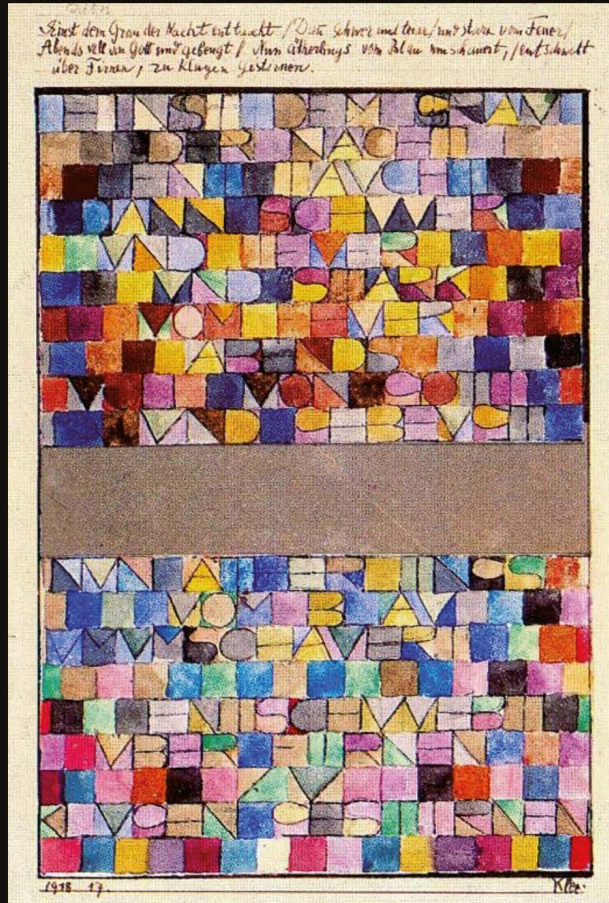


edited by

Mikołaj Deckert, Monika Kocot, Aleksandra Majdzińska-Koczorowicz



# Moving between Modes

**Papers in Intersemiotic Translation**

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In Memoriam Professor Alina Kwiatkowska

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ŁÓDZKIEGO

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Cover Image: Once Emerged from the Gray of Night, Paul Klee. Public domain  
<https://www.wikiart.org/en/paul-klee/once-emerged-from-the-gray-of-night-1918>

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Published by Łódź University Press

First edition. W.06911.15.0.K

Publisher's sheets 18.6; printing sheets 22.0

ISBN 978-83-8220-191-8

e-ISBN 978-83-8220-192-5

<https://doi.org/10.18778/8220-191-8>

Łódź University Press  
90-131 Łódź, 8 Lindleya St.  
[www.wydawnictwo.uni.lodz.pl](http://www.wydawnictwo.uni.lodz.pl)  
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*Professor Alina Kwiatkowska*



## Table of Contents

In Memoriam Professor Alina Kwiatkowska .....	11
Mikołaj Deckert, Monika Kocot, Aleksandra Majdzińska-Koczorowicz – <i>Moving between Modes</i> – Intersemioticity, Translation and Interdisciplinarity.....	13
Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk – Remembering Alina Kwiatkowska .....	21

### PART ONE: THEORETICAL REFLECTION

7

Lars Elleström – Media Transformation: The Transfer of Media Characteristics between Media .....	27
José Sanjinés – From Translation to Intersemiosis: A Journey across Expressive Modalities .....	43
Marta Kaźmierczak – From Intersemiotic Translation to Intersemiotic Aspects of Translation .....	61
Magdalena Wasilewska-Chmura – Why Intersemiotics Isn't Enough? Remarks on Intersemiotic and Intermedial Studies .....	89

### PART TWO: MODES OF LITERATURE

Tilo Reifenstein – Between the Visible and the Legible: Raymond Pettibon's "I" Caught in Translation .....	107
Monika Kocot – From Broken Communication to the Technique of (Linguistic) <i>Anamorphosis</i> . Edwin Morgan's Concrete Poetry .....	121

Anna Szczepanek-Guz – Perception and Conceptualization of Visual Arts in Ekphrastic Poetry .....	139
Agnieszka Taborska – Franciszka Themerson and the Gaberbocchus Press: Bestlookers versus Bestsellers .....	151
Marcin Giżycki – Bacon, Friedman, Themerson or How to Translate Anything to Anything .....	161

