration of verbal and musical rhythm and rhyme, problematise meaning.

When modes are deliberately combined in such a way that they do not converge, then dissonance or contradiction is the result. Different messages or attitudes can thus be conveyed simultaneously, which will challenge perceptions and introduce uncertainty and irony. Where ambiguity, paradox or irony are essential, using modes to create divergent meaning becomes important. Wagner, for example, has a very particular way of introducing dissonance and contradiction

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4. Musical rhyme can be thought of as sections of music, a group of notes to a refrain that are alike or similar.

through the use of leitmotif, musical symbols that refer to ideas, connecting what is unseen with what is seen, what is unheard (verbally) with what is heard (sung). Wagner's *Ring* is replete with modal incongruence: words 'say' one thing and the music 'says' something different.

Texts that comprise a number of modes in their communication are, therefore, semantically richer thanks to the overlapping semiosis, the combination of complementary meaning (Stöckl 2004, 18) or the creation of dissonance. The concept of integration, derived from theories of multimodal discourse, enables the translator of opera to move beyond the technical problems of opera translation to ask how a translation, despite a change of linguistic resources, can create the wholeness constituted of linguistic and musical meaning that might be deemed equivalent to the original opera *Gestalt*. The multimodal approach encourages the translator to analyse the function of coherence and cohesion between different modes in order to replicate them in the translation.

The arrangement and relationship of modal resources for aesthetic purposes can be thought of as style. The intermodal relationships that the author creates are part of the rhetorical structure that contributes to text cohesion; they are choices (albeit with certain restraints) that are not function or content bound. The translator who is aware of the stylistic choices made by the author of the original work, and why, will be in a good position to recognise how a change to one mode, through translation, alters modal relationships, potentially changing the nature of the work and the effect it is able to produce on the reader or spectator. The translator of opera might seek, therefore, to understand how stylistic elements of musical composition combine with the verbal text to create new semantic dimensions (Kaindl 1995, 115). This requires an understanding of how music can express meaning, which goes beyond the "tautological duplication of the spoken message" by the music (Kaindl 1995, 114) to considering how music can augment, explain, emphasise, rebut or contradict verbal meaning. When the relationship between different modes of meaning are thus considered, a fuller understanding of the text may be reached on which to base a translation.

3.   Wagner's *Versmelodie* as musico-poetic integration

In Wagner's theory of *Versmelodie* (verse-melody), the resources of music complete the emotionalisation begun by *Stabreim* (alliterative verse), which foregrounds the shared emotional and semantic content of words through the aural connections between root syllables. According to Wagner, the poet arranges his words with their repeated sounds, accents and shared relationships of alliterating rhymes to communicate a specific emotion. Just as alliterating root syllables

appeal to both feeling and intellect through their specific arrangement and relationship, so too are the tones of melody arranged to communicate those same feelings. *Versmelodie*, as the expression of verbal meaning in melody, is fundamental to Wagner's *Ring* composition.

The *Stabreim* of Wagner's libretto is largely based on that of the *Poetic Edda*[5] (via Ettmüller's 1837 translation),[6] an anonymous thirteenth century collection of Old Norse poems in which initial consonants and vowels[7] are stressed and repeated,[8] not for ornamental or rhetorical reasons, but for semantic and structural purposes through their regular patterning and systematic use (Aðalsteinsson 2014, 18). The metrical forms of *Stabreim* can be idiosyncratic but follow certain basic principles: a verse line consists of two half lines (a-verse and b-verse) separated by a caesura, each of which usually contains two primary stresses. The first stressed syllable of the second half line is called the head stave (from Old Norse *Stafir* meaning alliterating sound (Hollander 1962, xxiv)) and must alliterate with one or both stressed syllables in the first half line. The fourth stressed syllable is not part of the scheme:

$$/ \ \ \text{x} \ \ / \qquad / \ \ \text{x x} \ \ /$$
"**Bald** ent**brennt** / **brünstiger Streit**"[9]   (*Die Walküre* Act 2, Scene 1)

Although Wagner employed many of the basic elements of Eddic verse, it will be clear to anyone comparing the *Ring* to the *Poetic Edda* that he did not strictly imitate it, but adapted it for musical purposes, evidenced by his constant disregard of the rules and the greater quantity and complexity of alliterative rhyme schemes (see Schuler 1909).

Wagner considered *Stabreim* the most suitable verse for opera for four reasons. Firstly, he believed the shared semantic and aural connections between root syllables, which reveal a relationship or analogy to the objects they denote, produced a more pronounced communicative force (Wagner [1852] 1914b, 93). Secondly, Wagner believed (at the time of writing the *Ring*) that the inherent stylistic concision of the verse and its directness could most impress a listener's feelings ([1852] 1914b, 119). Thirdly, *Stabreim* was in Wagner's opinion close to the accent of

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5. For an English translation see Larrington (1999).

6. Wagner owned several translations (Westernhagen, 1966) but Ettmüller's (1837) is considered to have been his primary reference (Hauer 1991, 54).

7. All vowels are considered to alliterate with each other.

8. Only the root syllables of words can alliterate so that *entbrennt* rhymes with *brünstiger*. The unstressed prefix has no part to play.

9. Gloss: "Soon will flare up fiery battle." My translation: "**Storm** and **strife** soon will begin."

natural speech ([1851] 1872, 400), which contributed to truthful expression and clarity of meaning unlike the verse metres of traditional libretti. Fourthly, the loose arrangement of stresses in *Stabreim* freed him from having to bend the music to fit the standard regulated metrical arrangement of verse forms that had become conventional in opera libretti. *Stabreim* did not limit musical phrasing as the strict end-rhymes of metrical verse, but offered Wagner the revolutionary freedom to break with the traditional syntax of musical composition (Dahlhaus 1979, 105) resulting in musical phrasing dictated by the sense and expression of the poetry.

Although *Stabreim* could speak to both the intellect and the emotions through the relationship of sounds and their accentuation, its expression was limited, according to Wagner, by the linguistic availability of alliterating consonants and vowels and their accents, that when spoken, could not be markedly differentiated from each other ([1852] 1914b, 123–124, 140). Music, however, could provide a greater level of semantic nuance, varying the accentuation of accented rhyme words as well as non-rhymes in various ways through musical features such as tonality (key relationships and modulation), intervallic tensions, note duration, pitch and so on as well as through Wagner's own musical language of leitmotif.

According to Wagner's *Versmelodie* theory, music would interpret the content of the verse, its dramatic action and emotions; melody would mirror the meaning of the text (Abbate 1989, 96). It would not force the verse into any unnaturalness, nor would it take attention away from it, but by mirroring declamation, through which emotion is expressed in speech, it would communicate more than the sense of the words alone. Like other composers, Wagner expressed the text using music's ability to suggest an event, action, object, feeling or even concept through sonic resemblance or imitation. He also used, as shortcuts to given conventional meaning, codified musical rhetoric, topics and a vocabulary of musical figures, particularly intervals, handed down unconsciously over centuries "as elements of musical heritage" (Cooke [1959] 1990, 174). The *Ring* is particularly characterised by the way in which expression is "etched into intervallic shape" (Trippett 2013, 11). Melodic sequential intervals, the constituent parts of melody, have a meaningful function and emotive qualities dependent on their span (Rieger 2011, 11). For example, a repeated small interval with a fast tempo can convey violence and anger but, if repeated at a slow tempo, it can mean suffering. Intervals are used by Wagner as symmetrical constructs to connect ideas rhythmically and tonally, to reinforce alliterative parallelisms as well to convey meaning through the distance in pitch, their rise or fall, tempo and so on.

The cornerstone of *Versmelodie*, however, is the relationship of tonality and alliteration. For Wagner, musical keys were to the musician what alliteration was to the poet, a means to communicate affinity and contrast of emotion. Musical tonality would reinforce the semantic and sonic relationship of initial rhymes with the

move from one key to another. Wagner illustrates this in *Oper und Drama* with the following examples: a musician composing a melody to a verse of like emotional content, such as "*die Liebe gibt Lust zum Leben*",[10] would not change key, there being no reason to do so. However, if presented with a verse of mixed emotion, such as "*die Liebe bringt Lust und Leid*",[11] he would feel compelled to modulate from the key found suitable for the first emotion to another key in keeping with the second. The word *Lust* (pleasure) would be the pivot into the new key, part of both the original and new key. The same cohesive force of tonality can be used to return to the first emotion in the next verse line "*Doch in ihr Weh auch webt sie Wonnen*".[12] The key would modulate back to the original key on "*webt*" that would then clearly relate "*Wonnen*" ['delight'] with "*Lust*" ['pleasure'], whilst "*Weh*" ['woe'] and "*Leid*" ['sorrow'] are related through sharing the new key ([1852] 1914b, 152–53). In this way, rhythm, rhyme and tonality meet in a nexus of potential meaning. Alterations to this nexus through a change of language can potentially rupture Wagner's carefully constructed modal convergence and attenuate the emotional or semantic force of its communication.

4.   Translating *Versmelodie* in *Die Walküre* and *Götterdämmerung*

The following explores how, in Wagner's *Ring*, alliterative verse and melody converge as modes, and how music iterates, corroborates, elaborates or contradicts the verbal meaning. Have translators preserved the interrelationship, and, if not, what difference does this makes to a singer or the audience's understanding of Wagner's opera?

The discussion is based on translations by Jameson, Porter, Sams and myself of two scenes in two of the *Ring* operas,[13] *Die Walküre* (*The Valkyrie*) Act 2 Scene 4 (hereafter the 'annunciation scene' [DW]) and *Götterdämmerung* (*Twilight of the gods*) Act 2 Scene 5 (hereafter the 'conspiracy scene' [GD]). They are important dramatic scenes containing a mixture of dramatic dialogue and lyrical passages and exemplify Wagner's methods of creating a convergence of music and words. In the 'annunciation scene', Brünnhilde orders Siegmund to follow her to Valhalla but he refuses because of his love for Sieglinde. Brünnhilde is so moved by this that she defies Wotan's orders and attempts to save Siegmund's life. In the 'conspiracy

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10. Gloss: Love gives pleasure to life.

11. Gloss: Love brings pleasure and sorrow.

12. Gloss: But in her woe she weaves delight.

13. Four operas make up the *Ring*; the other two are *Der Rheingold* (*The Rhinegold*) and *Siegfried*.

scene', Brünnhilde, having been deceived, unwittingly, by her husband Siegfried, and feeling betrayed, plots his death with Hagen and Gunther. She reveals that Siegfried can only be killed by striking him in the back.

The earliest translation, by Frederick Jameson (1839–1916), was published between 1899–1904 (Jameson, Wagner and Klindworth n.d.-a and n.d.-b) and used in the first English language production of the *Ring* in 1908 at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (Porter 1978, 399). It was used in performance until 1948 and is today the only translation available as a vocal score. Jameson's translation, praised for its "closeness to the original text" ("The 'Nibelung's Ring' in English", 1908), emulates Wagner's archaic German style with archaic English replete with inversions and the obsolete second person singular. Andrew Porter's (1928–2015) translation (Porter and Wagner 1977) was a commission for the Sadler's Wells Opera company (now English National Opera), which staged the first post Second World War English *Ring* cycle in 1973 (Porter and Wagner 1977, xix). The *Times* admired Porter's "clarity" and "naturalness" (Sadie, 1977) but, lacking Wagner's nexus of rhyme and musical stress, it was said to have lost its "Wagnerian colour" (Anderson 1976, 1002). The most recently performed translation was that of Jeremy Sams in 2004, also commissioned by the English National Opera. It has not been published but can be obtained from the dramatic licensing agency, Josef Weinberger (Sams and Wagner, 2002). The translation was described as "fruity" by one reviewer, who concluded that this went some way to making the opera accessible and entertaining (Richardson, 2001). Sams did not attempt to imitate Wagner's word-tone synthesis through alliterative verse, and his style is marked by modern diction, inconsistent register and use of cliché (Wilson-deRoze 2017, 116).

My own translations were created as the practical element of my PhD thesis (Wilson-deRoze 2017, Volume 2). My primary aim was a translation that could be sung in performance, but which retained the stylistic convergence of alliterative verse and musical semantics. Even if only ever used as a reading libretto, my translation was intended to serve the needs of Wagnerian and translation scholars and be an aid to non-German speaking singers preparing for performance, providing greater access to the original score than earlier translations.

Jameson, Porter, and Sams's translations have one thing in common: they do not reproduce the alliterative verse of Wagner's *Ring* libretto, at least not consistently. In some verse-lines, alliterative rhymes, accents and their related semantics converge, but more often than not alliteration is absent or used as ornamentation. An estimate of the quantity of rhymed verse-lines reproduced in the translations of *Die Walküre* and *Götterdämmerung* by Jameson, Porter and Sams, compared to Wagner's original libretto and my translation, is given in Table 1. The data is based on two samples: Act 1 of *Die Walküre* and Act 3 of *Götterdämmerung*, which have a similar number of verses (243 and 205 respectively) and a similar mixture

of dialogue and poetic language in monologues or soliloquys (Wilson-deRoze 2017, 142–144).

Table 1. Rhymed verse-lines reproduced in the translations

	A	B	C	D	E
	Verse lines in which translators recreate				
	100% of the rhymes (full)	≥ 50% of the rhymes (part)	< 50% of the rhymes (part)	Total no. verses with any rhyme	Total no. verses with NO rhyme
Jameson	12%	21%	12%	45%	55%
Porter	8%	18%	11%	37%	63%
Sams	2%	14%	8%	24%	76%
Wilson-deRoze	50%	30%	4%	84%	16%

Jameson reproduced 45% of Wagner's rhymes. An earlier translation by the Corders (Corder and Wagner 1882) had reproduced almost all the alliterative verse, even though this made the translations sometimes incomprehensible ("to blame is my wit that bad is thy weal; // for rarer goods I wot of than the Gibichung yet ever won"). In Porter's translation, the quantity of rhyme has been further reduced to 37% of the original, whilst Sams reproduced only 24% of the rhymed verse-lines. The main reason for the move away from rhyme appears to be the desire for ease of comprehension. Contemporary critical reviews suggested that Jameson's prioritisation of comprehension over rhyme made his translation better than those that had gone before ("The 'Nibelung's Ring' in English", 1908). Porter wrote that his reason for taking on the translation was to produce something "a little easier to understand" (Porter and Wagner 1977, xiii). Sams claimed "the translator can only be interested in something that has resonance and immediacy now" (Sams and Johnston 1996, 175). However, my translations (Wilson-deRoze 2017), in which an estimated 84% of the rhymes are reproduced, show that alliterative verse can be preserved, if not fully, then to a high degree, thus maintaining verbal and musical semantic convergence and the expressive nature, diction and mythic Norse character of the language. To do this meant compromise. Rhyme schemes were changed, there were liberties taken with the correctness of the rhymes, as in rhyming "spear" with "strength" and semantic accuracy often gave way to paraphrase. However, I was convinced that such compromise was warranted if my translation hoped to emulate the semantic integration of music and words to the benefit of singers and audience alike. Even if this essential feature of Wagner's style is difficult to reproduce (see Wilson-deRoze 2017, Chapter 6.2.5), unnecessary for the translation to be singable (rhythmic fit is possible without rhymes) and unlikely to

be appreciated by the audience during the performance (semantic sound symbolism is often masked by the music), *Stabreim* was an imperative for my translation because it works stylistically as a signpost to meaning, preserves Wagner's 'mythic' diction, contributes to characterisation, and functions as a mnemonic for singers.

It is easy to dismiss the aesthetic function of poetry in a libretto and be concerned solely with language in a pragmatic sense: who is doing what to whom and why, and this is certainly enough to make a performable translation. However, each mode of signification in Wagner's *Ring* contributes to its meaning, and respect for the composer's nexus of alliterating syllables and musical meaning is not empty fidelity, but one that might guarantee a level of singability far in excess of mere metrical matching of language and declamation. In respecting the alliterative rhymes, the translator is more likely to respect the relationship of verbal and musical meaning that is available to the singer who performs in German but often absent for the singer of the translation.

Space does not permit a full exploration of the many ways musical and verbal meanings converge (for detailed analysis, see Wilson-deRoze 2017, Chapters 4.4 and 6.3), so I have limited the discussion to three elements of word-tone intersemiosis which can, if somewhat artificially, be examined in isolation for the purpose of demonstrating how a translator might consider the multimodal implications for a translation. The semantic possibilities of accentual hierarchies, intervallic tensions and tonal relationships are examined in their convergence with alliterative verse. I demonstrate how Wagner's musical language contributes to textual meaning, going beyond iteration to functioning as a linguistic sub-clause that emphasises, contradicts, undermines or adds meaning not available in the words alone. My main interest lies in how translations which do not re-create the musico-poetic relationships suffer loss or alteration of potential meaning and deprive singers of information necessary for their interpretation.

4.1   Accentual relationships

Musical accents in the *Ring* are a function of Wagner's alliterative verse and its concise language, which emulates the monosyllabic Old Norse verse of the *Eddas*.[14] Translating Wagner's highly inflected and archaic German into English is challenging and it is often impossible to set alliterating syllables to the same musical accents as in the original score. Modern English grammar and syntax do not allow for the same concision or word placement afforded by the flexible syntax of German. Not only this, but Wagner's extensive use of rhetorical devices,

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14. In the Old Norse language, almost forty percent of words were monosyllabic (Hoops 1986, 370).

such as apocope (the loss of a word-final unstressed vowel, e.g., "*fänd*" instead of "*fände*"), the omission of words (assumed to be inferable by the listener) and asyndetic parataxis (a construction in which sentences or clauses are not formally coordinated or subordinated with any connective, of which the prolific use of the semi-colon is a typographical marker) also facilitated a level of succinctness that is difficult to emulate.

One of the most frequently used stylistic features that helped Wagner achieve his concise language is the use in conditional and optative clauses of either the present or past indicative or the imperfect subjunctive (in both the main and subordinate clause with subject-verb inversion) instead of the conjunction "*wenn*" ['if']. The problem for the translator into English is how to incorporate conditionality and preserve the relationship of musical accent and rhyme, given the restricted availability of notes and the stress pattern established by the accent / rhyme relationship of the original score as seen in Musical Example (1) below:

(1)   Musical example
       The 'annunciation scene' (DW).

Wagner uses the past indicative "*beschied*" ['chosen', 'decided'] to signal conditionality. Just as modern German, using the more common *wenn*-clause requires more syllables to do this, so too does modern English: "if he chose for me disgrace instead of victory". Wagner's seven syllables of "*beschied er mir Schimpf fur Sieg*" have become thirteen! The translator's overriding imperative is to find seven syllables that convey the same meaning, whose stressed syllables match the accents in the music. He or she may also note how the key word[15] of the phrase, "*beschied*", is set to a descending triplet for added emphasis and gravitas. Jameson and Porter simply removed the conditional element. Sams retained the conditional element by reorganising the phrase and altering the music to accommodate an extra syllable, but in doing so broke the relationship between words and musical accent. Where Wagner had the combined power of musical accents and alliterative rhymes to emphasise textual meaning, Sams's words must communicate without the support of the music whilst the music communicates empty meaning (consider the accents with which the words "made" and "but" converge). Like Sams, I preserved the

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15. The story of the *Ring* has the dialectic between fate and freedom at its centre.

conditionality of the phrase but found alliterative rhymes to set to the same accents as Wagner. I was able to create a convergence of word and tone that makes sense of the musical accents and allows them to add context to the words. For example, the wide interval on which "*Schimpf*" ['disgrace'] is set amounts to a wail of anger and despair and "sordid", in the context of Siegmund's utterance, is an iteration of this. Porter's "bring" and Sams's "but" fail to fuse the verbal and musical meaning. Given the differences between Wagner's German and modern English, choices must be made that often omit elements of information or paraphrase rather than strictly translate. "Sordid death" is not a translation of "*Schimpf für Sieg*" [disgrace instead of victory], though it has connotations of ignominious defeat. Semantic fidelity is far from adequate when translating opera; preserving the musico-poetic relationship is much more likely to serve the singers' interpretative needs.

Wagner's intersemiosis of rhyme and accent can be preserved to some degree even when the translation does not reproduce the rhymes as long as the significance of the musical accents are matched to the words set on them. In Musical Example (2), from the 'annunciation scene' (DW), Wagner's alliterative rhymes are emphasised by being set to one of the two most important beats of the bar in which they appear, the first or third, but the rhyme word "*traulich*" is further accentuated by being set to a melisma,[16] an accent of duration.

The melismatic setting of words was, as a general principle, avoided by Wagner for the reason that assigning several notes to one syllable can obscure comprehension. Here, however, Wagner exploits the long accentuation of the word "*traulich*" ['lovingly' / 'tenderly'] to emphasise its irony. Set to a descending 5-3-1 pattern (Eb-C-Ab), in Ab major, both music and text suggest that nothing could be more desirable to Siegmund than for Brünnhilde to welcome him to Valhalla. The descent from the dominant through a major third to the tonic is conventionalised musical shorthand that conveys a sense of consolation or fulfilment (Cooke [1959] 1990, 130), yet the audience knows that Brünnhilde is opposed to Wotan's order to let Siegmund die. The audience also knows that Siegmund's death has only been made necessary because of Wotan's duplicity and treachery through the theft of the gold from Alberich and its use to fulfil his contract with Fasolt and Fafner, the giants who built Valhalla as a symbol of Wotan's power.

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16. A melisma is a group of notes sung to one syllable of text. Melismatic is the opposite of syllabic, meaning that each note is sung to a different syllable.

(2)   Musical example
      Rhyme words emphasised by the accents of the music.

The translation choices made by Jameson, Porter and Sams negate the additional meaning offered by the melisma. The change of word order that sets the translation of the verb "*reicht*" ("filleth", Jameson; "bring", Porter; and "attend", Sams) on the melisma makes defunct the heavenly consolation that the melismatic descending perfect fifth promised when attached to the adverb "*traulich*". Whilst my choice of the adjective "welcoming", an alliterating rhyme for "wine", a meronym for "drink" ("*Trank*"), does not translate "*traulich*" directly, it makes greater sense of the long accent than the more perfunctory verbs "filleth", "bring" and "(at)tend" and goes some way to preserve the irony found in the original score.

The relationship between musical accent and alliterative rhyme is often used by Wagner to create a particular declamatory style relevant to a character or situation. In Musical Example (3), also from the 'annunciation scene' (DW), the pairing of rhymes on notes of the same pitch and duration produces a monotone utterance that gives Brünnhilde's words the gravitas one might expect of a goddess appearing to a warrior to announce his death:

(3)   Musical example
       Pairing of rhymes on notes of the same pitch and duration.

In Jameson, Porter and Sams's translations, significant words like "*Tod*" ['death'] and "*taugt*" ['worthy of'] lose their import when separated from the musical accent on which they were originally set. Jameson acknowledges the musical intent by constructing his phrase to keep the important, semantically connected content words "doomed" and "looks" in the same position as "*Tod*" and "*taugt*". Porter's translation is a close copy of Jameson's, but he replaces the verb "*taugt*" with the adverb "alone", for which the emphatic accent of the music seems inappropriate. Sams's translation, which changes the music to accommodate it, is very naturalistic but lacks the fateful gravitas found in the music because the musical accents are ill matched to the functional pronouns "those" / "they". A translation may preserve the meaning of the words, but can fail to match the combined signification of words and music if the shared resources, in this case patterns of similarity and repetition through rhyme and accent, are not integrated as they were in the original. The integration of rhymes with the emotional accents of music gives greater emphatic weight to Brünnhilde's feelings and communication than words alone. In my translation, the juxtaposition of rhyme and musical accent allows the English-speaking singer to bring both sound and sense to bear on the listener at one time. Once again, paraphrase and connotation are relied upon. The word "doomed", for example, does not translate "*Tod*" ['death'], but its connotations and proximity to the word "death", set on the second strongest beat of the bar, helps the translation maintain the significance of the original musico-poetic conflation.

4.2   Intervallic tension

Musico-poetic convergence is often achieved by Wagner through his use of intervals or sequences of intervals that pictorialise words, or accommodate a character's

psychological or emotional state. The latter can be seen in the musical imitation of gestures, in which a pattern of notes may "have the same character as a bodily movement" (Budd 2002, 46). Certain emotions can be identified with this perceived movement; for example, sadness and happiness are understood through vertical movement: sad is down and happy is up (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 462). Therefore, musical gestures are heard as happy if the music is upward moving, high in the orchestral or vocal range or at high volume whilst sadness is expressed when the music is downward moving, at a low pitch and quiet. As Bierwisch puts it, music shows things acoustically through "analogous encoding" (1979, 59).

In the 'conspiracy scene' (GD), Wagner's use of wide intervallic leaps creates analogous musical gestures for lament, anger and revenge. In Musical Example (4), alliterative rhymes combine with the dissonant downward movement of descending minor sixths and sevenths, as well as octaves, to express Gunther's sense of dejection, remorse and humiliation. He has just realised that he inadvertently tricked Siegfried into unknowingly giving him his wife, Brünnhilde, and is reeling from her public announcement that she is married to Siegfried, which is a stain on his honour. The intervallic setting of "*Betrüger*" / "*betrogen*" ['deceiver' / 'deceived'] and "*Verräter*" / "*verraten*" ['betrayer' / 'betrayed'] on the paired minor sixths and octave leaps gives the singer in German everything necessary to communicate meaning and emotion. In this case, English can achieve something similar because synonyms for "*Betrüger*" / "*betrogen*" and "*Verräter*" / "*verraten*", found in "deceiver" / "deceived" and "betrayer" / "betrayed", have the same syllabic accents and similar quantities. For the last phrase, however, there are no obvious English rhyme words to set to the woebegone minor sevenths that connect the rhymes of "*zermalmt*" / "*das Mark*" ['crush' / 'marrow'] and "*zerbrecht*" / "*Brust*" ['shatter' / 'breast'].

(4)   Musical example
      Preserving the convergence of musical and verbal meaning.

Whilst the overall sense of Sams's unrhymed verse lines and the part-rhymed lines of Jameson and Porter can be said to resonate with the musical meaning, without the link between the paired rhymes and the extreme intervals, both words and music have less semantic force than in the original score. Paraphrasing Gunther's expression of despair using different imagery afforded me the appropriate juxtaposition of rhyme words and intervals to preserve the convergence of musical and verbal meaning.

Whilst some musical intervals take their meaning from their relationship to the words (in terms of pictorialisation of objects and emotions), others have developed over time into finite entities (Trippett 2013, 59) that give specific connotations to the words they accompany. Wagner would have been familiar with musical theory that suggested all intervals have a specific meaning (A. B. Marx 1826). For example, the tritone (also known as a diminished fifth or augmented fourth), nicknamed "the devil in music" and banned from ecclesiastical music in medieval times, is a strident dissonance, whose unstable sound and ambiguous nature have become synonymous with restlessness, pain, sorrow, evil and insanity. When the indecisive Gunther, having vacillated about killing Siegfried, finally commits himself to the act, he does so with the words "*So wär' es Siegfried's Ende*" ['This means the end of Siegfried'], where "*Ende*" is set to a tritone interval (see Musical Example (5)). The dissonant tritone is a musical analogy of Gunther's

state of mind; its sinister tone iterates the meaning of "Ende". Unfortunately, the obvious English translation of "*Ende*", "end", has only one syllable, which does not fit the two notes of the tritone interval:

(5)   Musical example
      Musical interval and meaning.

Porter and Sams do not to address the significance of the tritone. Jameson's "downfall" makes sense of it but, set in the context of a question, it does not fit the falling musical intonation. To give "downfall" the intonation of a statement, my compromise was the unusual imperative construction, "Let come then", with its biblical overtone. Though unnatural in modern English, it suits the register of a mythical drama and does not hinder comprehension. The rhyme words "*Ende*" and "*Allen*" are masterfully juxtaposed by Wagner through the pairing of the ominous tritone with a dissonant minor ninth interval (C to Db). This undermines what may seem a triumphant statement and makes tangible the irony of "*Allen*" that refers to Gunther and Brünnhilde, for whom Siegfried's downfall will lead to tragedy. Being unable to use the word "end", the rhyme "all" is made unavailable and the subtle irony is lost in all the above English translations.

4.3   Tonal relationships

The relationship between alliterative rhymes and musical keys forms the backbone of Wagner's compositional method in the *Ring*. Musical tonality reinforces the semantic and sonic relationship of initial rhymes with the move from one key to another relating similarity and antithesis. Wagner also associates certain keys with specific themes, objects, events, people, places and so on to create "units of meaning" (Petty 2005, 2) and these associations add significance to the words with which they are linked. There is not only significance in the relationship between words, key changes (modulation) and the associations that keys add to the words, but also in the relationship between keys in context with the text.

   In the 'annunciation scene' (DW), Siegmund asks Brünnhilde if Sieglinde will go with him to Valhalla and his question vacillates between minor and major tonalities (Musical Example (6)). Altering the order of certain words becomes a matter of important consideration, as particular ideas are related to particular keys.

Siegmund begins optimistically in F♯ major ("*Begleitet*" / ['accompanies']), then moves to D major when he speaks of himself – the primary key of the "sword" motif with which he is associated. As he sings the words "*die bräutliche Schwester*" / ['the bridal sister'], the key changes to B major, as if happy thoughts have entered his mind on thinking of Sieglinde. The final part of the question moves through B minor to the dominant seventh of E minor on "*dort*" as doubt and premonitions of sadness overtake him.

(6)   Musical example
        Major and minor tonality.

Wagner's arrangement of keys and alliterative rhymes highlights the juxtaposition of "brother" / "bride", a relationship that is essential to the plot in which Siegmund and Sieglinde are unknowingly in an incestuous relationship that will force Wotan to bring about Siegmund's death and the downfall of the gods. Jameson, Porter and Sams do not preserve this significance. In their translations, the music connects instead "sister" and "Walhall" (Jameson), "blessed" and "bride" (Porter), and "sister" and "have" (Sams), whose relationships are of little significance to the opera. To preserve the word order and rhymes of the original score and thus the connotations in the juxtaposition of major and minor keys, I accepted as a compromise a cumbersome verb-subject inversion, which is, however, somewhat mitigated by the slow tempo and rising arch of the melody.

An example of Wagner using the divergent meanings of music and words to great effect can be found near the beginning of the 'conspiracy scene' (GD):

(7) Musical example
     Juxtaposition of the major and minor keys.

Semantic divergence between text and music makes visceral Hagen's double-dealing nature and intentions, which are of course central to the opera's plot. Hagen's words "trust", "deception", "betrayal" and "vengeance" (rhyming couplets in the original text) are set to a series of intervals: a perfect fifth, a minor third, a perfect fourth and a major sixth, within the context of four different keys. Wagner uses the juxtaposition of the major and minor keys as well as the dissonant and consonant intervals to contradict the character's words and create through the resulting ambiguity both tension and irony that prefigures Hagen's betrayal of Siegfried. The dialectic of major / minor through which Hagen hopes to ingratiate himself with Brünnhilde, to become her defender, is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2. The dialectic of major and minor keys

Vertraue mir (trust me)	*Betrogene Frau* (deceived woman)
Perfect 5th interval. Key: d minor	Minor 3rd interval. Key: Bb major
The consonant interval suggests 'trust' but the minor key contradicts this. Brünnhilde should not trust Hagen for, as the audience already knows, he plans to kill Siegfried to obtain the power of the ring.	The juxtaposition of a minor 3rd in a major key belies Hagen's display of concern and reveals his evil character and motives.
Wer dich verrieth (on he who betrayed you)	*das räche ich* (I will take revenge)
Perfect 4th interval. Key: Gb major	Major 6th interval. Key: Gb minor
The major key and consonant interval contradict the words and lend irony to Hagen's statement, as it was he, not Siegfried, who betrayed Brünnhilde when he used Gutrune's magic potion to make Siegfried forget his love for Brünnhilde.	The minor tonality negates the assertiveness of the major 6th interval; Hagen might be taking revenge but not for the reasons he gives.

Modal incongruence reveals the irony of Hagen's words, which 'say' one thing whilst the fluctuating tonality of the music 'says' something different. Each translation shown in Musical Example (7) has merits but none fully exploits this incongruence, because the rules of English syntax force the translator to disassociate verbal and musical meaning. Yet despite the lack of rhyme and one or two changes to the verbal meaning, all the translations re-create Wagner's musico-poetic integration at a basic level because the sense of the words overall works with the semanticity of the musical keys as outlined above. Wagner's carefully constructed modal convergence remains, however imperfect, and thus the emotional and semantic force of its communication is only partly attenuated.

5. Conclusion

Music and words in Wagner's *Ring* work in a symbiotic fashion, each giving meaning to the other. This musico-poetic correlation or juxtaposition is an outcome of stylistic choices made by the librettist and composer, who in the case of the *Ring* were one person with a particular theory of word-tone synthesis. In this study, I have described a number of ways in which Wagner's music converges with alliterative rhymes to corroborate their meaning or comment upon them, thus modifying their meaning, and I have demonstrated how translators have approached his word-tone intersemiosis, suggesting possible reasons for their decisions.

The above analysis shows that Jameson, Porter and Sams's opted not to reproduce Wagner's word-tone intersemiosis in as much as they chose not to reproduce the alliterative verse, whose preservation they believed would result in tortuous English that would be difficult to comprehend on first hearing. Indeed, the stated aims of Porter and Sams (Porter and Wagner, 1977: xvii: Sams and Johnston, 1996, 177) and reviews of Jameson's translation ("A Retrospect of 'The Ring'", 1909: "The 'Nibelung's Ring' in English," 1908) support this view. The prioritisation of easily comprehensible English stems, I suggest, from the translators' desire to make the opera more relevant to their audience compared to what had gone before. Whilst in the translations of Porter and Jameson, Wagner's alliterative rhymes are generally replaced by non-rhyming but semantically equivalent words to preserve the convergence of textual and musical meaning, Sams, by contrast, does this as an exception and insignificant words are set to significant music and vice-versa, which results in both losing saliency. Indeed, in the case of Sams's translation, its vocabulary, syntax and register of expression suggest that the aesthetic and cultural demands of the production team can make greater demands than any need to reproduce musico-poetic intersemiosis.

If the audience is the primary recipient and judge of the translation, bearing in mind that their judgement is unlikely to include any reference to the source text whose language they do not know, then respect for Wagner's theories of word-tone synthesis and the preservation of alliterative verse may rightly be deemed irrelevant. However, this is not my view because the audience's appreciation is not based on the words alone, but on the singer's interpretation and the entire operatic *Gestalt* before their eyes. It is surely a great loss for the singer and production team and their interpretation of the opera when the synthesis of verbal and musical meaning is no longer available to them, and the subtleties of emphasis, contradiction, ambiguity, contention and irony are lost or altered. Therefore, a translation that respects Wagner's stylistic choices provides the non-German speaking singer with greater resources for their interpretation that will eventually provide the audience with a richer experience.

No one theory can fit all opera translation. The many different operatic styles from different periods and countries with their many different subjects have different demands. Of course, for a singable translation, prosodic match is non-negotiable, but everything else depends on the work and the cultural and artistic conditions of its reception. So whilst alliterative verse and musical intersemiosis can be considered important in Wagner's *Ring,* in other styles of opera – from the sung poetry of Monteverdi's (1567–1643) 'numbers' operas to Berg's (1885–1935) through-composed prosaic *Sprechgesang* (speech in music) – the importance of the modal resources changes and new ones come into play.

I have sought in this study to raise awareness of the relationship between text and music and how it influences translation choices and I have suggested practical strategies for the understanding and translation of multimodal opera texts. The approach is not only relevant to opera texts but any multimodal text whose modal resources must be analysed before discussing or creating a translation.

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Operetta in Turkey

A case study of Gün's translation of Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*

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The genre operetta has long found itself a place in the musical polysystem of Turkey and become one of the borrowed forms of art symbolizing modernity through Turkey's Westernization process. It was the main goal of the Republic to carry the young republican nation to the level of civilized societies like those of the West. Western ideological, cultural, scientific and literary works were examined and translated, paving the way to emergence of national ideologies, literary works, and cultural legacies. In this context, our study aims to examine Aydın Gün's translation into Turkish of Johann Strauss II's *Die Fledermaus*, under the title *Yarasa*. In order to do this, we draw on Peter Low's Pentathlon Principle.

Keywords: operetta, Turkey, Johann Strauss II, *Die Fledermaus*, Westernization, translation, singability, the Pentathlon Principle, polysystem theory

1.   Introduction

Operetta, a genre belonging entirely to the Western culture, has long found itself a place in the musical polysystem of Turkey and has become one of the borrowed forms of art symbolizing modernity through Turkey's Westernization process. This study aims to present the journey of the operetta genre from Europe to Turkey as a background for the analysis of the translations of Johann Strauss II's *Die Fledermaus* into Turkish, in particular Aydın Gün's *Yarasa*. This operetta is important because it was performed many times in different historical periods in Turkey, and its translations have undergone frequent changes, depending on the period and shifts in expectations.

Although operetta can be described as a 'lighter' form of opera and musical theatre, available to the common public and not quite reaching the status of the so-called 'higher' forms of performing arts, it has been regarded as an elite genre

in Turkey, addressing an educated, cultivated, and more affluent audience. It is our aim to outline the history of operetta in a country where, historically and geographically, Eastern culture meets, combines, collides, in and sometimes melts together with Western culture.

In operettas, conversational and cantabile parts follow one another, the subject matter is determined according to the current settings and environments, stage designs and costumes are rich and ravishing, and the main goal is to entertain and, while doing so, criticize society in a witty manner. Given this basic characteristic of the genre, the period of its appearance on Turkish stages coincides with the beginning of Turkey's modernization process. Perceptions of the genre vary in the Western and Turkish musical and theatrical polysystems, due to the differences between historical and social conditions affecting musical and theatrical culture.

As a transcontinental country located between Asia and Europe, Turkey has attracted many peoples through history and hosted several powerful civilizations. Recent studies in archaeology reaffirm that the civilization on Anatolia dates back some twelve thousand years (Gobekli Tepe, the first temple of the world, circa 10.000 BC). It is the heir of great empires such as the Hittites, Gokturks, Khazars, Seljuks, Trojans, and the Ottomans. Musical culture in Turkey thus inevitably presents traces from the preceding cultures. With respect to music, Ali Uçan, an outstanding musicologist, states that Turkish music "is the only culture of music belonging to nearly all the ascendant civilizations in the world, being influenced from the east, the west as well as the north and the south" (2002, 61). Throughout history, various cultures from the East and the West (and also from the South and the North) coexisted and interacted in Anatolia, creating a rich cultural mosaic. As Danielson, Marcus and Reynolds also point out, "[the] Anatolian peninsula is home to a celebrated classical music tradition, numerous forms of religious music, a historic tradition of military music, a wealth of unique musical instruments and genres of regional folk music and dance, and many forms of popular music" (2001, 755).

With its rich historical background, Turkish music culture was a medium of cultural reformation after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. In "The Relation Between Translation and Ideology as an Instrument for the Establishment of a National Literature", Berrin Aksoy explains that the translation of works of art from Western languages into Turkish was employed by the Turkish State intentionally, in the process of "attaining and implementing Western enlightenment and modernity in the Turkish society" (2010, 439). Indeed, after the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the War of Liberation (1919–1923), Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his followers looked westward, and emphasized humanist ideals. Special interest was paid to modern performing arts during this period; in Tekelioğlu's words, "Western polyphonic music, theatre, ballet, and opera were recognized

as being among the necessary pillars in modernization, westernization, and nation building program" (1996, 194–216). Atatürk, as one of the few leaders who himself had taken place actively in the cultural reformation of his country from a traditional, rural, Islamic fabric to a modern, secular and civilized one, wanted to create a synthesis of pre-Ottoman, Anatolian cultural elements and Western arts and techniques. Music played an important role in this, through government radio, the creation of conservatories, and the establishment of institutions such as *Musiki Muallim Mektebi* (Music Teaching School), *Belediye Konservatuvarı* (Municipality Conservatory), and the Presidential Symphony Orchestra, which all aimed to support music education in the country, drawing on European aesthetic forms and styles.

2.   A brief survey of operetta in Europe

According to Cevad Memduh Altar, a prominent specialist in Turkish musical history, "the art of the opera transformed into a new and different content and form in France in the second half of the nineteenth century and during the period of Ambroise Thomas, and *drame lyrique* evolved out of the traditional *opéra comique* and *grande opéra* through the mutual contributions of both genres" ([2000] 2011, 217, our translation). With the works of Jacques Offenbach, *drame lyrique* paved the way towards operetta.

The first examples of the genre of operetta, such as Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène*, thus go back to French *opéra comique*, a name that can be misleading since, around the middle of the 19th century, these works had tragic plots. In England, Gilbert and Sullivan created 'comic operas' during the Victorian era, which later influenced operettas and musical comedies created especially in the United States of America in the 20th century. The Austrian Johann Strauss II (1825–1899) is known as the most significant composer of operetta in the German language, with his *Die Fledermaus* (1874). Strauss's work has become one of the most popular operettas in the repertoire, staged around the world and translated into many languages, including Turkish.

Operetta in the 19th century developed in parallel to the social changes in the Western World. It addressed people's need for new styles of entertainment as the result of the emergence and development of new classes under the influence of the Industrial Revolution, with all the social and economic changes, as well as scientific discoveries and inventions that were taking place. Therefore, in Europe, operetta became a sort of mirror to the changing social structure and took into account new tastes and tendencies, showing that society needed lighter forms of opera for entertainment.

Meanwhile, the Ottoman Empire was going through winds of change. Although not in exactly the same way as Europe, its social structure was undergoing transformation and the Empire could not escape facing the cultural changes in the world. In fact, it appears that the efforts to combine Eastern and Western art do not start with the Republican Period. As Bernard Lewis states in *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response*, these attempts started during the Ottoman period:

> Music, including military music, was of course old established, and Islamic civilization has a rich musical tradition of its own. Military bands […] figure prominently in the armies of the Ottoman Empire, both on parade and in battle. […] But along with his new weapons and his new uniforms, Sultan Mahmud felt it appropriate to introduce new music. […] In due course, a bandmaster arrived. His name was Donizetti – Giuseppe Donizetti, the brother of the more famous Gaetano Donizetti, the composer. Signor Donizetti set to work and formed what was officially designated as the *Musiki-i Humayun-i Osmani,* the Imperial Ottoman Music – a military band in the Western style, playing Western instruments and of course Western music.   (2002, 148–150)

In this process, composers like Giuseppe Donizetti (1788–1856) and Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848) were invited to Istanbul during the 19th century to support the musical aspects of military reforms. In 1836, *Muzika-i Humayun Mektebi* (The Imperial Music School) was established with their assistance. It is also important to point out that individuals such as Leyla (Saz) Hanım (1850–1936), who was educated in the Harem, composed European style marches. This period also witnessed the first translation of an opera into Turkish: Gaetano Donizetti's *Belisario*. Although Western-style music and stage performances had been welcomed by the Palace ever since the 17th century, they were mostly for European ambassadors and other guests. Therefore, it is possible to suggest that translation was not of great importance during this period. Since the Ottoman Empire was a conservative Muslim society, theatre also remained an imported genre, at that time.

As opposed to the Palace, ordinary people lacked the formal public education system that was set up later, during the Republic, and could develop no such tastes, remaining disengaged from developments taking place in the wider world. As Aksoy points out, it was Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's endeavour to equip the nation "with all the concepts and institutions of Western humanism and enlightenment" (2010, 443).

3.   The development of Turkish operetta

The development of Turkish operetta took place in three stages. The first stage co-incides with the period before the constitutional monarchy; the second stage took place during the constitutional monarchy; and the last stage started after World War I and the republican period (Şenocak 2009, 671).

In the second half of the 19th century and the first thirty years of the 20th century, Istanbul and Izmir, two cities which were more open and favourable to Western art movements and the Westernization process of the country, wit-nessed foreign theatre troupes, especially Italian companies, staged some of the leading European operettas. Şenocak stresses that "there was great rivalry, espe-cially between the Greek and Viennese theatres to stage operas and operettas in Istanbul" (2009, 671). This rivalry could be seen in the sometimes simultaneous performances by two companies in Istanbul. For example, "while the Labruna Company performed the opera *Aida* in Concardio Theatre, the R. Scognamiglio Operetta Company staged the parody of *Aida* in Tepebaşı Theatre in the year 1896" (Şenocak 2009, 671).

Such performances generated great interest and demand in the audience, and initiated the development of Turkish operettas which would appeal more to the ears of the Turkish spectators. According to Altar,

> the first Turkish operetta with a Turkish libretto is *Pembe Kız* written by an har-monica officer by the name Ali Haydar Bey. The music of this operetta composed by Ali Haydar Bey was transformed to polyphonic by the celebrated music teacher of the time Macar Tevfik Bey. (2000, 197)

However, it is known that Agop Vartovayan, also known as Güllü Agop, laid the foundations of Turkish operetta by establishing *Osmanlı Topluluğu* (The Ottoman Company) as well as a theatre where he was attentive to stage Turkish perfor-mances. His theatre was given the grant of being the only one in Istanbul to stage Turkish performances, and this led to the emergence of musical plays; musical plays, operas and operettas were not included into the scope of the grant given to Güllü Agop and his own theatre. Since opera was not included in the grant, Dikran Çuhacıyan, one of the first Eastern composers that blended the classical forms of the West with the musical structure and motives of the East, founded *Opera Kumpanyası* (The Opera Company), which became a significant rival to Güllü Agop, and greatly contributed to the development of musical performing arts in Istanbul. As Hilal L. Akgül explains, "the first example of an operetta composed by using Turkish musical mode and tempo was given by Dikran Çuhacıyan; the artist's work *Arif'in Hilesi* went down in history by being the first of its kind" (2009, 16, our translation). And, in 1876, "*Leblebici Horhor*, which was put in performance

by Dikran Çuhacıyan and whose libretto was written by Yakvo Nalyan, gained major fame in the country and became the first Turkish operetta performed abroad" (Türkiye Ansiklopedisi 1988, 1222).

During constitutional monarchy and after the end of this period, many Turkish performers were trained in theatres and operetta companies. Muhlis Sabahattin and Celal Sahir, known for works such as *Hilâliahmer Çiçeği, Ayşe,* and *Çaresaz,* joined *İstanbul Operet Heyeti* (The Istanbul Operetta Committee). According to Şenocak, "*İstanbul Operet Heyeti*, which was created under the administration of Kaptanzade Ali Rıza Bey after the year 1918, staged operettas whose plot and music were guided by Turkish history" (Şenocak 2009, 672, our translation). Operettas including national themes and Turkish musical structures were produced and staged; they were influenced by the Viennese, Italian and Parisian operettas and operas during the Westernization process that took place in Turkey in the first years of the newly formed Republic.

Hasan Ferid Alnar, Fahri Kopuz, and Kaptanzade Ali Rıza Bey enriched Turkish operettas with their compositions. Levon Hancıyan and Muallim Kazım Bey, who left their mark on the art of the operetta, became the architects of the 'Operetta Era' in Turkey. Muhlis Sebahattin is the last representative of the operettas composed in the mode of Turkish music.

Turkish operettas drawing on the techniques of Western music in the 1930s were written by Ekrem Reşit Rey and composed by his brother Cemal Reşit Rey. The process started *Şehir Tiyatroları* (The City Theatres). *Lüküs Hayat,* the most famous and successful Turkish operetta composed by Cemal Reşit Rey, was first staged in *İstanbul Şehir Tiyatroları* (The Istanbul City Theatres) in 1933 and is still performed today.

4. Opera and operetta translation from the Ottoman period to the modern Turkish republic

Itamar Even-Zohar's polysystem theory puts forward a comprehensive theoretical framework accounting for how literary systems function and develop. At the same time, Even-Zohar also questions the ways in which translated literature affects national literature, and how national literature views translated literature. The interaction between translated literature and the national literary system is paramount for our study, in terms of explaining the position operetta translation occupied in the 20th century. According to Even-Zohar, a polysystem is a dynamic and heterogeneous system involving a multiplicity of intersections and great complexity (1990a, 12).

In his answer to a student's question about the applicability of polysystem theory to musicals, Even-Zohar suggested that the theory "is about heterogeneity and the fact that at one and the same time, concurrent (and competing) options operate in culture. This general principle 'applies' to any social situation [...]. It all depends on what you are interested in" (quoted in McKelvey 2001, 3). Polysystem theory thus treats literature as a dynamic system, as opposed to the more static, Saussurean conception. Indeed, in Saussure's view, the socio-cultural system conceives synchronic relations where the value of each and every piece is a function of the specific relation into which it enters with the others, and although these functions and rules can be detected, it is hardly possible to account for the changes and variations the system has gone through in diachrony. The factor of time, in other words history, is absent from this view. Even-Zohar's framework, on the other hand, is able to account for aspects of variability and heterogeneity in time and place; it makes it possible to deal with literary systems rather than texts, and breaks away from the normative notion of 'literature' and 'culture' as limited sets of products, exploring instead the multi-layered interplay between 'center' and 'periphery', and 'canonized' and 'non-canonized' works.

Translational activity in Turkey goes back in time to the pre-Ottoman period. According to Saliha Paker, "translations from Arabic and Persian started in the thirteenth century and continued until the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the early twentieth century" (quoted in Berk 2006, 1). However, even though translation from Arabic and Persian continued until the decline of the Ottoman Empire, translations from European languages also began in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, when European culture started affecting Ottoman society. Literary translations from Western languages played the most crucial role in shaping this new culture and literary system. For the promoters of the Westernization process in Turkey, the West was the model for success to be followed in redefining the country's national and cultural identity.

It was after the promulgation of *Tanzimat* (the political reforms and reorganizations in the Ottoman Empire in 1839) that the empire entered a new era, an era of thinking outside the box, as it were. This was the time when the younger generation rejected the old established models in literature, and when the Westernization process aimed to modernize the Ottoman Empire: "New concepts, genres and philosophical ideas started to influence the Ottoman élites with the help of contacts established through embassies and students sent abroad" (Berk 2006, 2). In this context, literary translations started to be made from French into Turkish, enabling translated literature to move from the periphery towards the centre of the Turkish polysystem. However, in order to observe the magnitude of the change in the polysystem, we need to briefly look at the Ottoman literary system.

According to Berk, "Ottoman literature is generally formulated in terms of dichotomy: *Divan* (Court) and popular / folk literature which had a hierarchical relationship between canonized or 'high' and non-canonized or 'low' strata" (Berk 2004, 50). *Divan* literature, particularly poetry for the ruling class and the elites, was at the centre of the polysystem, whereas popular or folk literature remained on the periphery, as it was mainly destined for the peasantry. Since translations were mostly from Persian and Arabic, *Divan* literature was under the influence of Persian and Arabic literature in terms of form, imagery and vocabulary. Poetry and *aruz metre*, which was in fact unsuited to the structure of Turkish language, were the most important aspects of *Divan* literature. In *Divan* literature, "prose narrative maintained a 'secondary position' and 'poetic' prose *inşa* was the canonized prose style" (Berk 2004, 50). Even though the outcome sometimes did not make sense in terms of meaning, writers tried to rhyme the words, as style was very important at that time. In the end, unable to convey meaning in a way that was comprehensible, prose narrative started to decline.

As Berk explains, "[f]olk narrative, on the other hand, was mostly oral, had its roots in the pre-Islamic epics of Central Asia and was transmitted by minstrels" (2004, 51). Since it was oral, the language used by the minstrels was the Turkish of the people. However, "folk literature could not achieve a canonized status" as it was not appreciated by the higher class of the Ottoman society and, therefore, "Ottoman literature in *Tanzimat* was in a state of stagnation" (Berk 2004, 51). Some of the genres that could be found in European literatures, especially in French, were completely absent.