### PART THREE: THE INTERFACES OF MUSIC

Elżbieta Górka – From Music to Language and Back .....	173
Marcin Stawiarski – Vocal Intersemioticity in James Chapman's <i>How Is This Going to Continue?</i> .....	191
Karen Wilson-deRoze – Mixed Signals: How German <i>Lieder</i> , as Multimodal Texts, Present Particular Challenges for Translators. ....	207
Joanna Barska – Love Old Sweet Song: How Joyce Narrativizes with Music? .....	225
Elena Aznacheeva, Yulia Mamonova – The Verbalization of Music in Fiction .....	235

### PART FOUR: PERFORMANCE

Izabela Szymańska – On the Analogies between Translation and Film Adaptations of Literary Classics .....	251
Claudia Cao – The Ending of <i>Great Expectations</i> According to <i>South Park</i> : A Science-Fictional Revisitation .....	265
Jadwiga Uchman – A Philosophical Debate on the Screen – Bishop Berkeley's <i>Esse Est Percipi</i> and Samuel Beckett's <i>Film</i> .....	279
Eva Bubnášová – Between Text and Performance: On the Productive Reception of H. C. Andersen's Fairy Tales by the Slovak Radio .....	295
Łukasz Borowiec – Inside <i>Noise</i> : Intersemiotic Translation and Metatheatre in Radio Drama .....	309

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*Table of Contents*

---

James Moir – Reading the Signs: Intersemioticity and Non-Verbal Communication .....	323
Teresa Bruś – Serialization and Multiplication in Portraiture: Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz and Photographic Translations ....	335
Contributors .....	345





## **In Memoriam Professor Alina Kwiatkowska**

The person who came up with the idea behind this book and did much of the work is Professor Alina Kwiatkowska. Her untimely departure in May 2018 left the publication project in progress and we were invited to take up where Professor Kwiatkowska had to finish.

At this point, we would like to thank Professor Piotr Stalmaszczyk and Professor Łukasz Bogucki for their advice and support throughout the publication process, and Professor Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk for sharing her thoughts in the text that we were able to include as part of this book.

11

We would also like to acknowledge the funding this volume received from the University of Łódź – from the Dean of the Faculty of Philology and the Head of the Institute of English Studies.

Together with all the Contributors we dedicate this book to Professor Alina Kwiatkowska.


*Mikołaj Deckert*

*Monika Kocot*

*Aleksandra Majdzińska-Koczorowicz*







## ***Moving between Modes* – Intersemiotic, Translation and Interdisciplinarity**

What can be termed “intersemiotic translation” has functioned as an exciting subject of inquiry but the line of work is still in its forming stage. Therefore, and for reasons that will be partly given below, there is clearly a need for more research but also critically for the existing research findings to be integrated cross-disciplinarily as well as systematised.

Partly given the gradable matching of terms, and because of the variable scope of themes under scrutiny, the term used in the current volume’s subtitle – “intersemiotic translation” – does not need to be explicitly employed for a research effort or output to be tackling topics with close affinity to the ones covered here. With that in mind, some of the relevant publications will range from papers (Clüver 1989; O’Halloran, Tan and Wignell 2016) and edited books (Oittinen, Ketola and Garavini 2017; Salmose and Elleström 2020<sup>1</sup>) to single-author monographs (Sager Eidt 2008; Pârlog 2019). Along those lines, to contextualise the current book, it should be highlighted that the research presented here ties in with an array of other vibrant subfields. One will be multimodality,<sup>2</sup> extensively researched for example within the paradigm of cognitive linguistics (Dancygier and Sweetser 2012; Sanz 2015). Another is audio description (cf. e.g. Remael, Reviers and Vercauteren 2014; Matamala and Orero 2016), functioning more and more prominently as a mode of media accessibility provision, therefore proving that research of the type documented in the current volume can have significant societal implications.

13

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<sup>1</sup> Notably, this volume was published in Routledge’s book series devoted specifically to multimodality.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Kwiatkowska acknowledges that “(w)hile mono-modal research is the tradition in academic study, intermodal or cross modal research is its much younger sister, and the contributors to this volume still have a chance to set some new standards as pioneers in this enterprise”. These words remain true even though some time has passed since the claim was originally formulated.