According to Komşuoğlu and Turan, "[d]uring this process in the nineteenth century in the Ottoman Empire, traditional music forms of the country were under discussion and opera found its audience as a part of the Western-style music tradition among Ottoman elites" (2007, 7). Thus, in the Ottoman Empire opera was for the elites, a situation which continued into the 20th century, despite (limited) efforts made to introduce it to larger crowds (see Komşuoğlu and Turan 2007, 16). However, with the proclamation of the Republic in 1923 – another turning point in Turkish history – political and cultural reforms took place. Translational activity started developing. An official Translation Bureau (*Tercüme Bürosu*) was established in 1940 to support translation; it was to have far-reaching influence on the Turkish socio-cultural system. Translations were mainly from European languages, so that "the young Republic could loosen its ties with the Islamic world of the East and create a modern, Western, Europe-oriented and secular society whose members would feel themselves to be primarily Turk" (Berk 2006, 6). New institutions were formed and existing ones were transformed, following European models: "Between the years 1923–1950 great importance was given to Western institutions of culture, such as orchestras, theatres, ballets, operas" (Berk 2006, 11).

Translations of Western plays, operas, and operettas were made, and with the establishment of *Konservatuar* (which had formerly been called *Darül Elhan* [The House of Music]) Western music was truly on its way to success in Turkey.

The libretti of the operatic plays were translated by the Translation Bureau and all these operas were performed in translation. The reason for translations to be performed was, first, to familiarise audiences with opera. Secondly, the most important aspect of the Westernization process was to promote the creation of a national literature influenced by Western culture and music; it was hoped that the translations of famous Western works would lead Turkish composers to create operas and operettas in Turkish.

Translating opera and operetta libretti and composing national operas and operettas continued until the 1960s. The works were translated in such a way that the public could understand them easily, and continue to attend performances. Mozart, Verdi, composers of the Italian verismo tradition, were translated and performed (Komşuoğlu and Turan 2007, 23). Saadet Ikesus Altan (1916–2007), who received vocal and stage training at Musikakademie Berlin between 1935 and 1940, was one of the first female opera performers, the first Turkish female opera performer taking stage in Europe, the first female opera director, and the founder of opera in Turkey. She was also a translator.

A libretto is the text used in an extended musical work such as an opera, operetta, oratorio, cantata or musical, which contains all the words and stage directions. Although it is sometimes referred to as 'the book', this usage excludes sung lyrics which are the paramount factors in an opera and operetta. Libretto translation has been debated for a very long time, as some prefer opera to be sung in the original language while other spectators wish to hear sung drama in their own language.

An original libretto creates an impact at the time and in the culture in which it was originally written. The translation of a libretto, such as the one written in the 19th century for Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*, should be able to create the same effect in the target culture, at the time when the translation is made, and be understood by the targeted audience. It is entirely normal for a translated libretto to feel somewhat alien to the target system. But if translation is an act of creative rewriting, then the translated libretto should not be expected to be fully equivalent to the original. A certain degree of freedom is absolutely necessary; the translator must be allowed to make the modifications the target culture, language, and the music itself require. While preserving the meaning conveyed by the text remains important, it is crucial that aspects such as the prosody rules of the target language should be given the attention they deserve (see detailed discussion in Apter and Herman 2016).

According to Jakobson, "translation is only an adequate interpretation of an alien code unit and equivalence is impossible" (1959, 233). For Nida, however,

dynamic equivalence leading to equivalent effect should be possible to achieve. With these considerations in mind, we examine in what follows several aspects of the Turkish translation of *Die Fledermaus*.

5. Strauss's *Die Fledermaus* in Turkish

Born in Vienna in 1825 and referred to as the 'King of Waltz' by the Viennese, Johann Strauss II is one of the most renowned operetta composers in Vienna and the world. However, had it not been for his mother, the world may never have gained such a musical talent. According to Altar,

> [t]he Strauss family agreed on raising one of their three sons as a musician; and yet the father objected to Johann being raised as a musician. It was the effort of his mother that Johann began taking violin lessons, and after the separation of his mother and father, Johann devoted himself to music freely and studied composition. He established a dancing orchestra consisting of fifteen people and attracted the attention of the public in a very short time. Johann Strauss evoked admiration with his concert tours involving the United States, and in the meantime, became the representative of Viennese grace and elegance in the art of music. He conducted the orchestras of the court balls of Vienna between the years 1863 and 1870, and later, handed over this job to his brother Eduard.   (2000, 17)

Johann Strauss provides an example of an outstanding composer of the operetta genre, whose works were sentimental and romantic, and whose political criticism is subtle and remains secondary to the romantic story line. Strauss's widely renowned operetta *Die Fledermaus* [The Bat] is an excellent example of the Vienesse operetta genre, whose libretto was authored by the French librettists Meilhac and Halévy and was later translated into German by Carl Heffner and composer Richard Genée. *Die Fledermaus* met the audience for the first time in 1874, in Vienna, and it was Strauss's third operetta for Vienna's Theatre an der Wien.

The work was based on a popular French vaudeville comedy. After its success in Vienna, it was performed quite often across Europe, and later in Turkey. *Die Fledermaus*, *Yarasa* in Turkish, was staged in 1934 for the first time, using Ekrem Reşit Rey's translation. Ekrem Reşit Rey contributed to the operetta genre not only with his translation work but also, in collaboration with his brother Cemal Reşit Rey, with Turkish operettas such as *Üç Saat*, *Lüküs Hayat*, *Deli Dolu*, *Saz Caz*, *Maskara*, *Hava Civa*, *Alabanda*, *Adalar*.

It is possible to find information about the performances of *Yarasa* since the 1960s up to now in the archives of the National Directorate of State Opera and Ballet. Initially (1962–1963), Mazhar Kunt's name is presented as the person who wrote the Turkish version of the work, instead of mentioning his name as

the Translator. Hasan Ferid Alnar and Aydın Gün translated the version of *Die Fledermaus* in use between 1967 and 1968, while Aydın Gün and Hakkı Şinasi Özel worked on the text once more for the next performances (1977–1978). Ten years later, Aydın Gün's translation was staged once more, with alterations (1986–1987). Finally, Hakkı Şinasi Özel retranslated *Die Fledermaus* once more for performances in the 1988–1989 season. Later performances (1988–1989, 1990–1991, 1995–1996, 2001–2002, 2008–2009, 2013–2014) were all based on the translation by Aydın Gün, but the stage director of the last performance, Murat Atak, states that he changed certain parts of the text for a more coherent and up-to-date presentation. Üstün Akmen gives an idea about the type and extent of Atak's alterations:

> With the exception of its musical dimension, Murat Atak has virtually restored the theatrical composition of the operetta, has artfully renewed and re-evaluated the frazzling parts, events, and wit of the libretto of Carl Haffner and Richard Genee without spoiling the dramatic action at all. […] Murat Atak has primarily cared about the text, and as a result, directed the operetta towards the audience as much as the listener. He has integrated the dramatic perfection he created with the melodic richness of the work. He has designed the stage with a wide ground plan that would meet the necessities of the performance. He has added dimension to the comic side of the work and embellished it by adding the name 'Ivan' to the characters. He has boosted the tempo by including the "Blue Danube Waltz" as a ballet to the second act and has fully accelerated the flow of the second act with the high performance of the "Can Can Dance" that appeals to the eye with its synchronized movements.   (Akmen, unpaginated, our translation)

The revised version by Murat Atak based on Aydın Gün's previous translation makes the object of our analysis in this part of the study. The cantabile parts of Gün's translation could not be obtained from the archives; nevertheless, sample dialogues from conversational parts are provided to illustrate translation points.

In *Die Fledermaus,* the comedy stems from infidelity, mistaken identities and frivolity. In the operetta, Dr Falke decides to embarrass his friend Eisenstein, who had left him to wonder home in a bat costume when he was drunk. Eisenstein, who has been condemned to spend a night in prison because he punched a police officer, plans to join a lavish party. Knowing that Eisenstein and his wife Rosalinde both have a tendency for extramarital relationships, Falke decides to bring the couple together at this party, under disguise. This results in a cycle of events in which the disguised couple flirts with each other. The operetta provides a happy ending for all the characters.

Peter Low (2005) developed an approach he calls "The Pentathlon Principle", which accounts for all the crucial factors involved in producing singable and performable translations of opera, songs and poetry (see also Low 2016). According to Low, along with the main skopos of a sung translation (which is that the text

must be singable in the target language), there are other considerations to bear in mind, and criteria to conform to. In Low's view, song-texts resemble both poetry and drama. Although, if surtitles are used, translating for singing might not always be necessary, in the case of operetta it is important, because such works mostly "gain from being comprehended instantly and directly by their audience" (Low 2003, 87). An interview with Turkish opera and operetta performers (Şenol Özdemir 2014) reveals that stage artists prefer original texts, but the element of laughter in operetta turns its translation into a necessity. Indeed, in many cases the success of a performance with the audience is linked to the translation, which makes it easier for spectators to accept it culturally.

According to Nick Olcott, the director of Strauss's operetta's 2014 staging at Maryland Opera Studio, "every production of *Die Fledermaus* is a premiere". He underlines that this work is still alive today due to improvements and adaptations made with each individual production:

> The script and even the score of this well-loved piece have been rather fluid as it's roamed around the globe through the years […] Fresh dialogue gets written. New pieces of music get inserted, and old ones get thrown out. *Die Fledermaus* may look so good because it's been getting facelifts for more than a century.
> ("Maryland Opera Studio Presents *Die Fledermaus*", unpaginated)

Olcott's comment seems quite valid for a work in which only the delightful music and the basic plot (infidelity, revenge and disguise) are preserved, while most of the dialogues are usually adapted in view of the various target languages and cultures.

According to Low's Pentathlon Principle, singability is the main priority in the translation of songs. Performability is, thus, the main criterion by which the translation can be assessed (Low 2003, 93), and experienced singers are the most competent to evaluate the translation. Nevertheless, to an extent, anyone with a sensitivity to sound and music is able to form an impression about whether the translation works on stage. The musicality of *Die Fledermaus* is must be preserved at all costs. Therefore, adaptation of the libretto is inevitable, although challenging. Our first example is from the first scene of Act 2:

(1)   Act 2, Scene 1. Adaptation for performability.

Libretto (1874)	English translation (1967–1968)	Revised Turkish translation (1986–1987)
Ein Souper heut uns winkt,	None like it has ever been;	*Ne güzel bir gece*
Wie noch gar keins dagewesen;	Choicest delicacies	*Eşi yok bir ziyafet bu*
Delikat, auserlesen	Always are eaten and drunk	*Ne kibar ne nefis burada*
Immer hier man speist und	here.	*yemekler içkiler*
trinkt	Everything filling the rooms	*Etrafı saran bu ihtişam*
Alles was mit Glanz die Räume	with brilliance	*Rüya gibi gelir bize*
füllt,	Seems to us like a dreamlike	*Herkes adeta büyülenmiş gibi*
Erscheint uns wie ein	vision.	*der ne latif*
Traumgebild'	As though spellbound in a	*Ne güzel ne latif*
Wie in einen Zauberkreis	Magic circle,	*Ne güzel bir gece*
gebannt,	Everything calls out: ah,	*Eşi yok bir ziyafet bu*
Ruft alles: Ha, charmant,	Amusing, yes, charming!	*Ne kibar ve nefis burada*
Amüsant, ja charmant!	Charming,	*yemekler içkiler*
Ein Souper heut uns winkt, etc.	A supper beckons us today,	
	etc.	

Although the rhyming endings in the source text ("*winkt*", "*trinkt*", "*füllt*", "*Traumgebild*", "*gebbannt*", "*charmant*") that contribute to the rhythm of the music could not be preserved, the rhythm is successfully recreated into Turkish. The choice of words such as "*ihtişam*", "*ziyafet*", "*büyülenmiş*" is compatible with the atmosphere of the work. The translator-director managed to transfer the song to the target language without sacrificing either the rhythm or the meaning. Despite the many changes which were deemed necessary, most of the songs, as is the case in Example (1), remain close to the original in terms of prosody and meaning. However, it should also be noticed that the Turkish version is not a "semantically exact" (Low 2014, 230) transfer; it reflects the original in accordance with its skopos, which is to be sung.

The second step of the Pentathlon Principle concerns the meaning of the original text. In certain cases it is important to use the nearest possible translation equivalents. In the case of *Die Fledermaus,* however, since each director creates a new version of the work, this step needs to be envisaged differently. Turkish versions of the work, as well as translations into other languages, adapt most of the content, aiming to provide the element of comedy. For example, the first version that belongs to Aydın Gün adds a dialogue between Ida and Adele concerning Adele's invitation letter to the ball:

(2)   Act 1, Scene 1. Dialogue added by Aydın Gün.

IDA: Adele! Seni böyle bir toplantıya kim davet etti?
ADELE: Kim mi davet etti seen….
IDA: Biri seninle eğlenmiş olmalı.Üstelik bu yazı da benim değil.
ADELE: Belli zaten, çok düzgün yazılmış, tek bir imla hatası bile yok.

The later version uses the comic potential of this dialogue by adding to it:

(3)   Act 1, Scene 1. Further additions.

IDA: Seni buraya kim davet etti? Doğru söyle, yoksa birini mi kafesledin?
ADELE: Şu ana kadar kimseyi kafeslemedim ama an meselesi. Bir asil, yakında enişten olabilir…
IDA: Atma, atma! Doğruyu söyle, seni buraya kim çağırdı?
ADELE: Ayol kim davet edecek? Tabi ki sen… Yazdığın mektubu ne çabuk unuttun?

This dialogue is written with a Turkish audience in mind. Ida asks Adele if she has stolen someone's heart or not, and Adele answers she has not found a man yet but that she can do it very easily. The original libretto does not include such an exchange, and the letter is mentioned just once, in the first scene of Act 1, when Adele tries to persuade Rosalinde to let her have the night off to see her aunt:

(4)   Act 1, Scene 1. The original dialogue.

Libretto (1874)	English translation (1967–1968)
Hahahaha! Ja	Ha ha ha ha! Yes!
Da schreibt meine Schwester, Ida,	Here writes my sister, Ida
Die ist nämlich beim Ballett:	She's in the ballet:
"Wir sind heut auf einer Villa	"Today, we will be at a villa
Wo es hergeht, flott und nett […]"	Where all is off and running […]"

The third criterion outlined by Low is naturalness. This criterion is very important in the case of *Die Fledermaus*, because it is precisely naturalness that has made this work survive for so long, in many countries around the world. Thus, domestic elements were added in the Turkish translation, especially where humour is concerned. The author of the revised translation aimed for naturalness, as can be seen in Example (5) below. The excerpt is from the Finale, where the original quatrain was rewritten into a poetic prose line in which the harmony is provided by means of an '-a' sound assonance; the original repetition of "Fledermaus" (which also appears in the English translation) is not used, as it would not feel natural.

(5)   Finale.

Libretto (1874)	English translation (1967–1968)	Revised Turkish translation (1986–1987)
ALLE *O Fledermaus, o Fledermaus,* *Lass endlich jetzt dein Opfer aus;* *Der arme Mann, der arme Mann,* *Ist gar zu übel dran.*	Oh Fledermaus, O Fledermaus, Release your victim finally; The poor man, the poor man, Has suffered too much.	*R., AD., I., FR., CHOR. –* *Artık yeter ey yarasa,* *kurbanını fazla üzme,* *zavallının hali bak çok fena*

Rhyme, which is the fourth principle according to Low, depends on the choices made by the translator more than the previous criteria do, since Low recognized that a margin of flexibility is necessary in terms of rhyme in order not to sacrifice the second criterion, which is the meaning. Therefore, while trying to translate a song-text that includes rhymes, not all source text rhymes need necessarily be preserved as such. In Example (6), the rhyme in the original is not recreated in the English translation, while the Turkish director-translator uses composite verbs that begin mostly with '-t' and '-i' sounds and end with '*etmek*' [to do], creating an effect in terms of rhyme, by means of hyperbole.

(6)   Rhyme effects in translation.

Libretto (1874)	English translation (1967–1968)	Revised Turkish translation (1986–1987)
BLIND *Rekurrieren, **appellieren*** *Reklamieren, **revidieren,*** *Reziepieren, **subvertieren,*** *Devolvieren, **involvieren,*** *Protestieren, **liquidieren,*** *Exzerptieren, **extorquieren*** *Arbitrieren, **resümieren!***	Petition, appeal, Complain, review, Prescribe, subvert, Devolve, involve, Protest, liquidate, Excerpt, extort, Arbitrate, summarize!	*Temin etmek, temyiz etmek,* *tetkik etmek, tecdit etmek,* *tehir etmek, tertip etmek, tespit* *etmek, temdit etmek, tassih* *etmek, tadil etmek, tahfif etmek,* *talik etmek, isnat etmek, ibraz* *etmek, icra etmek, imza etmek,* *itham etmek, inkâr etmek ve* *zafer mutlak sizindir.*

Finally, the last criterion in Low's classification, rhythm, actually supports the first one, singability. Low stresses the importance of syllables, but due to the many cultural, semantic, syntactic, and grammatical differences in language pairs such as German and Turkish, this criterion can hardly be met in practice.

6. Concluding remarks

Operetta, a borrowed performing art genre, has become a part of the Turkish musical polysystem not only thanks to translated works but also through original Turkish creations throughout the 19th and the 20th centuries. However, the degree of acceptability of the translations, as well as their performability, is open to discussion, as this study seeks to reveal.

When parts from *Die Fledermaus* are analysed through the framework of Low's Pentathlon Principle, it becomes clear that the libretto was translated into Turkish successfully (the revised text) through cultural adaptation, and by giving priority to naturalness. Gün's translation is lacking in both, since it is a more source-text oriented translation; however, many of its creative solutions represented a starting point for the revised version.

The successive translations present changing approaches to operetta, to translation strategy, and also to language. Clearly, performability and singability became crucial factors in the later Turkish version, much more than in Gün's rendering. Gün used a more elite – and yet plain – language, which sounded perfectly acceptable to the audience the translation sought to address at the time when it was made; the revised version, on the other hand, targets a broader audience of operetta lovers. In this sense, it is possible to suggest that the original aim of the operetta genre, which was to create a 'lighter' form of entertainment by comparison with opera and musical theatre, more accessible and more popular than the so-called 'higher' forms of performing arts, has been achieved in Turkey.

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Libretto translation revisited

Two English translations of Jaroslav Kvapil's *Rusalka* libretto

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This study investigates two translations into English of Jaroslav Kvapil's *Rusalka* libretto, set to music by Antonín Dvořák: the singing translation in verse by Daphne Rusbridge (1954) and Paula Kennedy's (1998) prose translation. It identifies sources in mythologies and folk tales, and outlines notable characteristics of language and composition in the Czech libretto. Semantic and stylistic shifts are discussed, with the aim of highlighting the impact of constraints under which the translators had to work, rather than criticising discovered shifts as avoidable errors. A summary of the translation shifts found, and their implications for the reception in English of Kvapil's libretto, includes both critical and favourable comments.

Keywords: Rusalka, Czech mythology, Jaroslav Kvapil, Antonín Dvořák, translation shift, opera translation, singing translation, singability

1.   Genesis of the *Rusalka* libretto and of the opera

There are numerous literary antecedents of Jaroslav Kvapil's dramatic poem *Rusalka, a Lyrical Fairy Tale in Three Acts*, adopted unchanged by Antonín Dvořák as the libretto for his opera, especially perhaps Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué's *Undine*, but his most direct inspiration, according to his article *O vzniku Rusalky* [The genesis of Rusalka][1] (Kvapil 1911), was Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid* and the Czech folk poetry of Karel Jaromír Erben (1811–1870). In his memoirs he recalls:

> In Andersen's homeland, on the Danish island of Bornholm, where I spent a holiday in 1899, I recalled from my childhood Andersen's fairy tale about the mermaid who, out of love for a human being, suffered the tortures of muteness

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1. Translations of quotations and titles (identified throughout by enclosure within square brackets) are my own unless otherwise noted.

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and the curse of damnation when her beloved deserted her and she chose not to purchase her own freedom at the cost of spilling his blood. I began to compose an opera text in the tone of Erben and although echoes of the famous *Sunken Bell* crept into it, I suppose, I think the *Rusalka* libretto is very Czech and I believe the spirit of Erben, so instinctively close to Dvořák's sensibilities, was crucial for its happy fortunes. (Kvapil 1946, 254)

Traditional folk beliefs personified many natural phenomena. Slav mythological characters have their origins in primitive fear of the elements – water, fire, earth and air – and they appear in tales of the supernatural as warnings of their dangers. For example, the water nymph (Czech and Russian *rusalka*) and the spirit of the lake (Czech *vodník*, Russian *vodyanoi*) drown unwary swimmers. Such mythological figures, widely met in folk tales, populate the *Rusalka* story, but their characterisation is here more benign, more 'human'. I adopt the term 'Spirit of the Lake' for *Vodník*, in preference to 'Water Sprite', 'Water Gnome' etc., in sympathy with his less grotesque characterisation in Kvapil's *Rusalka* (cf. German *Wassermann*). He is sometimes referred to in Czech as *pán vody* ['the lord of the lake'] (Tóth 2008, 43). Kvapil's invisible *Rusalka* lovingly embraces the Prince who comes to bathe in the lake – as she confides to the Spirit of the Lake (*Vodník*), mentioning that the Prince is unaware of her, as she is "merely a wave". Subsequently, when she is magically turned into a (mute) human, the heroine acquires a moral conscience and selfless free will. The Spirit of the Lake is a benign, fatherly figure, contrasting with the violent eponymous *Vodník* in Erben's poem. He is sometimes referred to playfully in the libretto as *Hastrmánek*, which I might render, for a similar stylistic effect, as 'Lake-Mannikin'.[2]

Kvapil's merely playful *lesní žínky* ['wood nymphs'] would, in folk beliefs, lure young men into forest glades and there dance them to death. Tóth (2008, 41) refers to them as *lesní víly* [wood nymphs / wood fairies].

Ježibaba ['the forest witch'] is a Slav witch corresponding in some respects to the Russian *Baba Yaga* (Cheek 2009, 10). Elizabeth Warner (2002, 73) associates *Baba-Yaga* with the Czech *jezinka*. According to Michálek (1976, 103) the *jezinka* is a folk-tale being of ancient provenance, an evil character living in the forest. In Karel Jaromír Erben's Czech folk-tale, people who venture into the woods are liable to be put to sleep by the eponymous *jezinky*, who then gouge out their eyes. Michálek adds that in other Slavonic languages, and more recently in Czech, similar folk-tale beings are also called *ježibaba* or *jagababa*. The dramatis personae

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2. Cf. the *Seemännchen* (Lake-Mannikin) of Nordic / Germanic mythology, e.g.: "Another story of the Seewen-Weher (pond) near Rippoldsau, in the Black Forest: A lake-mannikin liked coming to the folks at Seewen farm, would do jobs there all day, and not return into his lake until evening." (Grimm 1883, 485)

are identified in the original by generic names, but in translation the Czech terms *Rusalka* and *Ježibaba*, sometimes also *Vodník*, are commonly adopted as proper names. In the words of Alena Valšubová, "it is self-evident that in its musical conception *Rusalka* is a drama of nature and its elements. The characters are […] a personification of natural phenomena" (1991, 36).

Alexandr Stich (1992, 11–19) points out the role of opera in Bohemia in the late 19th / early 20th century, when it was seen more as a political statement, reinforcing awareness of Czech culture in the germanising Austro-Hungarian Empire, than as an aesthetic achievement per se. He suggests that Kvapil's view of the Czechness of his libretto had more to do with the success enjoyed by the opera as a whole in the intervening years.

Jaroslav Kvapil (1868–1950), not to be confused with the Czech composer of the same name (1892–1958), was a poet and dramatist, and Director of the National Theatre in Prague. He wrote several dramas in verse, of which *Rusalka, a Lyrical Fairy Tale in Three Acts*, is considered his crowning literary achievement. Jaromír Borecký, who says he was the first to read Kvapil's manuscript, considered that the foreign folk-tale motifs were wonderfully treated, imbued with Czech Erbenesque style. He records that Dvořák was so taken with its poetic qualities that he immediately decided to adopt it. (Borecký 1918, 18–19). Of Kvapil's achievement Markéta Hallová writes:

> The literature on Kvapil's libretto has concentrated almost exclusively on foreign influences, such as Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué, Andersen, Hauptmann, Grillparzer, and others. But it is not so important to determine the provenance of Kvapil's inspiration for his themes, or the models. The valuable contribution of *Rusalka* as such lies in the actual treatment. […] An immense dramatic conception is reflected in the structure of the work as a whole, and above all this conception has endowed the theme with the imprint of a profound philosophical content.
> (1996, 110–112)

2.   English translations of *Rusalka*

A performance of *Rusalka* was broadcast in Britain by the BBC Home Service and Third Programme in April 1949, with an (unpublished) English libretto by Christopher Hassall (Kvapil 1949). This translation is poetically more natural than the version by Daphne Rusbridge (Kvapil 1954) investigated in detail below, but (like Rusbridge) it strays somewhat from the content of the original in order to follow the musical notation and is, inevitably perhaps, stylistically now rather dated, containing archaisms considered inappropriate today. For example, Ježibaba

addresses Rusalka (inconsistently) as 'thou' and as 'you' in the same breath: "Whether you taste of love or no / – Thou shalt be dumb."

Rodney Blumer wrote a new translation for the English National Opera production directed by David Pountney in 1983 (Kvapil 1982). Though stylistically appropriate, Blumer's (unpublished) version was also semantically somewhat adapted to follow the musical notation.

Here is a brief comparative example to give a taste of the work of Hassall and Blumer respectively. As Act 1 opens, wood nymphs are singing and dancing in a forest glade by a lake; they tease the Spirit of the Lake as he awakes and rises to the surface:

> *Hastrmánek chce se ženit, / která z vás chce vodu pěnit, / dědka česat, lože změnit, / hou, hou, hou, / s babkou hastrmanovou?* (Act 1, lines 24–28[3] of Kvapil's original Czech; 1948, 216)

To assist comparison, I could suggest the following literal translation:

> Lake-Mannikin wants to marry, / which of you wants to make the water foam, / comb the old man's hair, / change beds / hey-ya-ho / with Lake-Mannikin's old woman?

and my own literary version:

> Lake-Mannikin would like a wife, / so which of you will cause some strife, / brush the hair on the old man's head, / hey-ya-ho, / usurp the Old Green Woman's bed?

Christopher Hassall's translation involves changes to the semantic content:

> Quaint old fellow longs to marry. / What bold nymph now dares to tarry, / Share his pillow, / Rule the billow? / Ho, ho. / Who would be his ugly wife? / That would be a wretched life. / Hey-ya ho.

Rodney Blumer's translation of these lines also shows a change of perspective in the dramatic roles:

> Water spirit from below, / Tell us quickly, do not tarry, / which of us you mean to marry, / under water, which you'll carry, / hei-ya, hei-ya, / which of us is it to be?

The following published English translations are known to have appeared: Daphne Rusbridge (1954), Yveta Synek Graff (1993), Paula Kennedy (1998), Timothy Cheek (2009, 85–250) and Jeff Clarke (2012). Jeff Clarke's singing translation is substantially adapted in content and language. There are various unpublished sets

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3. Here and throughout the article, the line numbers, counted separately for each act, are based on Kvapil (1948).

of surtitles in use;[4] surtitles are a special form of translation, distinct from literary translation; typically, their purpose is to provide only the gist of the original libretto.

The singing translation of the *Rusalka* libretto by Daphne Rusbridge published in 1954 continues to be included, together with a German singing translation, in the vocal score published in the scholarly Bärenreiter Urtext series (most recent edition: Dvořák and Kvapil 2006). A booklet available to audiences attending contemporary performances of *Rusalka* in Czech at the National Theatre / State Opera in Prague (Dvořák and Kvapil 2005) also contains this English singing translation, albeit with serious copying errors. This surprisingly long run makes Daphne Rusbridge's version a prime candidate for investigation.

Rusalka is today sung in the original Czech worldwide, and reception of the opera by audiences not having a good knowledge of this language can be enhanced by an accompanying published translation to be read before and / or after a performance. Until the mid-19th century, the audience could follow the printed libretto during actual performances, as the lighting in opera theatres was not dimmed. This was, of course, a distraction from the visual performance on stage and it was even more intrusive than modern projected surtitles.

3.   A comparison of two selected translations of the *Rusalka* libretto

Two contrasting translations of the *Rusalka* libretto are selected for investigation and comparison: Daphne Rusbridge's singing, partially rhyming version (Kvapil 1954, continually in use by Bärenreiter and the Prague opera theatres from 1954 to this day, and therefore a rather obvious subject for the present investigation), and Paula Kennedy's prose version (Kvapil 1998).

These texts are examined in order to identify semantic and stylistic shifts in the light of the respective strategies and solutions adopted by the translators. The term 'translation shift' was first introduced by John C. Catford (1965, 73–82), though the concept was familiar from the work of Vinay and Darbelnet (1958, 46–55). Various translation shift models are reviewed by Jeremy Munday (2001, 55–71). In the present study, translation shifts are understood as modifications of semantic or stylistic components of the source message, involving their deletion or amplification, additions in the form of explicitation or gratuitous over-interpretation, and radical changes of denotational or connotational meaning. As Levý (2011, 114) suggests, "[b]ecause translators are interpreters of the text, they not only translate

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4. I am grateful to Beno Blachut of the National Theatre in Prague, who kindly sent me two sets of English surtitle texts currently in use (2015), by Ivan Vomáčka and Milena Jandová, respectively.

it but they also explain it, i.e., they logicalise it, fill it out and intellectualise it." Such shifts frequently represent the explicitation of what Roman Ingarden (1973, 50-51) terms "places of intederminacy". Ingarden (1973, 50–51) explains the importance of the cognitive process in reading. An understanding of this process is doubly vital for an understanding of the translation process, which should involve first of all close reading of the original, then a true representation of its message in the target language, taking into account what it says only implicitly as importantly as what it does make specific and explicit. Ingarden's *places of indeterminacy* are aspects of the meaning of the text which are implicitly understood by the reader. These implicit meanings or connotations may vary from reader to reader, or they may not be understood or even perceived at all by a given reader, according to how they interpret (that is to say *concretise*) the text. Consequently, close reading, interpretation and concretisation are crucial initial phases of the translation process, followed by the process of expressing the perceived message in the appropriate forms of the target language. We have to ask whether, in particular literary translations, these processes have successfully rendered the message of the original text or whether they have led to over-interpretation or even misconstrual.

It is beyond the scope of the present study to address problems of singability criteria and the further complex constraints imposed on a translated libretto text. The latter must conform not only to a pre-existing musical composition and to the requirements of the director of a given stage performance, but also to the original text; such complexities are addressed at length by, e.g., Klaus Kaindl, who defines the topic of his important work (Kaindl 1995, 2) as the translation of operas for singing as stage performance. According to Dinda L. Gorleé, "[v]ocal translation is the translation of the poetic discourse in the hybrid art of the musicopoetic (or poeticomusical) forms, shapes, and skills, harmonizing together the conflicting roles of both artistic media: music and language in face-to-face singing performances" (2005, 7). The analysis focuses here on the semantic and stylistic impact of translation shifts, which in the case of Daphne Rusbridge's version may or may not be causally linked to musical constraints or adherence to rhyme patterns in all cases. Translation shifts associated with the remit of Paula Kennedy's communicative translation – namely to faithfully convey the semantic content of the original libretto in stylistically less complex but accurate prose – mainly involve explicitation. As a translation procedure, this is understood as the explicit rendering of meaning that is merely implicit in the source text.

The primary purpose of the present study is not to criticise discovered translation shifts as avoidable errors (indeed, the explicitation of implicit content may be appropriate), or to suggest that the translators should have better conveyed the style of the original, but, rather, to consider them in the context of the respective constraints under which they had to work.

Daphne Rusbridge's version, as a singing translation, is constrained to follow Dvořák's musical notation, the latter being associated with the natural rhythm, acoustic properties and syntax of Czech, markedly different from those of the English language. Form therefore dominates over both content and style. Rhyme patterns are not emulated throughout, however; they are a secondary feature, adaptation to the musical notation being primary, in many cases apparently precluding rhyme. Rhyming possibilities are further systemically constrained by the asymmetry of the rhyme repertoires of the respective languages, and only occasionally are the original patterns followed exactly.

In the following Chorus from Act 2, where the rhyme pattern in the original Czech libretto is ababcdcdefef, Daphne Rusbridge rhymes alternate lines (the English rhyme words are: pasture / laughter, manhood / stood and rays / grace):[5]

Excerpt 1.   Act 2, lines 137–148.

JK ababcdcdefef	DR pasture / laughter manhood / stood rays / grace
Květiny bílé po cestě,	White flowers blooming by the way,
po cestě všude kvetly,	Dotting both field and pasture.
hoch jel a jel k své nevěstě	Off rode the youth to see his bride,
a den se smál tak světlý.	Gay was the day with laughter.
Nemeškej, hochu, k milé spěš,	Tarry not, stripling, hasten on.
dorosteš záhy v muže,	Soon you will grow to manhood,
zpátky až tudy pojedeš,	Red roses gay when you return,
pokvetou rudé růže.	Will bloom where white the flowers stood.
Květiny bílé nejdříve	Flowers white bloomed beside the way,
úpalem slunce zašly,	Wilted beneath the sun's rays,
ale ty růže ohnivé,	But the red roses, passion red,
svatební lože krášlí!	They will our lovers' couch grace.

The above contrasts with the sporadic rhyme found, for example, in Ježibaba's aria in Act 3, where the rhyme pattern of the original is aabbcdcd, but in Daphne Rusbridge's translation only two pairs of rhyme words are found: kiss / wilderness and earth / birth:

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5. This and all subsequent excerpts are annotated as follows: JK stands for Jaroslav Kvapil's original text in Czech (line numbers based on Kvapil 1948), DR refers to the translation by Daphne Rusbridge (Kvapil 1954), and PK designates the translation by Paula Kennedy (Kvapil 1998).

Excerpt 2.   Act 3, lines 25–32.

JK aabbcdcd	DR kiss / wilderness; earth / birth
Krátké bylo milování,	Short indeed the time of love
dlouhé bude naříkání,	Long the bitter time of mourning,
po hubičkách mužských úst,	After passionate human kiss
nekonečný, věčný půst!	Cruel and bleak the wilderness.
Člověk je člověk, živlů vyvrhel,	Humans are humans, scum of elements,
z kořenů země dávno vyvrácen –	Long ago spewed from the bowels of the earth,
běda, kdo jeho lásku poznat chtěl,	Woe, you who wanted that love to engender
jeho kdo zradou je teď zatracen!	Simply to monstrous betrayal gave birth.

According to Jiří Levý, typical translational tendencies take the form of shifts in three directions: (a) between general and specific denominations; (b) between stylistically neutral and expressive denominations; (c) between repetition and variation of vocabulary (Levý 2011, 114). However, where form is dominant, on the principle of musicocentrism (*prima la musica e poi le parole*), Gorlée (2005, 8) translation shifts may be the consequence of ad hoc imperatives rather than any broad translational tendencies.

In the space of the present article, it is possible to mention only a few selected sample cases of translation shifts. Daphne Rusbridge often achieves a match with the musical notation evidenced by the vocal score (Dvořák and Kvapil 2006) by abandoning some ideo-aesthetic content,[6] i.e., semantic or stylistic components of the original libretto; furthermore, gratuitous padding is frequently added to achieve the requisite syllable count and / or rhyme.

Paula Kennedy's version was written for global dissemination, so it is designed to communicate the sense of the original in a form of straightforward prose comprehensible also to non-native English speakers. In this translation, adjustment to the communicative criteria entails abandoning some stylistic qualities of the original; the most common form of shift is, predictably for this *skopos*, explicitation.

4.   Semantic and stylistic shifts in the two translations

The selection of examples of semantic and stylistic shifts in the two translations focuses on the representation in English of mythological and folkloric dimensions

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6. An original work of art is created […] as the reflection and subjective transformation of objective reality; the outcome of this creative process is an ideo-aesthetic content realised in verbal material. (Levý 2011, 24)

of the *Rusalka* libretto and aspects of their treatment in the translated text, taking into account significant features of the style of the original. The latter include repetition of key words and phrases, for example repetition of forms of address, highlighting contacts between characters, repetition of imperatives, adding urgency to the situation and repetition of interjections and declarations for semantic and emotional intensification.

A further stylistic dimension within the prominent stylistic strategy of repetition is the use of diminutives, both in forms of address and as a means of characterisation. In the vocal score, further repetition is added for purposes of musical expression. However, as Alexandr Stich (1992, 27) points out, it is important to bear in mind that "Kvapil's repetitions are an inherent and inseparable component of the rhythmical structure of his verse."

Relevant themes are descriptions of the natural setting, the naming and characterisation of mythological protagonists, and features of their discourse. These themes are naturally intertwined in the texts and, similarly, shifts of various categories overlap; in order to compare the representation of the complex mythological-folkloric theme across the two translation versions, the excerpts from them will be shown in parallel.

4.1   Act 1: The opening scene

The opening scene of Act 1 presents a woodland setting at night-time with a lake, the habitat and domain of Vodník, the Spirit of the Lake, and Rusalka, the Water Nymph. The lakeside is further populated by other mythological figures, the diaphanous young wood nymphs singing, dancing and teasing the old Spirit of the Lake. The next four excerpts, below, showing the original Czech libretto in parallel with Daphne Rusbridge's and Paula Kennedy's translations, are from the opening Chorus of the Wood Nymphs.

Excerpt 3.   Act 1, lines 1–2.

JK	DR	PK
Hou, hou, hou,	Ho, ho, ho! Ho, ho, ho!	Ho, ho, ho,
stojí měsíc nad vodou!	Bright the fullmoon lights the flow,	the moon hangs above the lake!

Key concepts here are "*voda*" ['water' / 'lake'], "*měsíc*" ['the moon'], and the characters "*vodník*" / "*hastrman*" ['spirit of the lake' / 'lake-mannikin'] and "*lesní žínky*" ['wood nymphs']. Setting this scene in translation, Daphne Rusbridge fills in various places of indeterminacy, deriving contextual information to interpret and render explicit what is implied by "*stojí měsíc nad vodou*" [the moon hangs above

the lake], i.e., that there is a full moon, brilliantly lighting up the lakeside scene, a characteristic setting in Slav mythology: "Bright the fullmoon lights the flow". Personifying the moon and indicating its brightness in the next line, Kvapil writes: "*Zvědavě se v hloubku dívá*" ['(the moon) peers with curiosity into the depths']. The contribution of the translational strategy to cultural transfer in the setting of this scene is diminished by Daphne Rusbridge's lexical choice of "flow" (to rhyme with "*Ho, ho, ho!*"). Such a denotation of running water is inappropriate, as it gives an erroneous interpretation of a key concept at the heart of the opera's setting, that is to say the lake where mythological beings dwell. The interpretation of the water as a lake is confirmed in the source text by the description of the setting of Act 1 in the score: "*Palouk na okraji jezera*" ['A glade at the shores of a lake'] and by various subsequent lines such as, for example: "*Po jezeře tančí vánek*" ['A gentle breeze dances over the lake']. In any case, "*voda*" ['water'] in this familiar natural environment (even disregarding the mythological context) would be interpreted by a Czech audience or reader as a "lake" or "pond". Its representation by the word "flow", denoting running water, is therefore inappropriate as a representation of the natural setting familiar in mythology; it is evidently devised purely for the purposes of rhyme.

Excerpt 4.   Act 1, lines 3–7.

JK	DR	PK
Zvědavě se v hloubku dívá,	Sharply through the depths she peers,	Curious, the moon peers into the depths,
po kamení ke dnu splývá,	Silver trails o'er stones, through meres.	sending her beams to the bottom of the lake,
hastrmánek hlavou kývá,	Water-gnome he sits a-nodding	where a Water Sprite shakes his head.
hou, hou, hou,	To and fro,	Ho, ho, ho,
starou hlavou zelenou.	With his old green face aglow.	his old green head.

Both translators convey Kvapil's personification of the moon, which is represented by the author as a mythological protagonist of this lyrical fairy tale. Daphne Rusbridge's rendering of the semantic content is not close, however; her lexical choices are largely governed by the demands of the rhyme scheme. The word "mere" is an excellent poetic synonym of "lake", but the plural form, chosen to rhyme with "peers", is incompatible with the present intimate scenario. The stylistic register would seem to call for "bed" of the lake rather than the generalised, low-style "bottom" chosen by Paula Kennedy; her rendering "shakes his head" suggests that the Spirit of the Lake is expressing disagreement, rather than that he is asleep.

Excerpt 5.   Act 1, lines 9–15.

JK	DR	PK
Kdo to chodí nocí tou?	Ho, ho, ho! Ho, ho, ho!	who goes there through this night?
Hou, hou, hou!	Who goes there, is't friend or foe?	Ho, ho, ho,
Hastrmánku, měsíc stoupá,	Water-gnome, the moon is mocking	Water Sprite, the moon is rising,
už se tobě v okně houpá,	Through your window see her rocking,	she is peeping through your window
za chvíli se k tobě vloupá,	Thief she is, she'll not come knocking	and in a moment will steal in,
hou, hou, hou,	Ho, ho, ho,	ho, ho, ho, ho,
ve tvou síňku stříbrnou!	At your silvery parlour, oh!	into your silvery hall!

Daphne Rusbridge's "friend or foe" is a rhyme-driven addition. She also introduces unwarranted negative characterisation of the personified moon. "*Měsíc … se … vloupá*" ['The moon will steal in'] denotes only intrusion (in an ironic sense) here, it does not denote robbery; indeed, the phrase "Thief she is" is contrary to the benign perception of the moon as a sympathetic protagonist. Such negative characteristics are entirely out of character, as witnessed most expressively by Rusalka's aria to the moon (see below), where she appeals for its assistance.

The rhyme words "mocking" / "knocking" have little to do with the original text. It is not possible to identify either of these words as associated with some concept found in the context. The verb "*houpá*" suggests the moon bobbing on the surface of the lake as it ripples in the breeze; in Paula Kennedy's version it is "peeping" through this metaphorical window on the Spirit of the Lake's realm. "Mocking" and "thief" are characterisations of the moon contrasting with its benign role in the original libretto.

In the stage directions at this point, Daphne Rusbridge translates "*Vodník se vynoří…*" ['The Spirit of the Lake surfaces…'] as "The watergnome climbs out of the water, …" (Dvořák and Kvapil 2006, 17) suggesting that the Spirit of the Lake has left the watery environment to which he is by definition confined in the mythology, and as spelt out elsewhere in the stage directions: "*Skotačí kolem vodníka, který z vody nemůže*" ['(The wood nymphs) cavort around the Spirit of the Lake, who cannot leave the water'] (Dvořák and Kvapil 2006, 20).

Further radical shifts in semantic content evidently result from her response to the demands of rhyme here; in her version, little is conveyed of this playfully suggestive scene (lines 23–28). Paula Kennedy renders the semantic content fairly

fully. However, "*babka*" is a (here jocular) derogative characterisation like "old woman" (not necessarily denoting old in years); it does not denote "Grandma":

Excerpt 6.   Act 1, lines 23–28.

JK	DR	PK
Hastrmánek nad vodou!	Water-gnome has left the lake,	the Water Sprite is coming to the surface!
Hastrmánek chce se ženit,	Water-gnome, he wants to marry	Water Sprite wants to get married,
která z vás chce vodu pěnit,	Which of you will fetch and carry?	which of us will make the water foam, comb
dědka česat, lože změnit,	Come and tell him, do not tarry	the old one's tangled locks, take the place –
hou, hou, hou,	Ho, ho, ho!	ho, ho, ho –
s babkou hastrmanovou?	Be his wife and with him go.	of Grandma Water Sprite?

The Spirit of the Lake welcomes the wood nymphs dancing on the shore of the lake:

Excerpt 7.   Act 1, line 29.

JK	DR	PK
I pěkně vítám z lesa k jezeru!	A merry welcome, ye of woods and lake.	You are most welcome here in the lake, you denizens of sylvan glades!

Daphne Rusbridge's translation: "A merry welcome, ye of woods and lake" gives a false impression of the identity of the wood nymphs; it is suggested that they belong to the lake as well as to the woods, whereas in the mythology they are specifically of the woods and indeed there is a playful interaction between the denizens of the respective environments in this scene. Paula Kennedy's version is accurate, explicit and adds poetic style. There follows the responding chorus of water nymphs:

Excerpt 8.   Act 1, lines 38–44.

JK	DR	PK
Lesní žínky	Wood-Sprites	Wood Nymphs
Hastrmánku heja hej,	Water-gnome, oh heigh, oh heigh,	Water Sprite, hey, hey,
tedy si nás nachytej!	Try to catch a sprite at play.	try and catch us if you can!

Kterou chytíš, mužíčku,	If you catch us, ugly wight,	Whichever one you catch, dear man,
dá ti pěknou hubičku,	You can claim a kiss as right.	will give you a nice kiss!
ale žena, ha, ha, ha,	But your wife, then, hee, hee, hee,	But your wife, ha ha ha,
za uši ti vytahá!	She will pull your ears for ye!	will pull your ears for you!

In contrast to the cruel, vindictive character in Erben's folk verse, Kvapil's Spirit of the Lake in this work is a benign, fatherly figure, though he does eventually swear to avenge his wronged Rusalka. Daphne Rusbridge's rhyme-driven translation of the above lines inappropriately characterises him in a negative fashion. The wood nymphs address him with the term of endearment "*mužíčku*" ['dear little man']; this is replaced with the derogative appellation "ugly wight".

Excerpt 9.   Act 1, line 47.

JK	DR	PK
Rusalka	Rusalka	Rusalka
Hastrmánku, tatíčku!	Water-gnome, oh father dear!	Father Water Sprite!

Another diminutive-endearing form of address, "*tatíčku*" ['daddy'] (excerpt above), Rusalka uses to call her "father", the Spirit of the Lake, is not rendered with an English diminutive counterpart in either translation.

4.2   The aria to the moon

The next excerpt from Act 1 is Rusalka's appeal to the personified all-seeing moon to help her find her beloved Prince. The respective translations of this important aria are discussed in the notes below, referring to specific lines:

Excerpt 10.   Act 1, lines 100–114.

JK	DR	PK
Měsíčku na nebi hlubokém,	Silver moon upon the deep, dark sky	O moon in the velvet heavens,
světlo tvé daleko vidí,	Through the vast night pierce your rays,	your light shines far,
po světě bloudíš širokém,	This sleeping world you wander by	you roam throughout the whole world,
díváš se v příbytky lidí.	Smiling on men's homes and ways.	gazing into human dwellings.
Měsíčku, postůj chvíli,	Oh moon, ere past you glide	O moon, stay a while,

řekni mi, kde je můj milý?	Tell me, where does my loved one bide?	tell me where my beloved is!
Řekni mu, stříbrný měsíčku,	Tell him, oh tell him, my silver moon,	O tell him, silver moon,
mé že jej objímá rámě,	Mine are the arms that shall hold him	that my arms enfold him,
aby si alespoň chviličku	That between waking and sleeping he may	in the hope that for at least a moment
vzpomenul ve snění na mě.	Think of the love that enfolds him.	he will dream of me.
Zasvěť mu do daleka,	Light his path far away,	Shine on him, wherever he may be,
řekni mu, kdo tu naň čeká!	Tell him who does for him stay!	and tell him of the one who awaits him here!
O mně-li duše lidská sní,	Human soul, should it dream of me	If a human soul should dream of me,
ať se tou vzpomínkou vzbudí!	Let by memory wakened be.	may he still remember me on awaking;
Měsíčku, nezhasni, nehasni!	Moon, oh moon, oh do not wane…	o moon, do not fade away!

The first word of the aria to the moon ("*Měsíčku*") is morphologically significant, carrying much more meaning than the plain denotation "moon". It is a diminutive form signifying endearment and it is also a form of address (in grammatical terms, the vocative case). This means that, from the outset, we know the water nymph is addressing the moon as a sympathetic observer. In this opera the moon indeed becomes a protagonist, to whom the mythological water nymph appeals for assistance. The nature of this relationship is further highlighted by the use of intimate rather than formal means of address. The functions of these grammatically distinct forms in Czech are difficult to convey in English, but they are amongst the most prominent stylistic features of Kvapil's lyrical fairy tale (cf. Stich 1992, 30) and, along with the frequent repetition of these and other expressions, constitute a powerful intensifying element of the composition, further enhanced by Dvořák's musical setting, which exploits them wonderfully. Daphne Rusbridge translates "*Měsíčku*" as "Silver moon", anticipating an attribute appearing in subsequent lines, but functionally this is only padding, designed to match the original syllable count. Paula Kennedy has "O moon", conveying in a simple but effective way the form of address, thereby also evoking the sense of appeal to the moon, while "in the velvet heavens" adds a poetic enhancement, depicting the bland "moon" in a softening, enriching context.

Daphne Rusbridge's sharp verb "pierce" is at odds with Kvapil's sympathetic characterisation of the moon. Paula Kennedy renders the metaphor as an explicitation: "*vidí*" ['sees'] becomes "shines". The verb "*bloudíš*" is an allusion to the outcome of the story, when the water nymph is condemned to become a *bludička* ['will o' the wisp']. Rusbridge's "wander by" loses this connection; the translation "roam" better anticipates it. Her addition of "smiling" is in contrast with her previous depiction of the moon (cf. "pierce" in l.2), so it probably serves merely to match the syllable count. Daphne Rusbridge's evidently rhyme-driven solution replaces the imperative verb "*postůj*", entailing loss of this instantiation of a prominent feature of Kvapil's expressive style. Her translation presents a grammatical shift from present tense "*objímá*" to future tense "shall hold". In terms of the plot and the mythological curse that is to come, this may be considered an invalid foreshadowing.

Daphne Rusbridge's version is a notable example of unwieldy syntax ("Let by memory wakened be"), adopted in order to achieve the rhyme, detracting considerably from the ideo-aesthetic content of the original, especially as the rhyme-word found is weak: "be". The stylistically important repetition of the imperative ("*nezhasni*" ['do not fade away']) is not consistently followed here in either translation.

4.3   Ježibaba, the forest witch

There now follows the scene in Act 1 where, in response to Rusalka's pleading, the forest witch Ježibaba casts spells, bringing the water nymph out of her mythological watery environment onto dry land and turning her into a (mute) human being. The characterisation of Kvapil's Ježibaba fits Elizabeth Warner's description of Baba-Yaga, a character occurring in Russian folk-tales: "Although the frightening and negative aspects of Baba-Yaga tend to be emphasized, she is a character with a split personality and many tales reveal a positive side to her. In these situations the hero, less often the heroine, approaches Baba-Yaga for advice or help" (2002, 77). This description fits the characterisation of Kvapil's Ježibaba in *Rusalka*.

Excerpt 11.   Act 1, lines 134–137 and 201–215, Ježibaba's Incantations.

JK	DR	PK
pusť ji vlnko, pusť ji ke mně,	Wavelet free her, wavelet, recoil!	Release her, waves, set her free,
ať se nožky dotknou země!	Let her feet touch solid soil.	let her feet touch the ground!
Nožičky, neste ji, nožičky držte ji –	Steady keep, little feet, little feet, bear her fleet!	Little feet, carry her, little feet, support her –
Vida, jak nožičky chodit už umějí!	See now, see now, her little feet, treading forth earth to greet.	see how her feet are already learning to walk!

[…]	[…]	[…]
Čury mury fuk,	Fee, faw, fum, faw, fee,	Abracadabra!
čury mury fuk,		Abracadabra,
bílá pára vstává z luk!	White steam rising from the lea,	the mist is rising from the meadows!
Kapka krve dračí,	Just a drop of dragon's blood,	A drop of dragon's blood,
deset kapek žluče,	Ten of gall and tainted mud…	ten drops of bile,
teplé srdce ptačí –	Bird's heart fresh then double,	the warm heart of a bird,
pokud ještě tluče!	See the hell-broth bubble.	still beating!
Skoč, můj mourku, skoč a skoč,	Tabby bristle, jump and mew	Jump, my tom-cat, jump, jump,
varem v kotli pozatoč!	Briskly stir the thickening brew,	give it all a good stir!
Čury mury fuk, *čury mury fuk,*	Fee, faw, fum, faw, fee,	Abracadabra, abracadabra,
nelekej se větších muk!	Let no brain-storm frighten thee!	no torture can ever be as bad as this!
Toť tvé lidské věno,	Take your human dower,	This is your lot as a human
a to musíš píti,	Drink within night's bower.	and you must drink it;
tím co uvařeno,	Venomed gall blindbat's hood,	once you've tasted this brew,
jazyk zdřevění ti.	Let her tongue be turned to wood!	your tongue will feel as if turned to wood.