In light of the explanation provided in this volume's introductory note, Professor Alina Kwiatkowska managed to draft fragments of what she intended to include in the book's opening. The current text therefore uses some of those passages to further acknowledge Professor Kwiatkowska's being the impetus behind this publication. To begin with, the original editor remarks as follows:

The present collection of papers was inspired by the international conference on *Intersemiotic Translation* held at the University of Łódź in 2013. Organized by the Institute of English Studies, it brought together many enthusiastic participants, who gathered to discuss the issues that many traditional scholars would consider to be niche and rather exotic. The volume includes a selection of papers from that conference, complemented by some additional contributions.

While the line-up of contributors is slightly altered compared to that of 2013, due to practical reasons, it remains a valid point that the authors:

include linguists, literary scholars, and media scholars, who represent various approaches to the study of intersemiotic / intermodal / crossmodal interactions or translation of texts (be it linguistic, visual, or musical). They are all united, however, by their interest in exploring the processes and mechanisms involved in moving meaning between modes, especially the meaning of the subtle and non-obvious kind arising from creative activity. Research in this field must naturally cross – the borders of disciplines – only the integration of insights from different areas of expertise may lead to the broadening of our understanding of this complex and heterogeneous field.

14

Indeed, interdisciplinarity is the current volume's major asset and is reflected in the "variety of research interests and points of departure, of the subjects and materials chosen for analysis, but also of the employed methods of research". Professor Kwiatkowska talks about not fitting "the traditional 'pigeonholes' of disciplines or levels of analysis" as holding the promise of development and originality in research and alludes to the conceptual integration theory (cf. Fauconnier and Turner 2002), pointing out that "different points of view and different descriptive tools make up a colorful whole; they become input spaces in a fascinating blend".

One demarcation that has traditionally been clear is between linguistics and literary studies. While their respective tenets and foci will be differently similar on different occasions, it is possible for these disciplines to cross-feed.<sup>3</sup> And this, we would argue, is what the current volume accomplishes, even if the orientation will naturally be more

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<sup>3</sup> These distinctions are also acknowledged in a recent publication devoted to intersemiotic translation (Pârlog 2019) whose subtitle reads "Literary and Linguistic Multimodality", thus stressing the need to interface approaches, which has been a vital source of motivation for our volume.

towards one or the other – a point expressed by Professor Kwiatkowska talking about “the relative neglect of non-literary discourse” which, as she goes on to clarify, is rather natural “considering how much of the inspiration for the research in this field to date has come from the scholars with a literary background”. Literary studies and linguistics being just one prominent example, other cases of cross-fertilisation to be mentioned include visual arts, performing arts, semiotics, media studies, philosophy, poetics and stylistics.

At the same time, as the need for diversity in thinking about research subjects is here acknowledged and encouraged, one should keep in mind the risk of inconsistency which cross-disciplinarity might bring when approaches are collated. Professor Kwiatkowska was well-aware of that and the following remark of hers is just one example to argue that the current volume does not suffer from ill-conceived heterogeneity – “despite this variety and originality, the authors [...] have several authorities whose writings recur in the reference sections of their papers, and that they are also aware of one another’s work”.

A related issue to heed would be of terminological-conceptual nature which Professor Kwiatkowska identifies even with respect to the key notion of “intersemiotic translation” that “has been around for some time” and yet “the use of other terminology having to do with intermodal relations has been somewhat erratic”. A similar question appears to be relevant when it comes to the possible differentiation between polysemioticity and multimodality, with the formulations of what constitutes a “modality” – as possibly discernable from “mode” – not necessarily overlapping across disciplines or even researchers working within fairly narrow subfields (cf. Zlatev 2019).

The book opens with a text by Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk – one that is both personal and scholarly – tellingly titled “Remembering Alina Kwiatkowska”. Then, we follow with four parts around which this volume is organised, starting with “Theoretical Reflection”, through “Modes of Literature” and “The Interfaces of Music” to conclude with “Performance”. The contributions accommodated in these respective sections are briefly outlined below.