A prominent feature of Kvapil's style, the use of diminutives, is a translation problem to be solved here: "*nožky*" and "*nožičky*" are diminutives of "*nohy*", which can mean either "feet" or "legs". These diminutives are terms of endearment; they could be rendered as, e.g., "wee legs", "leggies" or "tootsies" ("tootsies" can colloquially denote "feet" as well as "toes"; if perceived here in the latter sense it can function as synecdoche). As used by the forest witch, such diminutives have an ironic sense (Stich 1992, 30). Both translations actually render this stylistically marked word quite effectively as "little feet".

The witch's incantation "*Čury, mury, fuk!*" accompanying the brewing of a magic potion is rendered, respectively, as "Fee, faw, fum, faw, fee!" and as "Abracadabra!" The former is reminiscent of the thunderous, threatening "Fee fi fo fum" of the Giant in "Jack and the Beanstalk", suggesting anger, aggression, revenge – not the closest folk-tale parallel, therefore. It echoes Nashe and Shakespeare. The expression appears in *Haue with you to Saffron-Walden* by

Thomas Nashe (1596): "Fy, Fa and fum, / I smell the blood of an Englishman." In Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Edgar exclaims: "Fy, foh and fum, / I smell the blood of a British man." The incantation "abracadabra" is of ancient origin, but it is associated today mainly with stage magic tricks. An allusion to the "Double, double toil and trouble; Fire burn and cauldron bubble" incantation of the three witches scene in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* would offer the English-speaking reader an experience closer to that of the original.

There is a case of the conversion of a metaphor to a prosaic comparison: "*jazyk zdřevění ti*" ['your tongue will turn to wood'] becomes "your tongue will *feel as if* turned to wood" (Paula Kennedy's translation). It is a form of explicitation and logicalisation, converting the mythological operation of magic and its result into a phenomenon which could be experienced in the real world.

4.4   The axis of the drama and the dénouement

As Jarmila Gabrielová (2009, 69) points out, the second act, taking place in the "real world" at the Prince's castle, is pivotal to the dramatic action. Rusalka's plaintive aria: "*Ó marno, ó marno to je*" ['O it's all in vain…'] is for the eponymous heroine a turning point in the dramatic action, preparatory to the tragic finale (Gabrielová 2009, 75). Although Rusalka has been rendered mute in the world of humans, she is able to communicate in the mythological sphere, addressing the Spirit of the Lake as follows:

Excerpt 12.   Act 2, lines 167–174, Rusalka's Lament.

JK	DR	PK
Rusalka	Rusalka	Rusalka
Ó marno, ó marno to je,	In vain it is, in vain, in vain,	Oh, it's all in vain! There's no point in going on,
a prázdnota je v srdci mém,	And all my heart an empty waste,	and my heart is now empty of feeling.
jsou marny všechny vděky moje,	In vain my love, my longing pain	All my charms are in vain,
když zpola jsem jen člověkem!	Since I of passion may not taste.	as I am still only half human!
Ó marno to je, mne už nezná zas,	In vain it is, in vain, He no longer knows me now,	It's all in vain, he no longer wants to know me,
Rusalku prostovlasou.	Rusalka, mute and pale,	his simple Rusalka!
Jí hoří v očích vášně síla,	For in her eyes burns passion's flame,	Her eyes burn with passion,

té lidské vášně prokleté,	That human passion so accursed,	that accursed human passion,
mne voda chladná porodila	The waters cool that gave me birth	whereas I was born of cool water
a nemám, nemám vášně té!	In me that passion never nursed.	and such passion is alien to me!

Paula Kennedy adds an explicitation at this crucial point in the dramatic composition, emphasising the pivotal role of this aria: "There's no point in going on." This means that Rusalka, not having found love in the world of humans, will never be able to go back to her former state. This tragic dénouement was shown to have been a foregone conclusion once it was revealed that, under Ježibaba's spell Rusalka, as she now bewails, is not only speechless amongst humans but, crucially, incapable of experiencing or showing the very human passions she misguidedly sought: "*když zpola jsem jen člověkem!*" ['since I am only half-human']. In Daphne Rusbridge's rendering, Rusalka admits she does not possess inborn human passions ("That human passion so accursed, / The waters cool that gave me birth / In me that passion never nursed"), but she does not convey her complaint that she is only half human, translating the relevant line obscurely as: "Since I of passion may not taste." Rusalka's complaint that she is only half-human is crucial, as it highlights the tragic circumstance that her desire to become a human and love the Prince was doomed never to be fulfilled. Ježibaba's magic spell made her passionless as well as speechless, whereas she was forewarned only of the latter.

4.5   The final dénouement

In the final tragic scene (Act 3, lines 240–270), the stylistic features of Kvapil's lyrical verse are intensified, particularly the characteristic repetition, reaching a crescendo in the concluding exchanges, as Rusalka, having of her own free will refused to kill the Prince, tells him her kiss will spell his death, and the Prince – likewise of his own free will – chooses to die this way, happy to do so rather than return to his former life. They both perish because they will it, not because they are inevitably victims of the mythological curse of damnation.

Excerpt 13.   Act 3, lines 240–251, Rusalka's Farewell to the Prince.

JK	DR	PK
Rusalka	Rusalka	Rusalka
Proč volal jsi mne v náruč svou,	Why did you call me to your arms?	Why did you enfold me in your arms,

proč ústa tvoje lhala?	Why spake your lips a falsehood?	why did your lips lie to me?
Teď měsíční jsem vidinou,	Now through the night, your ruin I	Now I am nothing but a moonlit vision,
v tvá muka neskonalá!	Must lure you through the wood.	destined ever to torment you.
Teď tebe šálím v nočních tmách,	And I must lead your steps astray	Now I must entice you at dead of night,
je zneuctěn můj klín	Dishonoured now am I.	my womanhood is defiled,
a s bludičkami na vodách	A will o' the wisp to waters cold	and together with the will-o'-the-wisps
tě svedu do hlubin.	I draw you down to die.	I am condemned to drag you into the depths!
Tys hledal vášeň, vím to, vím,	You sought a passion, oh I know,	You sought passion, I know,
tys hledal vášeň, jíž já jsem neměla,	Which I did not possess,	a passion that was alien to me,
a teď-li tě políbím,	And were I to embrace you now	but if I were to kiss you now,
jsi ztracen, jsi ztracen docela.	You die in my caress.	you would be lost for ever.

The crucial point that Rusalka has returned to her mythological world, condemned to be a "will o' the wisp": "*Teď měsíční jsem vidinou*" ['Now I am a moonlit vision'] is lost in Daphne Rusbridge's translation. The important mythological association with the moon, a thread pervading the whole work, is also ignored. The word "destined" is a context-derived explicitation of the mythological implications, while the translation of "*tebe šálím*" ['I am deceiving you'] as "I must lead your steps astray" is a semantic generalisation, specifying the Prince's fate more vaguely. The term "condemned" is a context-derived explicitation of the mythological curse Rusalka has voluntarily accepted.

The repetitions "*vím to, vím*"; "*Tys hledal vášeň,… tys hledal vášeň*"; "*jsi ztracen, jsi ztracen*" are disregarded by Daphne Rusbridge, neutralising the emphatic function of this characteristically expressive style. The translator also deletes the semantic element "*docela*" ['completely'], which is key in the dénouement, replacing the entire line with different content, for purposes of rhyme. The semantically and stylistically more significant "*ztracen*" ['lost'] is replaced by "die". Finally, the urgent repetition "*Zda to víš,… zda to víš*" ['Do you know… do you know'] is not reflected in either translation.

Excerpt 14.   Act 3, lines 253–266 and 268–270, The Dénouement.

JK	DR	PK
Princ:	Prince	Prince
Líbej mne, líbej, mír mi přej,	I care no more for worldly ease	Kiss me, kiss me, give me peace,
nechci se vrátit ve světa rej,	Kiss me, oh kiss me, bring me peace	the world is already lost to me,
do smrti třeba mne ulíbej!	Death then may come whene'er he please.	I would gladly die of your kisses!
Rusalka	Rusalka	Rusalka
A tys mi, hochu můj, tolik dal,	Of every joy you were the cause,	You who gave me so much
proč jsi mne, hochu můj, oklamal?	Why did you, lover mine, play me false?	why did you betray me?
Princ	Prince	Prince
Všechno chci ti dát,	All that I gave to you, would I give,	I will give you everything you desire,
líbej mne, líbej tisíckrát!	In your embrace I die or live.	only kiss me, kiss me a thousand times!
Rusalka	Rusalka	Rusalka
Zda to víš, hochu, zda to víš,	Do you know, darling, that from me,	Do you realise, my lad,
z loktů mých že se nevrátíš,	Nevermore shall you now be free	that from my embrace there's no return,
že zkázou to v loktech mých zaplatíš.	And by my love must cursèd be?	that here you will pay for your treachery* with your life?
Princ	Prince	Prince
Nechci se vrátit, zemru rád,	I care no more for worldly ease.	I have no wish to return, I would gladly die,
líbej mne, líbej, mír mi přej.	Gladly with you fore'er I'll dwell.	kiss me, kiss me, give me peace,
Nechci se vrátit, zemru rád,	Now let me bid the earth farewell.	I have no wish to return, I would gladly die,
nemyslím, nemyslím na návrat!		to return is now unthinkable!
Rusalka	Rusalka	Rusalka
Láska má zmrazí všechen cit,	Not even love can your ransom buy	All feeling will be frozen by my love,
musím tě, musím zahubit,	Now to your doom in my arms fly	I must destroy you,
musím tě v lednou náruč vzít!	In my embrace you now must die.	I must clasp you in my icy embrace!

*Paula Kennedy adds an explicitation: "for your treachery".

A characteristic feature of Kvapil's style in this lyrical fairy tale, the repetition of imperatives for purposes of highlighting relationships or intensifying emotions, reaches a climax in the finale. Though she renders the repetitions of the Prince's imperative "*Líbej mne*" ['Kiss me'] in line 252, it is very noticeable that Daphne Rusbridge omits the urgent phrase in line 264 altogether, as well as the Prince's repeated declaration that he will gladly die (line 265), rejecting his chance to survive as he voluntarily seeks the kiss of death from Rusalka.

Similarly, where Rusalka repeats her affirmation that she is fated to destroy the Prince, Paula Kennedy's translation does not fully reflect this agonised repetition (a stylistic feature); Daphne Rusbridge translates the verb "*musím*" ['I must'] only once, omitting two occurrences in line 271, sacrificing them to the demands of rhyme.

5.   Concluding remarks

Semantic and stylistic shifts have been identified in two selected translations of Jaroslav Kvapil's *Rusalka* libretto, one produced under strict constraints of adherence to the musical notation composed for the original libretto and under partial adherence to the original rhyme scheme, while the other was constrained to give precedence to transparency of content over style.

With a few minor exceptions, Paula Kennedy's prose translation renders the meaning closely. The observed semantic shifts, unsurprisingly, tend to have the function of explicitation. This translation enables listeners to appreciate the sung performance in Czech on CD, simultaneously following the dual-language libretto, as a preparation for the fuller enjoyment of a live theatre performance. Given its *skopos*, this prose rendering, by definition, does not aspire to render the full stylistic qualities of Kvapil's work, yet it is not without its occasional poetic enhancements.

By contrast, shifts identified in Daphne Rusbridge's translation exemplify the extraordinary difficulties of creating a singing opera translation. Important semantic components and stylistic characteristics of the original Czech lyrical fairy tale in verse *Rusalka* are missing or distorted, compromising the reception of certain cultural features. In such circumstances, as Klaus Kaindl (1995, 186) suggests, when a translation is continuously resorted to regardless of its age and present suitability, a critical (rather than purely descriptive) analysis seems appropriate. The present study has focused on style and content, to the exclusion of performative aspects such as singability. Whatever its performative qualities may be, however, in the light of the present findings regarding the translation shifts in Daphne Rusbridge's version, it is remarkable that this singing translation, first published in 1954, continues to be included in the authoritative vocal score over sixty years later.

It could be concluded that Jaroslav Kvapil's masterpiece of lyric poetry, which immediately and directly inspired Dvořák's musical composition – the composer suggested virtually no changes to the libretto text (cf. Dvořák 1995, 191–194) – calls for a lyrical (but non-singing) English literary translation, a crucial missing component in the gamut of translated text types facilitating a reception of the opera by English speakers. This is not to say that no constraints apply to such a complementary work; many problems are entailed in any literary translation, and in the present case, inter alia, adherence to a rhyme scheme is probably essential.

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Intertextuality in nineteenth-century Italian librettos: To translate or not to translate?

A case study of *Adriana Lecouvreur*

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This study looks at whether it is feasible or desirable to translate stylistic intertextuality in opera librettos, particularly wording and utterances from late medieval and Renaissance Italian poetry which are put into the mouths of dramatic characters in 19th- and early 20th-century Italian operas. The paper describes the various techniques available to deal with such situations and notes that they are incompatible with a modernising-naturalising strategy. Rather, they can be used only as part of an archaising modality of translation that audiences and critics only accept in a diluted form. The discussion that follows is essentially based on two scenes from Francesco Cilea's *Adriana Lecouvreur*.

Keywords: intertextuality, allusion, ungrammaticality, Italian librettos, Renaissance epics, *carpe diem*, naturalising translation, archaising translation, *Adriana Lecouvreur*

1. Specific issues about opera intertextuality

It is common knowledge that, in opera librettos, intertextuality operates at least at two levels: the macro-textual level, where the libretto as a whole is based on an existing literary text from which it borrows plots, situations or characters; and the micro-textual level, through what is commonly understood as allusion, or in more technical terms "key-phrase allusion" or "quotation-like allusion" (Leppihalme 1997, 3; Ruokonen 2010, 67). Many studies on librettos deal with reconstructing the genesis of operas, and so can be placed at the macro-textual level. This is the meaning of 'intertextuality' in some collective publications that include this term in their titles (Zidaric 2003; Grilli 2006). All that has been written about Boito and Shakespeare serves also as a very illustrative example. But I would like to turn to the micro-textual level, which poses more difficulties for the translator, and focus

on the language and period most commonly found in the repertory: the Italian used in 19th-century and early 20th-century operas. As is well known, this sort of Italian is heavily stereotyped and codified in linguistic forms rooted in the older literary tradition.

Based on a preliminary analysis of the factors and variables which distinguish the various forms of intertextuality, in most cases, those which concern Italian librettos: (1) are stylistic, not (or not only) thematic; (2) cannot be identified by external marking (quotation marks, italics, etc.); (3) are familiar to the well-read Italian, but not – and here lies the difficulty in translating it – to readers from other countries, since the numerous references belong to Italian literature and have not achieved universal recognition; and (4) are optional (like intertextuality in non-operatic literature) in that the alluding passage admits for a non-allusive reading. Regarding this last point, it is quite different from the intertextuality found in advertising and newspaper headlines. A translator, faced with the task of translating "Naming Private Ryan" (*Daily Mirror*, 24 May 2011) in reference to the private life of the football player Ryan Giggs, cannot skip the allusion to Spielberg's film *Saving Private Ryan*, otherwise the target text headline would make no sense. In contrast, the lines spoken by Leicester when talking about Mary Stuart (*Maria Stuarda*, 1835, music by Gaetano Donizetti, libretto by Giuseppe Bardari, Part I, Scene 5), "*sembianza avea di un angelo / che appare, ed innamora*" ['she looked like an angel, whom you fall in love with as soon as she appears'], or the aria "*Sì, fui soldato*" ['Yes, I was a soldier'] in *Andrea Chénier* (1896, music by Umberto Giordano, libretto by Luigi Illica, Act 3, Scene 12), are perfectly translatable even if the translator is unaware that the former are quoting Guinizelli while the entire aria itself is a variation on Carducci's poem "*Passa la nave mia, sola, tra il pianto*" ['My boat sails along, alone, among the weeping'].[1]

This clarification of the fourth point is by no means an attempt to play down the loss which comes from overlooking the intertextual references, but serves rather as a point of departure for arguing that it is a viable option. I would now like to assess this option as potentially appropriate when sifting through the peculiarities that distinguish intertextuality in opera from that found in other literary genres. I will begin by comparing the libretto text for two passages from *Adriana Lecouvreur* (1902, music by Francesco Cilea, libretto by Arturo Colautti) and the corresponding excerpt from the play on which it is based (1849, by Eugène Scribe and Ernest Legouvé). In the *finale* of the first act (Act 1, Scene 10; Act 2, Scene 10 in the play), four actors, while returning from the stage to the green room, give

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1. The infiltration of Italian culture in the version of Mary Stuart's history given by Bardari has posed a great challenge to *Maria Stuarda* English translators, especially in terms of political and religious ideology (Apter and Herman 2005; Degott 2011).

air to their envy when they hear the burst of applause for the performance by Adriana, for whom, in contrast, the stage-manager (Michonnet) and two distinguished guests (the Abbé of Chazeuil and the Prince of Bouillon) express their great admiration:

(1)   a.   QUINAULT *(furibondo)* Un delirio!
LA JOUVENOT *(sdegnata)* Un furore!
POISSON *(sprezzante)* Che pubblico!
LA DANGEVILLE *(nauseata)* Che orrore!
QUINAULT Io soffoco!
LA JOUVENOT Io la sfido!
POISSON Io fremo!
LA DANGEVILLE *(ridendo)* Io piango!
MICHONNET *(tra sé, rasciugandosi gli occhi, gongolante)* (Io rido!)
(Dai primi usci laterali rientrano il Principe e l'Abate, insieme a varî altri signori.)
IL PRINCIPE *(entusiasta)* Magnifica!
L'ABATE *(rincarando)* Sovrana!
[…]
LA JOUVENOT *(stupita, al Principe)* Come! anche voi?
IL PRINCIPE *(con un gesto di minaccia)* Mi vendico!…[2]

(Colautti 1902, 34)

b.   MADEMOISELLE DANGEVILLE. Je ne sais pas ce qu'ils ont ce soir ; ils applaudissent tous comme des fous.
MADEMOISELLE JOUVENOT. Ils se trompent, ma chère… ils se croient déjà aux *Folies amoureuses*.
L'ABBÉ, *entrant*. C'est superbe !
MADEMOISELLE DANGEVILLE. C'est absurde !…
POISSON. Ça me fait rire…
QUINAULT. Ça me fait mal.
MADEMOISELLE JOUVENOT. Pauvre homme !

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2.   Here I have transcribed the first edition without graphically reproducing the metrical distribution of the lines of verse. It should be noted that many later editions, even by the same publisher, read "*Che furore!*" ['What an uproar!'] instead of "*Un furore!*" ['An uproar!']. Literally translated, the Italian libretto reads as follows: 'QUINAULT *(furious)* A frenzy! / MLLE JOUVENOT *(outraged)* An uproar! / POISSON *(scornfully)* What an audience! / MLLE DANGEVILLE *(in disgust)* How awful! / QUINAULT I'm choking! / MLLE JOUVENOT I challenge her! / POISSON I'm shuddering! / MLLE DANGEVILLE *(laughing)* I'm crying! / MICHONNET *(to himself, drying his eyes, overjoyed)* (I'm laughing!) / *(The Prince and the Abbé re-enter along with several other men.)* / THE PRINCE *(enthusiastically)* Magnificient! / THE ABBÉ *(eager to join in)* Sublime! […] / MLLE JOUVENOT *(surprised, to the Prince)* What? You too? / The PRINCE *(threateningly)* I'm taking revenge!…'

> LE PRINCE. Le fait est que jamais je n'ai rien entendu de plus beau… et je m'y connais !³   (Scribe and Legouvé 1849, 19–20)

In Act 2, Scene 10 (Act 3, Scene 10 in the play), Adriana helps the Princess of Bouillon to escape from the villa where the Prince has almost caught her *in flagrante delicto* with the Count of Saxony, Maurizio. Amid the darkness, the Princess does not discover Adriana's identity but figures out that Adriana is in love with Maurizio:

(2)   a.   LA PRINCIPESSA […] Duchessa, siete voi?
> ADRIANA *(facendo un passo indietro)* No…
> LA PRINCIPESSA *(con simulata dolcezza)* Perché celarvi?… Un'èmula temete in me?
> ADRIANA *(sospingendola verso l'usciolo)* L'attimo fugge… cresce il periglio…
> LA PRINCIPESSA *(fermandosi più che mai sospettosa)* Lo conoscete?
> ADRIANA *(c.s.)* Sì…
> LA PRINCIPESSA *(con intenzione)* E il buon consiglio per me chi 'l porse?
> ADRIANA *(senza sospetto)* Chi mi confida tutto…
> LA PRINCIPESSA *(alzando la voce)* Badate! questa è una sfida…
> ADRIANA *(stupita)* Perché, signora?… Forse è un delitto?⁴
>   (Colautti 1902, 55–56)

   b.   LA PRINCESSE. […] pourquoi vous dérober à ma reconnaissance… duchesse de Mirepoix… c'est vous ?
> ADRIENNE. Non !… Mais hâtez-vous de fuir les dangers qui vous menacent…
> LA PRINCESSE. Vous les connaissez donc ?

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3. Translation of the French into English: 'MADEMOISELLE DANGEVILLE. I don't know what's wrong with them this evening; they're all applauding like madmen. / MADEMOISELLE JOUVENOT. They are deceived, my dear… They think they're already at the *Folies amoureuses* [the farce]. / THE ABBÉ, *entering*. It is brilliant! / MADEMOISELLE DANGEVILLE. It is absurd!… / POISSON. It makes me laugh… / QUINAULT. It makes me ill… / MADEMOISELLE JOUVENOT. Poor fellow! / THE PRINCE. The fact is, I've never heard anything so wonderful… and I'm a connoisseur!'

4. Translation of the Italian libretto into English: 'THE PRINCESS […] Duchess, is it you? / ADRIANA *(taking a step back)* No… / THE PRINCESS *(feigning kindness)* Why do you hide your face?… Do you fear that I am an adversary? / ADRIANA *(pushing her towards the door)* The instant flees… [Time is flying…] danger is growing… / THE PRINCESS *(having stopped, and become more suspicious than ever)* Are you aware of it [the danger]? / ADRIANA *(as above)* Yes… / THE PRINCESS *(meaningfully)* And who gave this good advice for me? / ADRIANA *(unsuspecting)* One who tells me everything… / THE PRINCESS *(raising her voice)* Careful! This [thing you are saying] is a challenge… / ADRIANA *(surprised)* Why, Madam?… Is this thing [that I am saying] a crime?'

ADRIENNE. Qu'importe, vous dis-je ? croyez à ma discrétion et ne craignez rien.

LA PRINCESSE. Mais ces dangers… ces secrets, qui vous les a confiés ?

ADRIENNE. Quelqu'un qui me dit tout…

LA PRINCESSE, *à part*. O ciel !⁵   (Scribe and Legouvé 1849, 29)

As can be seen, in both cases the librettist has done none other than raise the style, in other words, subtract realism and add literariness to the dialogue, by importing the wording of two referents or *hypotexts*. The first is the Renaissance chivalric epic (Ariosto, Tasso, and other lesser-known authors): "*Un furore!* […] *Io la sfido!* […] *Mi vendico!…*" in Excerpt (1a) and "*questa è una sfida…*" in Excerpt (2a). The second is Petrarchan poetry: the famous leitmotif "*L'attimo fugge…*" in Excerpt (2a). The result is that the superimposed "cotextual meaning" and "allusive meaning" (Ruokonen 2010, 23), that is, the meaning of these phrases in the new cotext (or context) and their meaning in the source, are not entirely unrelated but quite distant from each other. Mlle Jouvenot and the Princess of Bouillon are both jealous of Adriana, but talk as if they were a 'furious' knight challenging an enemy to a duel. With the utterance "*L'attimo fugge…*", Adriana urges the Princess to hurry but at the same time she is (literally) telling her that life is short and you have to make the most of it. This dual semanticity is surprising because in the libretto – as opposed to what happens in advertising, the press and poetry – the intertext is expressed not by the author, but by a character, who one would not expect to make intertextual word plays. If the two meanings were more closely related, the intertextual reference would be barely noticeable, resulting in a more plausible dialogue.

Creating plausible dialogues is not, however, a priority for the librettist. In effect, the relative decontextualisation of the allusive meaning is produced in order to follow certain genre conventions. These passages from *Adriana Lecouvreur* not only establish a link with the late Medieval and Renaissance literary tradition, but also with the opera libretto tradition itself, in which the words and phrases cited above recur with great frequency. The use of "*Un furore!*", or "*Che furore!*", by Mlle Jouvenot in Excerpt (1a) is, to start with, ambiguous. It could be understood in a modern sense, indicating the audience's enthusiasm in response to a performance, as understood by certain translators of the libretto:

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5. Translation of the French play: 'THE PRINCESS. […] Why do you avoid my gratefulness?… Duchess of Mirepoix… Is it you? / ADRIENNE. No!… But flee quickly from the dangers that threaten you… / THE PRINCESS. So you know about them? / ADRIENNE. What does it matter, I say to you. Trust in my discretion and fear nothing. / THE PRINCESS. But these dangers… these secrets, who informed you of them? / ADRIENNE. Someone who tells me everything… / LA PRINCESA, *aside*. Heavens above!'

(3)   a.   A sensation! […] A furore!   (Sauls 1962, 23)
            What acclaim!   (Anonymous 2011, 9)
            dieser Beifall!   (Dahms ca. 1938, 73)

But in the light of the play by Scribe and Legouvé – "*ils applaudissent tous comme des fous*", in Excerpt (1b) –, and the meaning of 'madness' associated with "*furore*" which dates back centuries in the history of Italian literature and Italian librettos (Orlando's "*furore*" in Ariosto's poem), it seems clear that Quinault and Jouvenot's comments do not simply – or only – show a bitter reaction to Adriana's success (the bitterness expressed in the stage directions), but they also criticise the audience's reaction – as does Poisson. This is reflected in other translations:

(3)   b.   They are quite mad! […] Simply raving.   (Pinkerton ca. 1904, 29)
            Insanity! […] An uproar!   (Jones 1984, 42)
            What a frenzy! […] Madness! Madness!   (Chalmers 1991, 44)

A third possible interpretation (more likely for "*Che furore!*") is that "*furore*" refers to the character who is speaking. In other words, Mlle Jouvenot is not saying the audience is mad, but rather that she is enraged, beside herself:

(3)   c.   Je suis dans une fureur ![6]   (Anonymous 1978, 29)

This last option is perhaps a *lectio difficilior* but – and this is important – the one which follows more obviously in the wake of the libretto tradition: "*tutto il sangue in sen mi bolle. / Che furor! Che ardor!*" ['my blood is boiling. What fury! What ardour!'] (*Il burbero di buon cuore*, music by Vicent Martín Soler, 1786, libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte, Act 1, Scene 27); "*O delitto! O furor!*" ['Oh crime! Oh fury!'] (*Norma*, 1831, music by Bellini, libretto by Felice Romani, Act 2, Scene 11). The exclamations formed by the interjection 'O' followed by a noun, themselves a mark of Italian operatic style, can indicate both the action the speaker sees and the feeling that it produces. In addition, they allow for options ranging from an overtranslation that amplifies the phrase to remove any ambiguity ('What fury I see!', 'Oh fury, how you incense me!') to an undertranslation that merely indicates that the speaker is vexed ('Dammit!'). All these alternatives, thus, further contribute to multiplying the options available to translate the phrase spoken by Mlle Jouvenot. Clearly, "*Un furore!*" or "*Che furore!*" are not the same as "*O furore!*", but they come quite close.

It is therefore clear that, for the librettist, it is important for the utterance to converge with a codified formulation, even though this clouds its meaning. More precisely, it is important for the entire stage scene – Excerpt (1a) – to converge with a codified discursive fabric, because "*Un furore!*" generates, firstly, in the mouth

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6. 'I am in a fury!' In other words, 'I am a prisoner to fury', or 'I am furious'.

of Mlle Jouvenot herself, "*Io la sfido!*", according to a well-established correlation within the genre: "*Più non piango, più non temo… / Tutto io sfido il tuo furor*" ['I no longer weep, I no longer fear… I challenge all your fury'] (*La straniera*, 1829, music by Bellini, libretto by Felice Romani, Act 2, Scene 16). Later it generates the "*Mi vendico!…*" ['I'm taking revenge!…'] which is no longer said by Mlle Jouvenot, but by the Prince instead. This last phrase is not complete or clear at the mimetic reading level either, while its affiliation with "*Che furore!* […] *Io la sfido!*" is perfectly clear at the allusive level: the listener can almost see in the Prince the knight who accepts the challenge or comes running to the aid of the maiden.

Given Colautti's approach to his libretto, some of the statements made at the start of this chapter need to be further qualified. Firstly, the way he shoehorns in the intertext with little concern for how it might affect the intelligibility of the dialogue would suggest that, of the three options proposed by Ruokonen (2010, 78–86) for the cotextual meaning of the allusion (incoherent, incoherent to some extent, coherent), coherence is not always the case when it comes to librettos. Sometimes the resulting passage clearly can be classified as 'incoherent to some extent', meaning that readers and listeners who are not aware of the intertext will struggle to decipher the cotextual meaning and will not understand why it is difficult to decipher.

Secondly, this intertextuality does not always unravel at a micro-textual level. It is often expressed in a "stream of allusions" and textual signs (Ruokonen 2010, 80; Martel 2005, 97) which can comprise a scene or subscene. In addition to this, there is an attempt to link with scenes or subscenes from other operas. A macro-textual level is thus activated which is not at the level of the work as a whole, as in the link between Boito's *Otello* and Shakespeare's *Othello*, but rather at the level of "a more general pool of knowledge related to particular genre characteristics" (Panagiotidou 2011, 226). This architextuality, or constitutive intertextuality, gathers more weight in librettos than in any other genre because no other follows the notion of genre so closely, that is, no other genre reproduces the same conventions and phraseology to the same degree. The plots are repeated work-by-work and on each occasion similar or even identical linguistic modules are reused (Serianni 2007, 15). Colautti's scene with the actors converges on one of these modules: the duel module, that is applied – in real or figurative terms – to all manner of rivalries. It is always constructed with the same linguistic material mined from the same quarry, namely the chivalric epic written in Este's court in Ferrara which furnishes phrasal allusions in the strict sense ("*qui ti sfido a mortal guerra…*" ['here, I challenge you to mortal warfare'], *I puritani* [1835, music by Vincenzo Bellini, libretto by Carlo Pepoli], Act 1, Scene 10, quoting Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*, Canto II, Stanza 90), and particularly a wide range of lexicon (also including "*orror*" and "*fremo*") and modes of enunciation highly charged with aggression and passion.

The rivalry between the actresses, and that between Adriana and the Princess of Bouillon, were opportunities which could not be passed by. In fact, the former in particular has a much more intranscendental routine profile than that of a duel to the death. This implies that the objective of "maximis[ing] the intertextual patterning" (Panagiotidou 2011, 21) is achieved by stretching the scope in which the linguistic material is used, to the extent that it can be applied in highly improbable contexts ("*fuga dal reale*" ['a departure from ordinary usage'], Baldacci 1997, 106; "*fuga dal* mot propre" ['an escape from the appropriate word'], Telve 1998, 340). The intertext thus has a stereotyping function that seeks to assimilate all the contexts to the most 'melodramatic', namely to that which is more emotionally charged. The most banal situations have to sound as if the characters were risking their lives. Even more indicative, in this sense, is the highly common use of the *topos* known as *tempus fuggit* ("*il tempo vola*" ['time flies'] and "*il tempo fugge!*" ['time flees'] in *La Gioconda* [1876, music by Amilcare Ponchielli, libretto by Arrigo Boito], Act 2, Scene 5 and Act 4, Scene 4; "*Il tempo passa!* […] *il tempo è veloce!*" ['Time goes by! … time is fast!'] in *Tosca* [1900, music by Giacomo Puccini, libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica], Act 2, Scene 5) with a cotextual meaning – as seen in the conversation between Adriana and the Princess in Excerpt (2a) – in which the formula is degraded to the mere rank of 'hurry up', 'don't linger', 'it is late', while literally and allusively what is said does have existential charge and is going to converge on the *carpe diem* message of the hedonistic scenes (another of the more recurring 'modules').

Even though the material is taken from an "enclosed literary system" (according to Genette's understanding of intertextuality, as in Allen [2000] 2011, 93), the librettist is etched out as (in line with Kristeva and Barthes) a pseudoanonymous figure: more imitator than creator, someone who tends to exercise intertextuality automatically rather than consciously or intentionally, more in search of reproducing clichés than a unique original moment. In fact, this moment is not even produced by so-called 'ungrammaticality', which is hardly noticeable in a libretto within the style which surrounds it. By definition, the 'ungrammaticality' would have to be noticeable. This is the name given by Riffaterre to obstacles when reading which indicate there is an intertext: basically an anomaly, a stylistic contrast that "rings a bell" (Leppihalme 1997, 62–66). However, since these deviations mainly consist of catachresis ("inappropriate, twisted wordings", Riffaterre 1978 [1984], 21) and of "[a]rchaic […] linguistic features" and "[e]levated, poetic style" (Ruokonen 2010, 69), and since an opera libretto is written from beginning to end according to these stylistic patterns,[7] the ungrammaticality of the intertex-

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7. In Auden's words, opera is "the last refuge of the High Style" (see Lucile Desblache's contribution within this volume).

tual wedge in this genre is added to many other forms (orthographic, morphological, syntactical, discursive), which can be equally qualified as ungrammatical, that is, alien to a standard and realistic dialogue, and attributable to one or other intertext – particularly from Kristeva's and Barthes' perspective.

Given its omnipresence, the heroic and sublime register shows that it is not only the objective of all intertextual operations, but also the means to carry them out. In this "*linguaggio che mai fece parte della lingua parlata*" ['language which never belonged to the spoken language'] "*trascuratezza*" ['carelessness'] and "*ricercatezza*" ['affectation'] are mixed (Dallapiccola 1980, 67–68) because highbrow rhetoric, free as it is from the constraints of verisimilitude, in fact gives a great deal of scope to the librettist to adopt forced or abusive wordings. This is also the solution for problems posed by placing intertextuality in the mouths of dramatic characters (an ungrammaticality which would be unacceptable in a realistic dialogue is attenuated) and this is the way to reconcile two meanings (cotextual and allusive) which, as seen above, differ appreciably from each other.

2.   Intertextuality and naturalising translation

From all the characteristics of operatic intertextuality discussed above, the one which has the greatest impact on translation is precisely its contiguity with other ungrammaticalities. Given the archaicising nature of these ungrammaticalities, and that the majority of the repertory were first performed more than a century ago, for translators today the problem translating the intertext is interwoven with dilemmas inherent to all translations of old language. What answer can be given to these problems? This article focuses on translations to be read: printed librettos which are part of a publisher series, the performance programme or booklets which accompany audio or audio-visual recordings.

There are essentially two prevalent and opposing strategies in these translations: literal and naturalising. The first consists of maintaining the original vocabulary and syntax even though they are only minimally comprehensible to target readers / listeners and even though they do not sound natural in the target text: foreignisation, in translatese, but more exaggerated than would be acceptable in other text types and genres. The 'strangeness' of the source text style is used as a shield to create greater artificiality, since in the target text that formulation which has not been domesticated will be equally, or more, difficult to decode than in the source language. In contrast, the second strategy consists of avoiding any enigmatic or puzzling solutions. The translator interprets everything which is obscure

or ambiguous and composes a dialogue which is likely and fluent in accordance with the style found in the current target language conversation.[8]

However, it should be pointed out that both options tend to coexist in the same translation. Clearly, the switching takes place in varying degrees and with more or less satisfactory results in each individual case, but one can find, even in the best translators, major difficulties in maintaining a uniform register. It is rare to find a translation which does not fall into fluctuations from the literalist pole to the naturalising pole and vice versa, or does not cause uncertainty or confusion at some point. Indeed, many translators produce a highly irregular result, transforming the original libretto hybrid into another type of hybrid, with some passages written in a more natural language and others in a more crafted language.[9]

Critics and most likely readers too, generally tend to (quite rightly) disapprove of excessive literalness in libretto translations and prefer naturalising translations, providing this is not allowed to fall into an overly prosaic and modernising style. An illustrative example is Pierre Degott's position in his studies on the history of opera translation, in which he argues clearly in favour of "*un progrès constant vers une expression claire et naturelle*" ['constant progress towards clear, natural expression'], over the "*archaïque et rhétoriquement compliquée*" ['archaic and rhetorically complex'] style which predominated in the 19th century and early 20th century. At the same time, however, he condemns those versions which "*dé-poétisent à l'excès une langue modernisée à un degré difficilement supportable*" ['over-depoetise the language, modernising it to such a degree that it is difficult to listen to'] (Degott 2004, 417–426).

In this modernising and naturalising modality, whether used excessively or not, logic dictates that the intertextual reference tends to be lost along with the majority of the source text 'ungrammaticalities'. Translators who resort to this modality do not use 'shalt' for the future form "*fia*", and they translate "*rai*" as 'eyes' rather than, say, using the hyperliteral 'rays', a learned term like 'orbs' or an archaic form like 'eyen'. They therefore replace intertextual source text phrases with phrases that do not refer to any intertexts. The following example shows how one of the translators of *Adriana Lecouvreur* adopted this approach in Excerpt (1a):

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8. Apter and Herman (2016, 31–56) discuss the dichotomy between foreignisation and domestication in the context of sung operatic translation.

9. For the purposes of this discussion, the distinction between the more prosaic recitatives and the more lyrical arias or ensembles is not particularly important. In the Italian original, both are written with the same highbrow rhetoric. This distinction may influence translators somewhat, but register switches seem to occur not only in the middle of recitatives but also in the middle of arias and ensembles, though a more careful study would need to be conducted to confirm this hypothesis.

(4)   JOUVENOT *(coming from the stage; very angrily)* What an uproar!
      QUINAULT *(ditto; beside himself with fury)* Pandemonium let loose!
      DANGEVILLE *(ditto; in disgust)* How awful!
      POISSON *(ditto; contemptuously)* What an audience!
      JOUVENOT I'll spit in her eye!   (Cochrane ca. 1962, 20)

Another translator adopts a similar procedure for "*L'attimo fugge… cresce il periglio…*" in Excerpt (2a):

(5)   ADRIANA We're wasting time. Every minute is more dangerous.
                                                          (Sauls 1962, 35)

In these translations precious little remains of knightly challenges[10] or *carpe diem*, and this is perfectly understandable. Inserting the intertext would mean marking it so that it could be identified, and this would break the natural flow of the dialogue. When Alison Jones and Juan G. Basté, who both lean towards naturalising translations, give solutions such as "The moment is fleeting…" (Jones 1984, 67) and "*Se escapan los momentos…*" ['moments pass by…'] (Basté 1978, 21) for Excerpt (2a), they do echo the famous *topos*, but at the expense of momentarily breaking with the naturalising translation because the phrase sounds a little forced.

   Sixteen translations of *Adriana Lecouvreur* were used in this study and what is significant is that in all of them, including those which adopt a naturalising or mixed approach, little work has been put into reformulating these passages. The reply and counter-reply from Excerpt (2a) " – *Badate! questa è una sfida…* […] – *Perché, signora?… Forse è un delitto?*", are generally translated very literally: " – Be careful, that is a challenge! […] – Why, madam? Is it a crime?" (Chalmers 1991, 65). Even though the result is far from incongruent or incomprehensible, undoubtedly there is a need for some kind of amplification to optimise transparency and fluency. Likewise there are few who, like Cochrane, are prepared to change Mlle Jouvenot's exclamation "*Io la sfido!*" in Excerpt (1a).[11] The majority use "defy" (or "challenge"), "*défi*", "*desafío*" (or "*reto*"). In the whole scene, when dealing with Adriana's colleagues' reactions to her performance, most of the translators get caught up in a confusing dynamic in which it is unclear whether the actors are angry because Adriana has done it too well or too badly. Readers need

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10. Spitting in another's eye was one way of challenging someone to a duel, but most likely this would not even occur to many readers of Excerpt (4).

11. Only four: "*C'est stupide !*" ['It's stupid!'] (Milliet 1903, 35–36); "*Diese Mache, diese Mache!*" ['That farce!'] (Dahms ca. 1938, 73); "*¡La desprecio!*" ['I despise her!'] (Basté 1978, 15); "*Ich will Rache!*" ['I want revenge!'] (Werner s.d., 21). The first three solutions are perfectly natural and dialogic (the first and the second more liberal, the third closer to the original meaning). The fourth is more intertextual than the other three but less comprehensible in the cotextual meaning.

time to decide who the comments are addressed to, and in some translations it is not clear at any moment (especially if the stage directions are deleted). The naturalising translators should have at least avoided the 'strangeness' of certain literal solutions; had they been well informed about the source text intertext, this would have guided them in the task. To be able to see the hyperbolic language of the offended knight behind the actress's words, or simply know that "*furore*" often retains the Latin meaning of 'insanity' and that "*sfidare*" embraces a wide radius of action,[12] would have provided clues and resources with which one could construct a coherent, or at least likely, cotextual meaning for the entire scene with a naturalising language.

At this point I would like to propose an alternative for "*Un delirio!* […] *Un furore!* […] *Io la sfido!*": 'What a frenzy! […] What madness! […] I can't stand her!'. Or, if the "*furore*" is interpreted as being felt by Mlle Jouvenot: 'She gets on my nerves! […] I'd kill her!', or 'She gets on my nerves! […] I'm better than her!'. While these solutions are open to criticism because they are very free, they are justified by a number of factors: not only by the very virtues of the naturalising strategy and the fact that the target reader is less likely than an Italian reader to notice an Italian intertext, but also by the semantic stretching inherent to stereotyping. This stretching multiplies the equivalences and, for this reason alone, encourages an anti-literalist approach.

Therefore, allowing the intertextual reference to be lost in a naturalising translation has to be seen as an option that is both legitimate and often desirable, but this does not mean that the translator should not detect it. Identifying the allusion in the source text can prove useful or even necessary to (1) know how to avoid it, and (2) facilitate a proper reading of the word or phrase, whose meaning is obscured precisely because of the forced insertion of the intertextual material. A greater knowledge of intertextuality than can be observed in translations that are in circulation would contribute to reducing the irregularities found in many of them, and most particularly to avoiding the hyperliteral or puzzling moments which often impair the naturalising translations.

3.   The technique of compensation

There are other reasons to omit intertextual allusions, though those reasons are more strictly operative and are not specific to opera translation. Essentially, these boil down to the extreme difficulty that comes with translating intertextuality and

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12. When Cavaradossi cries out "*Vi sfido!*" ['I challenge you!'] to his torturers (*Tosca*, Act 2, Scene 4), nowadays he would be more likely to cry out 'Cowards!'.

the differing opinions concerning the results obtained. Techniques or procedures at translators' disposal have been spelled out by scholars (Ruokonen 2010, 132–157; Strohwald 2013, 72–73); however, many cannot be applied to a play (e.g., replication or external marking) or are unworkable for stylistic intertextuality or allusions to the source national literature (existing translation, literal translation).

As pointed out earlier, allusions shared by source and target culture are not the most common nor those which pose most hurdles for the translator. The Carduccian intertext of the aria "*Sì, fui soldato*" would only be picked up by an Italian reader and since Carducci's poem was not imported into other cultures (or only into small circles), no formulation in the target language will conjure this up. One obvious alternative is to quote a writer from the target culture instead of Carducci. It is this technique, the "replacement by a preformed TL item" (Leppihalme 1997, 84), which is the centre of the debate. On the one hand, what it has in its favour is that it responds to the call for creative strategies that smooth out the "culture bumps" these allusions cause. On the other hand, it is frowned upon for two reasons: it releases meanings and connotations which to some degree are inevitably different to the source text allusion, and introducing material from an author of the target culture falsifies the product and creates a disconcerting friction for the reader (Venuti 2009, 167–173; Leppihalme 1997, 118–119).

Aside from the disputable legitimacy of this procedure, it should be clarified that replacing a source-culture allusion with a target-culture allusion is no easy matter. First, a passage has to be found that enjoys a certain degree of fame and fits thematically into the lines of verse being translated, and second it has to fit syntactically into the discourse while at the same time respecting other translation imperatives which could clash with the intertextual problem.[13] These tasks require either a wide knowledge of literary rhetoric in both languages, or the willingness to invest a great deal of time and effort in researching for an equivalent quote. When dealing with works with a wide variety of intertextual material, this practice of 'replacement', if not limited to sporadic use, belongs to the realm of ideal aspirations rather than the real world possibilities for a mortal translator whose working conditions render certain exercises in virtuosity impossible even though s/he has the interest and the will.

One technique which attenuates the complexity of this task, particularly if the source text quotes or imitates an intertext in lengthy passages, is compensation. This procedure does not attempt to match every source intertextual reference with a target text cultural reference, but instead rules out some of them (i.e., for which no solution can be found) and introduces new references at other points in the

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13. For example, in Excerpt (1a), the syntactic parallelism between the dialogues.

translation where there are no allusions in the source text (Ruokonen 2010, 154).[14] The aim is to achieve a similar intertextual density, and outside the sphere of opera translation this is what the majority of the translators who decide to work with target-culture allusions do.

On a small scale, an example can be found in a 1996 Spanish translation of *La Cenerentola* (1817, music by Gioachino Rossini, libretto by Jacopo Ferretti). In Act 2, Scene 1, Don Magnifico, confronted with a choir of courtiers murmuring about the slight chances his daughters stand as prospective wives, as opposed to Cinderella, expresses his open indignation which is reminiscent of that shown by Don Quixote when, upon seeing everyone laughing at him, he adopts an aggressive attitude. The anonymous translator captures the Quixote intertext and reproduces it with a "*Voto a*" ['I vow by'], typically used by Cervantes's character:

(6) a. Mi par che quei birbanti
         ridessero di noi sottocappotto.
         Corpo del mosto cotto!
         Fo un Cavaliericidio.   (Ferretti 1817 [1998], 2: 716)
     b. Me parece que aquellos rufianes
         se ríen de nosotros a escondidas.
         ¡Voto a todo el mosto prensado,
         que haré un caballericidio![15]   (Anonymous 1996, 51)

A few lines later, Don Magnifico lets his imagination run wild: when one of his daughters becomes queen, everyone will go to him to ask for favours and he will not hesitate in allowing himself to be corrupted in exchange for money. In this case, the source text does not appear to make any particularly visible intertextual reference. However, the translator, when he resolves "*quello ha torto e vuol ragione*" with "*un entuerto enderece*", uses a phrase which is unmistakeably marked for all Spanish readers, as it is one of the most famous phrases from Cervantes's novel. Don Quixote went out into the world to become a knight-errant in order to "*enderezar entuertos*" ['right wrongs']:

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14. It is especially important for translators to take into account the distinction made above (see footnote 9) between recitatives and lyrical sections if they want one or several intertextual plays to be heard in a sung translation. In a recitative, they are less likely to be noticed than if they appear in a recurring sentence in an aria or ensemble. By creating or reproducing an intertextual reference in a particularly intelligible sentence, the compensation technique can compensate for any intertext lost elsewhere in the text.

15. An English translation which comes close to the Quixotic rhetoric is: "It seems to me that / those scoundrels / were laughing up their sleeves at us. / By the body of the martyr / I am going to commit cavaliericide" (Glasser 1983, 19). In the third line the exact words of the original are as follows: 'By the body of the cooked must', in reference to the character's passion for wine.

(7) a. Mi risveglio a mezzo giorno:
         suono appena il campanello,
         che mi vedo al letto intorno
         supplichevole drappello:
         questo cerca protezione:
         quello ha torto, e vuol ragione:
         chi vorrebbe un impieguccio:
         chi una cattedra ed è un ciuccio   (Ferretti [1817] 1998, 2: 739–741)

     b. Me despierto a mediodía:
         apenas hago sonar la campanilla,
         y ya veo en torno al lecho
         un montón de suplicantes:
         éste pide protección;
         aquél que un entuerto enderece;
         uno querría un trabajito,
         otro una cátedra y es un borrico[16]   (Anonymous 1996, 52)

Here the translator has come up with a formula which belongs to the literary en-
cyclopaedia in the target culture and does not hesitate to make use of it.[17] S/he has
realised that the librettist uses intertextual references on other occasions and de-
cides to imitate him, that is, to act as Ferretti would if he were writing in Spanish.
Moreover, the translator avoids any geographical-cultural friction because the
phrase chosen in Spanish comes very close to an idiom without Spanish speakers
losing awareness of its origin.

4.   Other techniques: Internal marking and re-creation

The compensation technique emerges as the most productive for resolving the
translation problem under discussion here, but is not only one. Not all the other
techniques proposed by experts in intertextuality are inapplicable to opera libret-
tos. Leaving aside footnotes or other paratextual devices (not translation in the
strict sense), I would like to point out what is known as 'internal marking'. This
consists of "the addition of intra-allusive allusion-signalling features (marked

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16. "I wake up at noon. / No sooner has the bell rung / than I see around my bed / a supplicant
squadron. / This one seeks protection. / That one has a grievance and wants justice. / This one
would like a little job, / This one a professorship and he is stupid" (Glasser 1983, 21).

17. In fact, the original says something different. The supplicant turns to Don Magnifico for
support that he is right even though he is not, that is, so that he sanctions bad behaviour as good
behaviour. The English translator cited in the previous footnote makes the same mistake.

wording or syntax) that depart from the style of the context, thus signalling the presence of borrowed words" (Leppihalme 1997, 84). A good example of 'internal marking' would be the aforementioned old form of the vow "*Voto a … que …*", as it was often used simply with the sense of 'you can be sure that …', 'certainly …'. If, in Excerpt (1a), "*Un furore!* […] *Io la sfido!*" had to be translated into Spanish, *Don Quixote* might be expected to offer some good equivalents of the source text reference to the chivalric world of Ariosto and Tasso, authors who greatly influenced Cervantes. However, Cervantes uses the term "*furor*" only once in his novel, and none of the synonyms he deploys is a particularly well-known formulation.[18] The same can be said of "*desafío*" ['defy', 'challenge'] or its word family even though he uses them more frequently. Faced with the impossibility of finding an appropriate equivalent allusion, the option that remains is to draw a linguistic form from *Don Quixote* with little semantic content, which the reader is familiar with and can be easily inserted into any type of context. If "*Un furore!*" were then translated using a word related to madness or chivalric pride and the vow were added to "*Io la sfido!*", this might at least allow the audience to catch a glimpse of Mlle Jouvenot as an ancient knight who is beside herself, which is how Colautti intends her to be portrayed. The syntactic parallelism in the source text suggests the same is true of Quinault. The choice of words and the arrangement of sentences will therefore produce different effects (how ambiguous the text is and how natural it sounds) and generate different interpretations. What follows is an example of two possible versions I would like to propose, the first with a more transparent intertextual reference and more focused on the agressivity:

(8) a. QUINAULT *(furibundo)* ¡Qué falta de cordura!
MLLE JOUVENOT *(indignada)* ¡Qué afrenta!
POISSON *(con desprecio)* ¡Qué público!
MLLE DANGEVILLE *(con repulsión)* ¡Qué espanto!
QUINAULT ¡Voto a Dios que harán que me ahogue!
MLLE JOUVENOT ¡Voto a Dios que harán que la mate![19]

b. QUINAULT *(furibundo)* ¡Qué desvarío!
MLLE JOUVENOT *(indignada)* ¡Qué poco juicio!
POISSON *(con desprecio)* ¡Qué público!
MLLE DANGEVILLE *(con repulsión)* ¡Qué espanto!

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18. At a stretch, "*extraño género de locura*" ['strange form of madness'] (*Quijote*, Part I, Chapter 3 and Part I, Chapter 37).