The first part of the volume, entitled “Theoretical Reflection”, features five chapters each of which discusses a different aspect of intersemiotic translation theory. It starts with Lars Elleström’s chapter “Media Transformation: The Transfer of Media Characteristics between Media” which aims to develop a new theoretical framework for the study of media characteristic transfer, which Elleström calls *media transformation*. The goal of the framework is to explain what happens when meaningful

data is changed or corrupted during transfer among different media, and how an in-depth understanding of such processes may influence understanding communication. In his chapter "From Translation to Intersemiosis: A Journey across Expressive Modalities", José Sanjinés uses an unfolding metaphor for journeys articulated in the context of translation and intersemiosis in order to discuss different theories and approaches in a synchronic perspective. Marta Kaźmierczak's chapter "From Intersemiotic Translation to Intersemiotic Aspects of Translation" sketches the distinction between several allied and complementary notions related to intersemioticity, polysemioticity and translation, and illustrates it with examples pertaining to the proposed categories. This section concludes with Magdalena Wasilewska-Chmura's chapter "Why Intersemiotics Isn't Enough? Remarks on Intersemiotic and Intermedial Studies". As a literary scholar with a musicological background, Wasilewska-Chmura demonstrates her own search for adequate tools to explore artistic projects of a transgressive nature, commonly referred to as borderline phenomena.

The second part of the present volume, entitled "Modes of Literature", focuses on the mechanisms underlying the production and/or reception of intermodal literary texts. This section opens with the chapter "Between the Visible and the Legible: Raymond Pettibon's 'I' Caught in Translation" by Tilo Reifenstein who reasserts the inexorable affinity and proximity between the verbal and the visual in Pettibon's work while questioning some persistent notions on the differences between language and non-verbal sign systems. Monika Kocot's "From Broken Communication to the Technique of (Linguistic) Anamorphosis. Edwin Morgan's Concrete Poetry" studies various examples of playful intersemiotic translation in Edwin Morgan's verbivocovisual poetry with an emphasis on a number of aesthetic traditions that inform Morgan's writing. In her chapter "Perception and Conceptualization of Visual Arts in Ekphrastic Poetry", Anna Szczepanek-Guz employs a cognitive poetics approach to look at a poem by Donald Hall who ekphrastically represents *The Scream* by Edvard Munch. This section concludes with two chapters on Franciszka and Stefan Themerson. Agnieszka Taborska's "Franciszka Themerson and the Gaberbocchus Press: Bestlookers versus Bestsellers" looks at fascinating examples of intersemiotic experimentation in the Gaberbocchus Press whereas Marcin Giżycki's "Bacon, Friedman, Themerson or How to Translate Anything to Anything" traces the history of the Baconian-Friedman ciphering, and shows that the practice of translating anything to anything has found its way to poetry, painting, and experimental cinema, as can be exemplified by Stefan Themerson's Semantic Poetry.

The third part of the volume, entitled "The Interfaces of Music", foregrounds music as a mode of expression. It opens with Elżbieta Górską's chapter "From Music to Language and Back" focusing on an intermodal translation from music to language and back on the basis of Daniel Barenboim's *BBC Reith Lectures* of 2006. Marcin Stawiarski in his "Vocal Intersemioticity in James Chapman's *How Is This Going to Continue?*" employs Roman Jakobson's understanding of intersemiotic translation as transmutation from one sign system to another, analysing two works belonging to different modalities, namely Alois Zimmermann's composition *Requiem für einen jungen Dichter* (1969) and James Chapman's novel *How Is This Going to Continue?* (2007). Karen Wilson-deRoze's paper "Mixed Signals: How German *Lieder*, as Multimodal Texts, Present Particular Challenges for Translators" also concerns the literature-music interface, presenting the problems that can be encountered in translating songs with reference to German *Lieder*. Joanna Barska in her paper "Love Old Sweet Song: How Joyce Narrativizes with Music?" pursues the motif of music and musicality inscribed into James Joyce's *Ulysses*. In a more theoretical vein, Elena Aznacheeva and Yulia Mamonova ("The Verbalization of Music in Fiction") conclude the section with discussing the issue of literature musicality understood as mutual transposition of semantic and aesthetic information from music into fiction.