19. '[…] – What lack of sanity! […] – What an affront! […] – What a public! […] – What a fright! […] – I vow to God that they shall end up making me drown! […] – I vow to God that they shall end up making me kill her!'

> QUINAULT ¡Voto a Dios que aquí me ahogo!
> MLLE JOUVENOT ¡Voto a Dios que yo la igualo![20]

The translations offered above are not limited to adding an internal marking. In addition, they weave a marked lexical fabric (“*cordura* […] *afrenta* […] *espanto*”); put another way, a stream of intertextual signs, as is the case in the source text. But, even if this were not so, the stream of signs could be used as an alternative technique, essentially a compensating technique. Among other target intertext echoing elements, it would be possible to include quotes that are not well-known and which, though they would be difficult to identify in isolation, would be more easily identifiable when used in combination with the rest of the intertextual materials. Thus, one way of translating “*Un delirio!* […] *Un furore!*” would be: ‘*Les han carcomido los sesos* […] *Les han desnatado el entendimiento*’, which would allude to Cervantes’s “*déjate destas vaciedades que te carcomen el seso y te desnatan el entendimiento*” (*Quijote*, Part II, Chapter 62).[21]

Another question is the degree of manipulation the quote undergoes. In this last example, only minimal syntactical changes have been made to integrate it into the new context. However, one can go even further using another technique, ‘re-creation’, that is the “creative construction of a passage” by means of a mix of authentic and non-authentic material (Leppihalme 1997, 84). This takes the form of utterances which are not allusions but appear to be, or variations of quotes such as the one offered below for Excerpt (2a) which I draw up on the basis of the famous phrase “en mal punto aquí vinisteis” [‘at a bad point here you came’] (*Amadís de Gaula*, Book I, Chapter 26):

(9) ADRIANA *(sin sospecha alguna)* Quien todo me lo confía.
     LA PRINCESA *(levantando la voz)* ¿Cómo osáis? En mal punto eso dijisteis…
     ADRIANA *(sorprendida)* ¿Por qué, señora? ¿Dije acaso una villanía?[22]

The literary histories of almost all the European languages include the chivalric genre, which provides reusable linguistic material in the infinite situations of confrontation which pervade opera librettos. Precisely the repetitive themes and ‘modules’ of librettos facilitate the work of translators, who in turn, can make their task easier by exercising greater freedom and sliding the translation in the direction

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20. ‘ – What ravings! – What lack of judgment! – What a public! – What a fright! – I vow to God that I am drowning here! – I vow to God that I am her equal!’

21. “[…] give over these fooleries that are sapping thy brains and skimming away thy wits” (Ormsby 1885, IV: 251).

22. ‘[…] – He who completely confides in me. […] – How dare you? You say this at a bad moment… […] – Why is this, madam? Have I made some base remark?’

of an adaptation. It goes without saying that the further the translator moves away from the original, the more scope he or she has to implement intertexts. The translations proposed here would not have been possible without lengthening the dialogue. Moving through the synonymic and metonymic chain, above all in the cause-effect contiguity ('I'd kill her!' for "*Io la sfido!*" in Excerpt (1a), since 'killing' is the consequence of a 'challenge'), gives equally good results.

5.   Conclusions

The previous sections describe a series of techniques that could seem effective to translate the intertextual references that are present in operatic librettos. Indeed, the examples have demonstrated they actually are effective to a certain extent, especially when they are used together. However, the descriptions of the techniques and the examples given have shed light on the obstacles and drawbacks of using them. First, it is clear that whatever technique is used and however much licence is taken, it will not significantly reduce the time, dedication and literary knowledge required to achieve the goals proposed in this paper. Although operatic intertextuality seeks to bring all librettos in line with certain conventions of the genre, these stereotypes are slightly more numerous and a little less simplistic than is often thought. Furthermore, although thematic modules like chivalry and hedonism are shared with other Western literatures, the phraseology is often unique to Italian literature, meaning that the translator needs to apply the more complex of the techniques available. In addition, there is a further limitation of another order: both the target-culture allusion and internal marking, both compensation and re-creation, put a non-current language form into the mouths of the dramatic characters and, therefore, confirm the need or convenience to omit intertextuality in modernising and naturalising translation. In other words, they are techniques which usually remain excluded from this modality. As seen above, in the source text the sudden shift to a more formal style does not take place, because the 'ungrammaticality' of the intertext is camouflaged in a forest of forms no longer in use. To place the aforementioned techniques into a proper framework, it would be necessary to recreate the entire forest in translations, not – or not only – by means of the literal modality, which has the drawback of leading into a style which to a large degree is alien to the rhetoric of the target language, but rather by means of archaising translation, based on exploiting the resources of the target language in its elevated style and previous literary tradition.

So far I have focused on literal and naturalising strategies, and have not mentioned this third modality, archaising translation, since it has been under-cultivated in librettos published to be read. However, it should be noted that singable

translations, especially until World War II, often adopted this model. What is in doubt is its viability and acceptability nowadays. As regards viability, the effort required to maintain a uniform style overcomes what the naturalising modality requires, since the translator evidently has a greater mastery of modern rather than old language. In some of the proposals put forward here, almost certainly there will be readers who will criticise having mixed the old and the modern. Conversely, translators in the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century worked at a time which was closer to the original librettos from a linguistic as well as cultural point of view and handled the highbrow rhetoric more easily.

Regarding acceptability, in the current circumstances a return to the 'old translations' approach would probably not be acceptable to critics or the public in the world of opera. Not all the arguments they supply are convincing. Critics argue against "*ce langage lourd, plein de poncifs poétiques, de permutations syntaxiques maladroites et autres vieilleries*" ['the convoluted language, crammed with poetic clichés, clumsy syntactic permutations and other relics'], as they consider this to be inadequate for "*la diction légère, proche du style conversationnel*" ['the informal, conversation-like speech'] of certain operas (Marschall 2004, 18). The original Italian versions of most operas, however, use what is better described as 'convoluted language' than as 'informal speech'. Edward Dent himself admits that one does not always manage – or consider it appropriate – to naturalise: "It is the lamentable fact that when an opera is starkly operatic and conventional in procedure, operatic English is the only language that can be reasonably sung to it" (quoted in Degott 2004, 418). From a theoretical perspective, therefore, the case can be made for archaising translations by using grandiose, anachronistic expressions, since the Italian librettos do the same. Nevertheless, it is equally true that times have changed: if the Italian libretto is able to arouse a certain hilarity for an Italian public today, then imitating that style is open to a similar reception.

Generally speaking, a light archaising translation is easier to digest, guaranteeing a degree of literariness and formal style without being overly affected nor identified with a particular period of time or literary movement. Finding this middle ground is not easy to achieve, but would be well received, since it borders on the highbrow naturalising-modernising style advocated by the critics who are concerned with preserving a "*certain degré de poéticité*" ['certain degree of poetic diction'] (Degott 2004, 425).

As opposed to a strict archaising modality, with this compromise comes a loss of archaisms and learned forms which also affects intertextuality. Many of the translation solutions proposed here would not be well received. Internal markers such as "*Voto a…*", "*Vive Dios que…*" ['by the living God'], "*pardiez*" ['by Gad', 'egad'], "*de este jaez*" (an obsolete term for 'of this sort'), allusions such as "*extraño género de locura*" and pseudo-allusions such as "*en mal punto eso dijisteis*" would

not pass the acceptability test as they would sound too pompous and erudite and too markedly 'Spanish'. Thus the impression of a time-place displacement often caused by an archaising translation and the rejection that this usually results in does not encourage a wide use of the techniques described in this study. In conclusion, given the current *status quo*, although translation scholars are calling for ambitious solutions to deal with intertextuality, a series of factors – within and almost certainly outside the world of librettos – mean that translators should shy away from such ambition. To describe intertextuality as 'untranslatable' would perhaps be to overstate its complexity. At the same time, however, more than with any other literary resource, translators seem bound not to give intertextuality the same space to function it enjoys in most source texts.

Funding

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Multilingual libretti across linguistic borders and translation modes

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Following up my research on multilingualism in opera production, reception and translation, this paper goes further into the relationship between translation and linguistically heterogeneous libretti, now focusing on the texts themselves. Plurilingual operas encourage reflection on how important it is to understand the semantic content of the various languages in order to grasp the comunicative value and / or enjoy these works; the advisability of neutralising the verbal diversity – integral to their meaning – in the translation process must be questioned too. The paper also analyses the translation strategies used in subtitling and CD inserts for some multilingual libretti, which show varying functions and degrees of heteroglossia, in order to observe whether those textual features determine translation choices as much as the translation mode.

Keywords: multilingualism, opera, language-music relationship, meaning, translation strategies, translation modes, subtitling, CD-inserts

1. Multilingual operas and translation

In a translation volume entitled *Multilingualism at the Cinema and on Stage: A Translation Perspective* (Şerban and Meylaerts 2014), I contributed an article on the translation of multilingual operas, following the lines suggested by one of the editors in an earlier study on heterolingualism and translation, in which she had claimed it was important to ask "who precisely is multilingual, when, where, for what purpose" (Meylaerts 2006, 2). My contribution thus analysed the relationhip between multilingualism and opera from a macrotextual perspective, since heteroglossia as a contextual feature can commonly be observed in the genesis, production and reception of opera texts (Mateo 2014, 331, 333 and 348). Linguistic issues, translation, and the presence of different languages are closely linked to this genre, reflecting the appeal that foreignness has held for librettists and composers

throughout its history (Desblache 2013, 14–15). Indeed, this "intercultural dimension" of opera (Bassnett 2000, 103), which is particularly noticeable at the extratextual level, can also be observed in the texts themselves: both in the linguistic, cultural, as well as artistic journeys many of them made before they actually became opera pieces (Mateo 2014, 332), and in the linguistically heterogeneous libretti that can be found in the repertoire.

According to O'Sullivan (2011, 176), "[m]ultilingualism becomes both a product of translation and a problem for translation", and opera seems to illustrate this neatly. I shall here deal with the *problem* side of that statement since, from a theoretical perspective, multilingual operas raise interesting issues concerning the study of opera in / and translation, while, from the practitioners' standpoint, they pose a real translation challenge. Therefore, this article will first reflect on the relevance of the semantic content, expressed in various languages, for the comunicative value and enjoyment of a multilingual operatic work, and on its consequences for the process of translation (in Section 2); a more practical standpoint will then be taken in the main part (Section 3), in order to observe the extent to which the deliberate mix of languages that composers and librettists introduce in their works (to various degrees and purposes) is conveyed in two of the translation modes commonly used for this genre of musical drama.

2.   Theoretical issues raised by multilingual operas in translation

2.1   The issue of meaning

It is important to start by briefly considering what it is opera audiences need to understand and for which they need translation. In other words, how is meaning created in opera? And, more specifically, what is the role of plurilingualism in the creation of that meaning?

Opera is one of the hybrid art forms, a status which it is accorded not because of its intrinsic features, in Levinson's view (1984, 6), but "in virtue of its emergence out of a field of previously existing artistic activities". Song and drama are combined in operatic art usually in a synthetic way, so that they end up losing their identity (which shows in the fact that libretti would not work well as spoken drama); the resulting product is thus not the sum of individual elements but a rich fusion. Levinson quotes Wagnerian opera as a prime example of this: it is "not a drama *plus* song – it is sung drama or dramatic song" (1984, 9). Wagner's musical drama also illustrates what Levinson calls the *integrative* type of overall effect, produced by hybrid art forms showing an intimate blend of its diverse elements. Of particular relevance to the present study, though, is the *disintegrative*

effect, identified by Levinson in hybrids where the complex and rich combination does not achieve an image of unity but "of complete fragmentation […] through a kind of cognitive overload" (1984, 12). Indeed, some multilingual operas can best be described in relation to the latter type of overall effect, associated to works in which "[w]e are forced to see the many" (1984, 12).

If opera, then, "is a hybrid art, which cannot be subsumed under any of its component arts" (Gorlée 1997, 240), some reflection is necessary on how the 'meaning' of the work arises from the intricate relationship between its heterogeneous elements, which are even more so when the libretto is a multilingual one.

The interaction between the two basic means of expression in the wide semiotic choice opera affords its creators, music and language, is problematic in terms of the role each of them plays in the creation of meaning, as was discussed in Mateo (2014, 327–328): most modern approaches to this complex issue agree that the functions assigned to the music and to the verbal text in an opera piece are far from a clear-cut dichotomy, so that both can perform the aesthetic function traditionally attached to music as well as a communicative one, often included in the realm of words (see, for instance, Corse 1987; Fornäs 1997, and Ruwet 2002). I am here interested, more specifically, in the way this applies to multilingual operas; and Corse's use of Julia Kristeva's distinction within human signification for the former's study of the text-music relationship may prove relevant (1987). Kristeva ([1974] 1984) observed that language can reflect both conscious (*symbolic*) and unconscious (*semiotic*) meaning; i.e., language can be used to highlight the intentional and referential (playing a symbolic function), or as the instrument of the unconscious and its primary processes (a semiotic one) (Kristeva 1984; in Corse 1987, 149; and Fornäs 1997, 116). This is particularly manifested in opera, in which, as has already been stated, the roles performed by music and text are both complementary and blurred.

Musical drama featuring several tongues in the verbal component might arguably be said to provide an even finer example of the merging between the traditional functions attached to each of opera's main systems. It is generally agreed that music adds its natural indefiniteness and ambiguity to the more 'definite' semantics of the verbal text, thus bringing in openness and multivalence to the complex operatic work (Corse 1987, 15–16; Kaindl in Clüver 2008, 404.). Nevertheless, in those operas which display an even coexistence of languages (rather than in those showing minimal multilingualism), the *meaning* of the verbal text might be somewhat closer (than in monolingual operas) to the *diffuse* meaning of music, since audiences will not generally understand the libretto completely, and that is probably the composer's intention. So their effect may be said to be nearer the semiotic level Kristeva found below the rational logic of discourse. The concept of 'songfulness' becomes relevant here, "defined as a quality of effortless pleasure

that is ascribed to the singing voice when it is enjoyed regardless of what it sings" (Kramer 1999, 303). This is surely the effect intended (or a crucial one) by the creators of multilingual operas, reducing the communicative function of the libretto and consequently making the aesthetic one prevail, not just in the music but in the verbal text too (see also Mateo 2014, 327–328). These operas evidence that libretti can also be "musical" (Fornäs 1997, 122).

'Voice' is an important concept here too. As Ruwet has explained (2002, 75), the fact that voice is the human *speech* organ implies that it immediately 'visibilizes' language whenever the latter participates in a musical piece; so even when the text becomes incomprehensible, vocal music can never overlook the medium of words, which are conveyed through the singing voice. Now, of the two key features that voice has in opera, "its materiality as an instrument of sound and its ability to transport verbal meaning" (Kaindl in Clüver 2008, 405–406), the material side seems to be highlighted in some styles of opera – such as multilingual libretti, for instance. In my opinion, this prominence of the material side of voice may have influenced opera audiences' traditional acceptance of performances in languages foreign to them (until the arrival of surtitling, which seems to have significantly changed this tolerance; see Mateo 2007). And it may also have encouraged certain composers' decision to combine languages in one and the same libretto. Some opera goers even find a source of enjoyment in the traditional alienness associated with opera libretti "because they know that incomprehension exalts and mystifies" (Corse 1987, 13, quoting Peter Conrad 1982). If one compares this to spoken drama – which is hardly ever performed in the original language to uncomprehending audiences and is not commonly surtitled (theatregoers' preferences being for target-language performance), then this tolerance and enjoyment must inevitably be explained by considering the role of voice in sung speech and the songfulness that creates or enhances the aesthetic pleasure of opera audiences. "[B]ecause that pleasure is localized in the singing voice, listeners need not understand what is being said or pay much attention to it if they do" (Kramer 1999, 310).

This does not imply, however, that meaning is not important to song, particularly in the context of opera, which has drama as an essential component (involving the development of a plot, characterisation, etc.). "On the contrary," as Kramer points out (1999, 317), "it remains the very nucleus of song. But any understanding of song does need to take account of how and why meaning is so regularly cast off." In opera, it may be explained in terms of selection and relevance: verbal text and music work together in a meaningful "selective interaction", so that the semantic content and the sound of the libretto are respectively foregrounded or backgrounded depending on "[their] relative closeness to emotive and structural components of the music" (Golomb 2005, 123–124). Besides, *meaning* does not only refer to semantic content; it is also present in the sounds themselves, which

may play not only a signifier but also a signified role (Desblache 2013, 12). This is certainly the case with multilingual operas, where the actual contrast between the sound of the languages mixed in the libretto, as well as the specific choice of the 'foreign' language(s), are significant.

2.2   The issue of translation

The study of opera translation has revealed that this genre calls for specific requirements in the various modes commonly used to convey it across linguistic and cultural borders. Various works have also shown that linguistic diversity seems to be an integral part of opera texts and contexts, manifested in the intercultural and interlinguistic background forming the genesis of most operas and in the ever present combination of languages in the production and reception of the genre. In fact, multilingualism seems to be more and more closely attached to the operatic form: "Large contemporary operatic endeavours are transnational art forms, […] but they promote multilingual, multicultural, and multimodal values and products" (Desblache 2013, 12).

Because of this, the genre often becomes "a type of entertainment that defies homogenization" (Desblache 2013, 12), something which itself seems to clash with the monolingualising pressures traditionally associated with the process of translation (de Higes-Andino 2014, 215; Voellmer and Zabalbeascoa 2014, 237). Consequently, "[m]oving beyond the longstanding view that translation involves two languages […] is a first step for translation theory to start accounting for heterolingual texts" (Voellmer and Zabalbeascoa 2014, 237).

A key question regarding multilingual operas, from the theoretical perspective, is whether it is in fact necessary to translate the *alien* parts of the libretto. Interestingly, this question was raised by Golomb, about opera in general, in his 2005 study: referring to Peter Low's observation on the extent of social need for what Golomb has termed *music-linked translation* in comparison to the demand for other types of mediating texts for opera (Low 2003), Golomb regrets that this type of question is hardly ever addressed in academic writing; "as if the 'need' is obvious and needs not addressing" (2005, 137). It certainly becomes a central issue when the opera in question is a multilingual one. Indeed, if, on the one hand, the appreciation of opera lies in a very complex process which implies understanding the libretto in order to follow the plot and grasp its interaction with the music (Golomb 2005, 141), on the other hand, the semantic content of the verbal text is frequently overridden by the combination of two or more languages in it which becomes significant in itself, as was discussed above.

What type or degree of translation, then, does a multilingual opera need in order to be received in a target context? It may be assumed that, when a composer

has decided to mix various languages to a greater or lesser extent in an opera libretto, this decision has a bearing on the opera's signification (at times becoming essential to it), so a target text should somehow reflect this diversity. Various factors influence the translation approach, some of which will be presented next.

An important one, for instance, is the mode of translation chosen, since it may be more or less suitable for the preservation of heteroglossia in the target text (that choice itself being determined principally by the medium of communication in the target context).

The hybrid nature of opera texts will also have a bearing, as it implies taking the musical component and non-verbal elements into account in translation decisions (obviously, in varying ways and degrees, depending on the translation mode used); these elements need not always imply constraints: they may actually provide compensatory resources to preserve the verbal multilingualism, by leaving the third language untranslated while relying on the visual aspects and / or the music to somehow convey the meaning. Another factor relating to the genre itself is the complicated process of *believing*, which, in opera, involves understanding the verbal component, among other things, and is connected to the question of being in control, itself an important element of the enjoyment we derive (Sutcliffe 1996, 5). This may encourage, for instance, the decision to insert interlinguistic surtitles for the alien bits in a source performance of a multilingual opera or a strategy of homogenisation in the surtitles of a target-context production, so that all the passages may be understood by the audience, forfeiting the heteroglossia in the captions.

The actual role and degree of multilingualism in the piece to be translated must also be quoted as a significant factor, together with the specific language(s) of the alien passages in the libretto, since one of the most thorny issues in the translation of plurilingual texts, for instance, appears when the foreign tongue (or one of them) coincides with the main target language in a translation act (Stratford 2008, 463). Relevant too are the different connotations the sound of other languages may have for the speakers of the target context, in relation to those held by the audiences originally addressed by the composer. (There may even be stereotypes regarding the voice quality, e.g., melodious *vs* harsh, typically associated with speakers of other languages [Voellmer and Zabalbeascoa 2014, 237], although this is less relevant in the case of opera since quality is here determined by the tessitura demanded by each role.)

The intertextuality sometimes established in a plurilingual opera through the foreign passage(s) will imply a further constraint on translation strategies, since it may not work well in the target context – intertextuality usually being culture-specific –, and it may discourage the translator from replacing the foreign language of the original with a different one which might differ from the main language in

the target text in order to recreate the original effect. Lastly, another factor is the degree of tolerance towards heteroglossia, which may show divergence between audiences in the two contexts involved in a translation process.

Two final observations are worth making regarding translation: a curious situation is sometimes created in the context of opera translation, since the verbal text may actually become more comprehensible for *target* audiences, i.e., reading interlinguistic surtitles, than for those sharing the language of the libretto being sung on the stage in a *source* production due to the incomprehensibility frequently marking opera singing. Similarly, in the case of multilingual operas, a target audience for whom the original heteroglossia has been neutralised in the surtitles will probably enjoy a greater degree of (semantic) understanding than the original audiences, who will miss the semantic content of the alien parts. Concerning the decision to prioritise understanding or the musical quality (and aesthetic role) of heteroglossia in the verbal text, Golomb's (2005, 140) highly pertinent distinction between the different types of communication aimed at in target opera performances may be used here: if the sung language is the original one, this researcher considers that *musical communication* with the composer has been preferred; if the singing takes place in the local vernacular, it is *theatrical communication* with the audience that has been prioritised in the target performance. Along the same lines, it may be claimed, in my opinion, that when heteroglossia is preserved in the translation of a multilingual opera, musical communication overrides theatrical communication in the target context (as it probably did in the source context), while neutralising the plurilingualism by translating the foreign part(s) of the libretto into the same target language used for the main part implies that the reverse takes place.

3.   Textual strategies for multilingual libretti

This section will focus on the textual strategies most commonly taken for heterolingual operas in translation. The aim will be to observe whether multilingualism (fully or partially) disappears in (different modes of) translation; if the function of the foreign fragment(s) is preserved or changed in the target opera and the extent to which it has been used as a criterion for the translation or has been subordinated to other factors involved in the process; and whether the approach taken will also depend on formal issues such as the degree of heteroglossia or the specific languages used in the source text. The analysis will hopefully contribute to our awareness of "the extent to which a translated text can be heterolingual" and the norms ruling "intertextual translation" (Voellmer and Zabalbeascoa 2014, 232) of multilingual operas today.

3.1 Features of multilingual operas

In Mateo (2014, 334–341), I distinguished three kinds of multilingualism in opera, depending on the degree and the role of heteroglossia in works of this genre. Of the three types, one of them is not relevant for the present study, being a contextual kind of heteroglossia: bilingual opera performances, common in some countries in 18th-century Europe, with arias and choruses normally sung in Italian and recitatives performed in the local vernacular. The other two types, (a) "operas which include the odd word, sentence, stanza or aria in an otherwise monolingual libretto" and (b) opera texts in which multilingualism "is formed by a mixture of tongues present on more or less equal terms" (2014, 335 and 338–339), *are* of great relevance for a translational analysis at the textual level (2014, 342–343), the standpoint adopted here: how opera translators deal with foreign insertions or with a balanced coexistence of different languages in libretti.

Five operas have been selected for the present study, four of them illustrating the above type (a) of multilingualism and one piece showing type (b), namely:[1]

a. Antonio Vivaldi's *Orlando Furioso,* with libretto by Grazio Braccioli (1727); Pyotr I. Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, with libretto by Konstantin Shilovski and Modest Tchaikovsky (1879); Richard Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*, with libretto by Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Harry Kessler (1911); and *Vec Makropulos* by Leoš Janáček, who wrote both the music and the libretto for it (1926).
b. Igor Stravinsky's opera-oratorio *Oedipus Rex,* with libretto by Jean Cocteau and the Latin translation of the Narrator's part by Jean Daniélou (1928).

The numerical system which has been used to describe the *form* of heteroglossia in films (e.g., de Higes-Andino 2014; Voellmer and Zabalbeascoa 2014) seems accurate and clear, so it will be used here to discuss it in opera texts. Thus, L1 will refer to the main language in the source libretto. Due to cultural and artistic reasons pertaining to the history of opera, this will commonly be one of a small group of languages: Italian, German, French, Russian or Czech, and occasionally a few others like English or Spanish.[2] In the operas selected here, L1 is Italian (*Orlando Furioso*), Russian (*Eugene Onegin*), German (*Der Rosenkavalier)* and Czech (*Vec Makropulos*). L3 denotes the 'token' language (in either the ST or the TT), having "far fewer words than the main language(s) and / or there is far less of a need for the audience to understand it" (Voellmer and Zabalbeascoa 2014, 238).

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1. The dates given correspond to the premiere of each opera.

2. The fact that English has now become the preferred language for new operatic works (Desblache 2013, 17) shows that the language question in opera is closely linked to issues of cultural (as well as political and economic) hegemony.

In the source operas in this study, L3 is French (*Orlando Furioso, Eugene Onegin*) and Italian (*Der Rosenkavalier*), but there are also instances of Spanish and Greek (both present in *Vec Makropulos*).

Now, in the same way as there may be more than one L3 – see Janáček's libretto – a source text may have more than one L1, with two or more languages having more or less equal weight (Voellmer and Zabalbeascoa 2014, 238). This is actually what happens in type b): *Oedipus Rex* combines Latin, for the sung parts, with French (or the specific audience's language) for the narration – there being recordings with this part in English, German and Japanese. Consequently, "heterolingual (source) texts characteristically have either more than one main language or one or more 'token' languages (L3), or both features combined" (Voellmer and Zabalbeascoa 2014, 238). Thus, *Babel 46,* a truly plurilingual piece by the Catalan composer Xavier Montsalvatge's (written in 1964, but first performed in 1994) which has been the object of study from a translational perspective too in Mateo (2017), displays several L1s (Spanish, Italian, French, Portuguese, and English) and L3s (Catalan, Sephardic Castilian, and German). It must also be borne in mind that the distinction between main and 'token' languages is established purely on the extent of their presence in the text (Voellmer and Zabalbeascoa 2014, 238), there being degrees in this respect: for instance, German and Sephardic Castilian appear in just a few words in Montsalvatge's libretto whereas Catalan is used for a whole aria (a traditional song).