17

The collection finishes with considerations concerning "Performance". Izabela Szymańska presenting a chapter "On the Analogies between Translation and Film Adaptations of Literary Classics" reflects on an analogy between interlingual translation and film adaptations of classical novels in the context of intersemiotic translation. In her analysis entitled "The Ending of *Great Expectations* according to *South Park*: A Science-Fictional Revisitation", Claudia Cao investigates an episode of *South Park* dedicated to *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens, presenting it as a science-fictional rereading that modernizes the original story. Adopting a more philosophical approach, Jadwiga Uchman ("A Philosophical Debate on the Screen – Bishop Berkeley's *Esse Est Percipi* and Samuel Beckett's *Film*") discusses the influence of George Berkeley's thought on *Film* by Samuel Beckett. Eva Bubnášová ("Between Text and Performance: On the Productive Reception of H. C. Andersen's Fairy Tales by the Slovak Radio") attempts to describe similarities and differences between H. C. Andersen's fairy tales and their radio plays by the Slovak Radio. Continuing the subject of radio drama, Łukasz Borowiec in his chapter "Inside *Noise*: Intersemiotic Translation and Metatheatre in Radio Drama" analyses how various semiotic systems work inside a radio play on the basis of the BBC radio production entitled *Noise* (2012) by Alex

Bulmer. James Moir focuses on the semiotic aspects of nonverbal features of communication presenting “Reading the Signs: Intersemioticity and Non-Verbal Communication”. Teresa Bruś closes the volume with a semiotic reflection on the aspects of serialization and multiplication of Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz’s portrait representations and their photographic transpositions (“Serialization and Multiplication in Portraiture: Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz and Photographic Translations”).

To briefly sum up, let us draw on Professor Kwiatkowska’s words once more as she emphasises the evolving nature of research topics like the one captured by the contributors to this volume:

This area of study is still an emerging paradigm, with scholars experimenting and asking questions rather than reaching definitive conclusions. It certainly will not be long before another collection of articles offers new hypotheses and analyses. Our volume is a link in this chain.

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## Remembering Alina Kwiatkowska

Alina Kwiatkowska graduated from the University of Lodz in late seventies of the past century. I was not her teacher but I vividly remember Professor Tomasz P. Krzeszowski, then head of the Department of English Language and Alina's PhD supervisor later, going out of his office in Kosciuszki 65 and pointing to me a delicate, red-haired girl who was sitting at a desk in our common room – 'She's the best student at my seminar' I heard from him. And she was indeed – Alina grew into one of the best cognitive linguists I've ever met, knowledgeable, sensitive, creative.

21

Professor Alina Kwiatkowska observed that moving of meaning across the borders can help find a substance which emerges in such a motion, the substance – combined or juxtaposed – which can make up an enthralling, often unexpected, whole. Ala or Alusia, as we used to call her, was one of the first to recognize Mitchell's 'pictorial turn' happening in our times. She was also one of the first to identify 'the ecstatic embrace of verbal and visual', as Anne Keefe describes it.

Alina Kwiatkowska earned her doctoral degree and completed her dr habil. and professorial procedures at the University of Lodz. Both her scholarly interests as well as classes, lectures she taught, conferences and seminars she organized focused on language-vision semiosis and the role language plays when combined with picture. She supervised over one hundred MA theses and a number of doctoral dissertations and was instrumental in establishing the Student Research Circle *Texts and Codes*, which organized national PhD student conferences in Lodz. Alina pursued a number of innovative projects, often in collaboration with colleagues from Lodz literature departments.

Alina Kwiatkowska was also one of the founders of the Polish Cognitive Linguistics Association and served as its President for one term, attracting new members with original, fruitful activities.

In the past twenty years or so, Ala shaped the debates at the interface between the verbal and visual both at the Lodz department and in cognitive linguistic circles. She believed that better theories of language – and communication – would come from the interaction between these two modes, which can also provide deeper access to wider ranges of subtle linguistic data. As early as 1986, when she defended her PhD, Ala clearly saw an incompatibility of generative theories of language, then in full bloom, to the research questions she pursued and to what started being widely accepted in linguistics only a few years later.