In a translation analysis focusing on multilingualism, attention should be placed on the strategies taken to render the L3(s), or the combination of L1s, in the target texts. The extent of the alien passages may prove significant since it may imply a greater or lesser need of comprehension on the part of the audience. Another relevant feature regarding the form of heteroglossia may be the sung or 'spoken' nature of the foreign insertion(s), i.e., whether they correspond to an aria, ensemble or chorus, or else adopt the form of recitative (sung in the rhythm of ordinary speech) or narration (as in *Oedipus Rex*).

Apart from the form of heteroglossia, the *function(s)* assigned to the alien passage(s) in the source opera by the composer-librettist will be crucial (see Stratford 2008, 461 for functions of heteroglossia in literary texts). The specific purposes served by multilingualism in each of the operas selected will be explained with the translation strategies in 3.2, but the general roles heteroglossia is given in these librettos can be listed here: it is used for characterisation purposes (*Orlando Furioso, Eugene Onegin, Der Rosenkavalier*); to produce a comic effect (*Eugene Onegin, Der Rosenkavalier*); to add realism or drama (*Vec Makropulos*); to introduce intertextuality (*Der Rosenkavalier*); to signal otherness and cultural stereotypes (*Eugene Onegin, Vec Makropulos*); or for distantiation purposes (*Oedipus Rex*) (see also Mateo 2014, 335–336 and 339).

The following table sums up the features described in this section, to be considered in the analysis:

Table 1. Features of the multilingual operas analysed

The form of opera heteroglossia	Degrees of opera heteroglossia studied here	Operas analysed	
		Type 'a'	Type 'b'
L1 Main language in the source libretto	*Type 'a'* Operas including a word, sentence, stanza or aria in a monolingual libretto	*Orlando Furioso* (Vivaldi / Braccioli, 1727) L1: Italian L3: French	*Oedipus Rex* (Stravinsky / Cocteau and Daniélou,1928) L1s: Latin and French (or other)
L2 Dominant language in the target libretto	*Type 'b'* Operas showing a (more or less) balanced coexistence of different languages	*Eugene Onegin* (Tchaikovsky / Shilovski and M. Tchaikovsky, 1879) L1: Russian L3: French	
L3 'Token' language (in either ST or TT)		*Der Rosenkavalier* (Strauss / von Hofmannsthal and Kessler, 1911) L1: German L3: Italian	
		Vec Makropulos (Janáček,1926) L1: Czech L3: Spanish and Greek	

3.2   Multilingualism in target opera texts

Our attention will now turn to the strategies translators have taken when facing the challenge of conveying the linguistic variation in the above opera pieces across linguistic boundaries, and will try to establish "a relationship between translation modes, translation strategies and constraints" in the analysis, borrowing de Higes's aim for her study of multilingual films (2014, 211). Of the usual translation modes associated with the opera genre – sung translation, surtitling, subtitling, bi/monolingual printed libretti or vocal scores, written translations in CD-inserts, and target-language summaries of the plot in theatre programmes (see Low 2017) – I have focussed on two which show some interesting differences and similarities, providing a framework for our object of study: CD-inserts and DVD subtitles. Both are written modes but translation is mediated differently in each: in

the former, the target-text medium is separate from that of the oral text it complements, and the reception of the opera can be reading plus aural – albeit not necessarily simultaneous (one can read the booklet containing the libretto *before* or *after* one listens to the CD). The subtitles, on the other hand, are inserted in the DVD images, so their reception *is* simultaneous with the text they complement, which is, moreover, not merely oral but visual too; i.e., the receivers who choose to watch an opera DVD with subtitles read them together with the images and the singing of the performance on the screen. This may imply different possibilities and constraints, coming from the other semiotic codes, for the translation strategies taken in either mode.

Another feature these two modes share which is relevant for the study of multilingualism has to do with the L2, "the dominant language in the target text" (de Higes-Andino 2014, 214). Both in CD-inserts and opera DVDs, it is common to find a choice of languages addressed at a linguistically diverse potential audience. Significantly, in parallel with what happens to the language issue in the genre's repertoire, there is little variation in the tongues found in each mode, usually a reflection of cultural and/or economic influence: English, French, Italian and German are the common choices both in CD-inserts and DVDs, with Spanish and Chinese also being frequently incorporated into the subtitle offer of the latter. This choice in the L2s provided will enable us to observe whether different textual strategies are used for heteroglossia in the various versions of one and the same CD or DVD, and in each mode, as well as to reflect on what the effect of the diverse strategies may be on the different types of receiver (Mateo 2014, 344). The decision to study several operas, so as to illustrate different types/functions of multilingualism, has implied (for reasons of space) restricting the translation analysis to the versions included in one CD and one DVD per opera. In any case, 34 target texts have been considered all in all.

3.2.1   *'Type a' multilingual operas in translation*
Vivaldi's *Orlando Furioso*, a *dramma per musica* in three acts, alternates arias with recitative, and it is precisely an instance of the latter that includes the heteroglossia in this opera: two brief speeches in French inserted by Orlando in an exchange with Angelica, whom he desperately loves, while he raves mad about the recent marriage between his beloved and Medoro (Act 3, Scene 1); the rest of the exchange is recited in Italian, the libretto's L1. The French insertions are meant to enhance the protagonist's madness, induced by the newly-weds' love. Indeed, this work, although rarely performed today, is praised not just for its "extraordinary musical and dramatic richness" but for its "astoundingly lively and individualised characters" (Delaméa 2004, 33 and 31). The CD studied (Tesori del Piemonte

2004) offers two TTs, in French (TT-Fr) and English (TT-Eng).[3] Neither of them has preserved the multilingualism: TT-Eng has rendered the whole of Orlando's ranting in English, while TT-Fr presents the very thorny problem in the translation of heteroglossia, mentioned in 2.2, which arises from the coincidence of the source text's L3 (in this case French) with L2 (also French in this TT); so, unlike TT-Eng, TT-Fr *has* preserved the L3 but, because of this factor, it has not conveyed the multilingualism either. By contrast, heteroglossia has been maintained in all the subtitled versions offered by the DVD examined (ArtHaus Musik 1990): the Italian subtitled version has intralingual captions both for the L1 on the screen (Italian) and the L3 (French); TT-Eng, TT-Ger and TT-Spa show interlingual subtitles for the L1 (i.e. English, German and Spanish translating the Italian sung on the screen) and intralingual subtitles for the L3 (French subtitles replicating Orlando's linguistic variation). TT-Fr, having adopted the same strategy as the other versions in the DVD, produces nevertheless a different effect on the receiver, since the fact that the alien language is the same as its L2 neutralises the multilingualism in these subtitles.

Pyotr I. Tchaikovsky based his opera *Eugene Onegin* on a classic novel by the much revered Russian writer Alexander Pushkin, thus contributing, like other 19th-century opera composers of the same country, "to give Russian culture international prominence" (Desblache 2013, 14), which Tchaikovsky certainly did through his musical dramas and ballet compositions. *Eugene Onegin* is probably the most popular opera from that country and is still regularly performed. Arranging it as a series of "lyrical scenes" about its selfish young hero – representative of the decadent St Petersburg society of the 1820s – who will end up regretting his rejection of Tatyana (the female protagonist), Tchaikovsky relied on his audiences' knowledge of Russian culture and history to fill in the missing details between the situations described in each scene. The multilingualism in this opera appears briefly in a ball scene organised during the celebration of Tatyana's name-day (Act 2, Scene 1), in which an elderly French character, Monsieur Triquet, says a few words and sings an aria in her honour, mixing his native language with his poor Russian.

There is divergence among the versions of the CD-insert in the translation strategies adopted (Deutsche Grammophon 1987). TT-Ger only keeps the name titles mentioned in some speeches (*Monsieur Triquet, Mademoiselle, Mesdames*) in French – the L3 of the sung couplets having disappeared in the German used for the whole libretto; TT-Eng does the same but compensates for the neutralisation of multilingualism by making M. Triquet speak English with a French accent,

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3. I am using the convention suggested by Voellmer and Zabalbeascoa (2014) to name the various target texts in their study of film multilingualism.

indicated here and there in the spelling (e.g., "I'as ze verses wiz me" for "I have the verses with me"), thus trying to somehow convey the foreignness role of the ST heteroglossia – a strategy for which Voellmer and Zabalbeascoa (2014, 244) propose the concept of "represented nationality". Interestingly, TT-Fr adopts a different type of compensation technique for the loss of multilingualism in it: M. Triquet's French couplets and sentences are camouflaged with the L2 in this version but a translator's note has been introduced to explain that the character's Russian is very poor in the ST, adding, in a humourous tone – probably to justify the neutralisation strategy adopted – that it would be impolite to make him 'massacre' his own language. Thus, the role of heteroglossia in the Russian libretto is conveyed to the French reader of this booklet on a metatextual level. The subtitles in the DVD studied (DECCA / Channel 4 1988) show a different situation: first, all the versions have adopted a similar strategy; and secondly, this involves the neutralisation or considerable reduction of the ST's multilingualism. M. Triquet's couplets appear in the corresponding L2 of each version and only the odd French word is maintained in some speeches (*voilà, Mesdames*, etc.). TT-Spa and TT-It keep even fewer L3 words than TT-Ger and TT-Eng, while TT-Chi seems to have none, so the multilingualism completely disappears in the latter (as well as in TT-Fr due to L3 / L2 coincidence). It must be said, however, that the language switch is very clear in the performance, so the subtitlers may have prioritised the audience's understanding in their strategies for the captions, leaving the *effect* of multilingualism to be conveyed through the singing on the screen.

Richard Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier* remains one the most popular operas in the genre's repertoire, despite the fact that the composer was severely attacked by the musical avant-garde of the time for having returned to a Mozart-like style producing a piece that was considered an anachronism, quite unexpected from the creator of *Salomé* and *Elektra* (Mann 1982, 29 and 33–34). The libretto, which combines a tale of love and farcical intrigue with a serious reflection on the passage of time, recreates neoclassical Vienna with great accuracy. The social portrayal can be seen from Act 1, during the Marschallin's levee in her own bedroom, where she receives a regular crowd of tradesmen, petitioners and intriguers, among whom there is an Italian tenor who offers an aria. The whole scene was inspired by one of the engravings in William Hogarth's ironic series *Marriage à la mode*, thus showing a sort of semiotic intertextuality; it also includes literary intertextuality in the sentimental vocal score the tenor sings in Italian, "*Di rigori armato il seno*", which is in fact borrowed from Molière's *The Bourgeois Gentilhomme,* and is here inserted in the German libretto. The multilingualism thus created has a characterisation and humorous function, since the aria's lyricism and love theme ironically contrast with the goings-on around the singer. The CD-insert studied here (Deutsche Gramophon 1984) uncommonly offers only one target text, an English translation,

but it is interesting for our purposes as it illustrates how the translation mode may widen or narrow the choice of strategies. The booklet shows a uniform presentation of multilingualism for the readers of the source and target texts: both give the aria in Italian, followed by a translation in German and English, respectively, provided in brackets. Thus, multilingualism is made visible (retaining its function) while listeners' understanding is also aided – the CD-insert format allowing this preservation of heteroglossia while securing comprehension of the alien fragment. The DVD (Deutsche Gramophon 1994) has the opposite strategy for the Italian aria: all its interlinguistic subtitle versions, TT-Eng, TT-Fr, TT-Spa and TT-Chi show "[t]raditional L1-to-L2 interlingual translation, where there is no L3 presence" (Voellmer and Zabalbeascoa 2014, 243) for the aria. Nevertheless, two of them, TT-Eng and TT-Spa, do show some awareness of linguistic variation, since they convey the foreign accent characterising another visitor of the Marschallin's, an Italian intriguer, by subtitling his speeches with spelling which signals a half-Italian half-French pronunciation in English or with wrong Italian-looking words in Spanish. Both versions also try to reflect one of the servants' dialect and retain the odd foreign word in another character's speeches (the Baron's). These would be cases of compensation (Voellmer and Zabalbeascoa 2014, 243). Interestingly too, the subtitles for the SL version have intralingual subtitling not just for the L1 of the libretto (German) but for the L3 in the tenor's part (Italian). They therefore may be said to play a deictic function, pointing at and reinforcing the effect of the multilingualism heard in the singing on the screen, rather than facilitating the Italian aria's comprehension for the (most probably German) viewers of this version.

The last work in this group, Janáček's *Vec Makropulos* (or *The Makrop(o)ulos Case*), although not so regular in the opera repertoire as other pieces by this composer, has been placed "among the most humane and moving musical documents of the twentieth century" (Marks 2007, 10). Apart from the intrigue concerning an old lawsuit within a family, the libretto tackles the issue of human mortality, around the character of an opera singer, Emilia Marty, who became immortal thanks to a miraculous formula invented by her father, the Cretan alchemist Hieronymus Makropulos, at the end of the 16th century. For three centuries, Elina Makropulos (her original name) has assumed many identities in order to conceal her longevity, among them that of Eugenia Montez, a gypsy woman from Andalusia; so an exchange in (very poor) Spanish, with another character who recognizes her in that earlier role, is inserted in the Czech libretto in Act 2. At the end of the opera (Act 3), when the potion finally wears off, the famous diva falls back into her mother tongue, reading a brief note from her father and reciting the Lord's Prayer, both in Greek, before she finally expires. The CD studied here is an English-language recording by the English National Opera (Chandos 2007). The insert presents only an intralingual version of the performance, with no source

text. This English written translation preserves the multilingualism of the original libretto (which can also be heard in the audio, albeit rather unintelligibly); however, the presentation of the Spanish phrases is rather sloppy, containing some typographical errors and wrong punctuation. The Greek fragments in the final scene have also been preserved, and they appear in italics, which signal they are quotes. Interestingly, the DVD (NVC Arts 1995) adopts a rather different strategy for both cases of multilingualism in all its three subtitling versions. Only a few words of the Spanish exchange have been transferred in TT-Eng and TT-Ger so the multilingualism appears in a reduced form – some of the phrases getting blank subtitles in these versions, even though the Spanish is, again, rather unintelligible in the performance on the screen. TT-Spa, also showing blank subtitling there, adapts some of the Spanish speeches to a more natural usage (e.g., "*Eugenia, moza negra, querida mía*" for the odd "[…] *querida carísima*"); this implies there is some curious divergence in this part between the text heard in the singing and the intralingual subtitles. The adaptation might be due to the fact that the L3 coincides with the L2 (Spanish) in this version – the heteroglossia having therefore become invisible, since the L3 has not been changed (Voellmer and Zabalbeascoa 2014, 243). Hence, the subtitlers must have decided to homogenise the language usage in the interlinguistic (Czech > Spanish) and intralinguistic (Spanish > Spanish) subtitling. The language variation created by the Greek fragments has been neutralised in all three versions. The reason for this may have been the nature of these brief texts. The Lord's Prayer is the most important prayer in the Christian world, so there are versions of it in (probably) all languages; thus, the beginning of this text which we hear from Emilia Marty in Greek appears in the corresponding language in the three subtitling versions. The other text in the protagonist's mother tongue is the beginning of the crucial document she has long been looking for, containing her father's formula. Therefore, the three subtitlers seem to have prioritised comprehension here, and recognition in the Lord's Prayer's case, at the expense of the multilingualism created with Greek in the ST.

3.2.2   *'Type b' multilingual operas in translation*

Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* materialised the composer's wish to write a great work on an ancient myth, through a "neutral and laconic libretto" in a dead language (Barbier 1993, 12). The language was so relevant to the project that it was actually chosen before the topic itself, for which the composer resorted to Sophocles's play about this well-known story. With the choice of Latin, "a language in a way distant, sanctified, and with an incantatory aspect" (Harrison 1993, 7), the verbal text became, according to the composer, "une matière uniquement phonétique" (Stravinsky, in Barbier 1993, 12), while he could rely on the audience's familiarity with the myth in order to concentrate on the musical dramatisation (Harrison

1993, 8). Nevertheless, albeit reluctantly, Stravinsky accepted Coucteau's idea of having a Narrator relating the events in the language of the audience (whatever it might be). This device, which makes the work a typically bilingual one, proved highly effective, as Harrison explains (1993, 8): it was vital for today's audiences' understanding of the plot; at the same time, the Narrator contributes to the distantiation purpose intended by the composer since, by introducing the characters and events of the coming scene, he/she removes the surprise element and the audience does not get so deeply involved in the terrible tale of the tormented patricide. Besides, the Narrator speaks from the present, so the ancient story appears as both familiar and strange. This is reinforced by the fact that the fictional events, which form the musical parts of the work, are marked by an impression of "statuesqueness" (Holland 1983, 2): the characters behave like living statues, unrealistically, matching the artificiality of the language chosen, which Stravinsky liked because it was immune from triviality and vulgarisation. This is what makes this work an opera-oratorio: opera for its dramatic force, and oratorio for the static quality characterising both the music and the action (Barbier 1993, 15).

Oedipus Rex is therefore an excellent example of the blurred boundaries between the communicative and aesthetic functions traditionally associated with words and music, respectively, in musical drama (as discussed in Section 2); while the balanced combination of languages and the crucial role assigned to Latin in its libretto provide us with a different case of heteroglossia, from those above, for a translational study.[4] The CD-insert of the recording analysed here (Orfeo 1983) shows no multilingualism in the versions provided, TT-Ger, TT-Eng, TT-Fr, which translate into the corresponding L2 both the sung parts in Jean Daniélou's Ciceronian Latin (L1a) and the Narrator's six speeches, originally in French (L1b).[5] The same homogenisation strategy – L1a and L1b being unified into L2 – has been adopted by all the subtitling versions in the DVD selected here (Philips 1993), a very special production directed by Julie Taymor for the 1992 Saito Kinen Festival in Japan, with a female Narrator reciting in Japanese. Thus, TT-Chi, TT-Eng, TT-Fr, TT-Ger, TT-It and TT-Spa present a uniform text in the corresponding language, so the multilingualism has been neutralised within each version and is now only present in the performance on the screen. The subtitlers

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4. Latin is deemed as so crucial to this work that, in a performance given in 1960, conducted by Colin Davis, the Sadler's Wells Theatre Company in London abandoned its normal English-language practice, giving priority to the multilingualism in the drama, so that the sung parts were performed in the original Latin (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oedipus_rex_%28opera%29, last accessed 23 March 2020).

5. The insert offers the source text showing the French-Latin switch, and an all-French text in which the Latin passages have been homogenized with the Narrator's language.

have clearly prioritised the function of the L1s as vehicles of communication: in the ST, Latin conveys the fictional plot while French explains the events in it for the original uncomprehending audience, as a sort of meta-language; in the TTs, the role of Latin as a medium "turned to stone" (Stravinsky in Harrison 1993, 7) with an inherent expressive value has been sacrificed in the subtitles and left to the audiovisual channel. (Only the occasional Latin word is kept in some of the versions, like *trivium* – repeated in the source libretto for rhythmical reasons, and kinetically 'explained' in this performance by the Japanese narrator's hand gestures and by visual effects in the scenery – long red ribbons displayed in the air, simulating a crossroads.) It is probably also worth pointing out that the French subtitles for the narration in this DVD are based on Cocteau's original libretto, while the English captions use the translation made by e. e. cummings, which is different from the version offered in the CD-insert.

4. Conclusion

In a hybrid art form like opera, arising from the fusion of drama and music, meaning is problematic. This is strikingly illustrated by multilingual operas, where the combination of languages highlights the material side of the singing voice and makes the expressive function prevail in the verbal text, which therefore seems closer to the diffuse meaning commonly associated with music. The specific languages mixed in the opera and the actual contrast between them become at least as significant as the semantic content of the foreign part(s) (or even more so); hence, the communicative function in these is somehow subordinated to the aesthetic one. This, however, clashes with the fact that the appreciation of opera also lies in understanding the libretto so as to follow the plot and enjoy the language-music intimate interaction.

From a translational perspective, all this encourages reflection on the need to translate the cases of heteroglossia in opera or, rather, on what strategies best convey the effect that the composer tried to achieve with a multilingual libretto. After listing some of the factors that may influence the translation approach taken for this challenging issue, a textual analysis has been carried out in this study, in order to observe the different strategies commonly taken in two translation modes: subtitling and CD-inserts. Five operas were selected, showing diverse functions and degrees of multilingualism, as well as different L1s and L3s; this allows us to draw some conclusions regarding the influence of these various elements on translation strategies.

As for the mode of translation, the sample analysed reveals two findings: (a) there seems to be more divergence in the strategies found in CD-inserts (both

between those of different operas and among the various versions of one and the same work (e.g., *Eugene Onegin*), than in those of DVD subtitles, which reveal great similiarity, practically all the versions of one and the same opera presenting the same strategy; (b) the prevailing approach taken in subtitling is to dissolve the multilingualism: only one opera has subtitles with heteroglossia in practically all the versions (*Orlando Furioso*); in the others, it has disappeared or it has been considerably reduced. This means subtitlers seem to rely on the audiovisual sung text coming from the screen for the *effect* of multilingualism and on the written captions for the conveyance of semantic content (Mateo 2014, 344–345); in other words, the subtitles focus on the communicative function of the libretto, while the expressive function is left to the singing on the screen (even though the language switch is not always clear in the performances analysed).[6] Some CD-inserts (generally showing a higher degree of transference of heteroglossia) also exploit the resources afforded by the medium in question, preserving the multilingualism in the target texts but offering a gloss with translation of the foreign passage, a strategy the subtitling mode does not allow.

In those target texts in which multilingualism has been preserved, the corresponding *function* has also been maintained (in, e.g., most subtitle versions of *Orlando Furioso* or the CD-version of *Der Rosenkavalier*). In a few cases, too, a compensation technique has been adopted, where the L3 disappears or is reduced, leaving a trace of the original function of heteroglossia through the use of punctuation (e.g., italics or quotation marks signalling intertextuality) or spelling which hints at a foreign accent. When the multilingualism has been completely absorbed by the corresponding L2, the function of heteroglossia in the opera disappears; this happens, for instance, in all versions in the CD-insert and the DVD of *Oedipus Rex*. Since both the Narrator's part and the story appear in the same language, rather than explain the plot to the uncomprehending audiences, the Narration now seems to paraphrase and introduce what they will be watching in the coming scene, as a sort of meta-text with no 'physical' or aesthetic effect.

The *degree* of heteroglossia does not seem to be a determining factor. Although, admittedly, the sample was too small for the second type in this respect (only including *Oedipus Rex*), we can observe a gradation in the amount of multilingualism of the various operas examined: some have a few words or brief speeches in L3 (*Orlando Furioso, Eugene Onegin* or *Vec Makropulos*); others display some couplets

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6. This factor actually gives subtitlers some leeway: for instance, the English captions of *Der Rosenkavalier* represent an Italian character's accent in the original German with a mixture of Italian and French features, but the (slight) discrepancy between the accent reflected in the spelling and that which the audience hears is hardly noticeable, since the audio is not so clear in those speeches.

too, or a whole aria (*Eugene Onegin* or *Der Rosenkavalier*); one also includes a brief dialogue (*Vec Makropulos*); and *Oedipus Rex* shows a balanced mixture of L1s. Nevertheless, in all those different degrees of heteroglossia we can find cases in which it has been preserved or disappeared among the target texts analysed.

The *specific language* used as L3, or in a combination of L1s, does not seem to determine the translation strategy either: for instance, French appears in two of the operas, which present versions with different approaches to the heteroglossia it creates. The language factor is a complicating one in those cases in which an L3 is the same as the L2 in a target text, particularly problematic in these translation modes in which the TT does not replace the ST but complements it; hence, the translator's choices will be tightly constrained – for instance, replacing the original L3 with another one which may differ from the L2 (a possible and effective solution in other translation contexts) would result in inconsistency between the subtitles or CD-insert and the sung version heard by the audience. Finally, as regards the *sung* or *spoken nature* of the multilingual passages, there seems to be some preference to preserve the linguistic heteroglossia or variation in spoken parts or recitatives rather than when it affects a whole aria, in which case the subtitling and CD-inserts tend to opt for translation into the L2. However, the sample analysed is not large enough to draw a solid conclusion here.

Some of these factors apply to the translation of plurilingual texts of all kinds, others are intrinsic to the opera genre, while yet another group are specific to the particular mode of opera translation chosen. It remains to be seen how other translation modes presenting different constraints, but also allowing other possibilities, reflect the complex hybridity of multilingual musical drama.

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Karen Wilson-deRoze defended one of the first practice-based PhD theses at the University of Leicester in 2017. Its practical component is a singing translation of two of Wagner's operas from the *Ring of the Nibelungen* cycle: *The Valkyrie* and *Twilight of the Gods*. Its critical component demonstrates the different possible ways a lyric can cooperate with the music in creating meaning and examines how the musico-poetic intersemiosis of Wagner's work is recreated in her translation and those of Frederick Jameson, Andrew Porter and Jeremy Sams. She contributed a chapter to *Key Cultural Texts in Translation* (John Benjamins, 2018), in which she addressed the evidence of Wagner's anti-Semitism in the libretto and music of the Ring and whether translators at different times have censored or adjusted Wagner's language to suit contemporary tastes.

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This volume covers aspects of opera translation within the Western world
and in Asia, as well as some of opera's many travels between continents,
countries, languages and cultures – and also between genres and media.
The concept of 'adaptation' is a thread running through the sixteen
contributions, which encompass a variety of composers, operas, periods and
national traditions. Sung translation, libretto translation, surtitling, subtitling
are discussed from a range of theoretical and methodological perspectives.
Exploration of aspects such as the relationship between language and music,
multimodality, intertextuality, cultural and linguistic transfer, multilingualism,
humour, identity and stereotype, political ideology, the translator's voice
and the role of the audience is driven by a shared motivation: a love of opera
and of the beauty it has never ceased to provide through the centuries,
and admiration for the people who write, compose, perform, direct, translate,
or otherwise contribute to making the joy of opera a part of our lives.

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