I was happy to organize with Ala an international conference on *Imagery in Language* at the University of Lodz. The conference was dedicated to Professor Ronald Langacker and his honorary doctorate he was awarded by the University of Lodz in 2002. The volume we co-edited can be considered a state-of-the art survey of *Cognitive Linguistic Research of Its Time*.

Professor Alina Kwiatkowska was also employed at Jan Kochanowski University in Piotrków Trybunalski. There too she organized cyclic international conferences, this time focusing on *Humor. Theories – Applications – Practices*, with a few post-conference volumes published and widely read. She was also an author of the project *Hybrid Identities. Hybridity in Literature, Language, and Culture*, which paved her way to the International Comparative Literature Association and their congresses. Ala's presentation on *The Application of the Theory of Conceptual Integration in the Study of Hybrid Identities* and her conclusions are likely to shape the debate on these issues today and in the future.

Alina Kwiatkowska's genuine interest in art was seen in her engagement in translation, which she performed cooperating with Lodz Museum of Arts and Art Gallery. She was also member of the Advisory Board and language editor of *Art Inquiry*, a periodical published by Lodz Scientific Society.

Alina Kwiatkowska was a prolific author of studies on verbal and nonverbal character of communication in such papers as *Cross-modal Translations: The Visual into the Verbal* (1996), *Between the Metaphoric and the Metonymic Pole: The Modes of Modern Art* (2000), and her particularly ingenious variations on Magritte's work *A Non-pipe and Other Dubious Objects. The Trickstery of Images* (2012).

The language of poetry was a special area of Alina's research. Her papers *On the Concreteness of Poetry* (2004), *Defamiliarization Revisited: Non-canonical Construal in Poetic Texts* (2004), editorial work on *Texts and Minds. Papers in Cognitive Poetics and Rhetoric* (2012), are stimulating examples of

her scholarly taste. Japanese language and culture, haiku poetry, appear as unexpected areas in what stood up as genuine intellectual values.

Interpreting sensual perception and feeling as expressed in language in her paper *A Look at Smells and Tastes and Their Reflection in Language* in 2002, an important 2008 work on perceiving and expressing resemblance in language, or the paper focusing on linguistic strategies of avoiding responsibility ('*The Devil Made Me do It!*'. *Some of the Things We Say to Push the Blame away from Ourselves*, 2008), or else an international conference and the post-conference volume on *Fifty Years with The Beatles. The Impact of The Beatles on Contemporary Culture* (2010), are just small samples of the originality of Alina Kwiatkowska's research questions, her imagination and the unique ways to respond to them.

The present collective volume *Moving between Modes. Papers in Intersemiotic Translation* starts with an editorial Alina managed to write, although she did not fully complete the editorial work. The volume is a logical continuation of her whole scholarly career. Devoted to intersemioticity of translation and the media, and their characteristics, Alina managed to collect contributions of insightful analysis which point to a variety of semiotic differences between source medium and target medium, literature, picture, music, and film, that permit alterations into novel creations, the transformations which are immanent in the interconnected media.

Alina was a scholar of great intelligence and erudition, she was a creative person filled with surprising and unconventional taste such as painting, music and poetry. She was a poet herself, wrote limerics, painted subtle watercolours and listened to rock music. She was particularly fascinated by abstract and nonsense art but also discovered sense in ordinary things like chairs, which served as a topic of one of her brilliant cognitive analyses.

To her students and colleagues, Alina was an inspiring mentor, always ready to help a student or colleague, and when required she fought with tenacity for the causes she knew to be just. She acted quietly taking on burdens without ever seeking any recognition.

On 4<sup>th</sup> May, 2018, Alina Kwiatkowska passed away, unexpectedly for us and prematurely. Intelligent and rigorous as a scholar, curious and exemplary in her teaching and mentoring of students, inspirational and courageous and, at the same time, fragile, modest, and non-imposing, we miss Alina and will not forget her values and dedication.



**PART ONE**  
**THEORETICAL REFLECTION**





## Media Transformation: The Transfer of Media Characteristics between Media<sup>1</sup>

Meaningful data is constantly exchanged between people with or without external technical devices, and is also transferred between different kinds of media. We talk and write to each other, create music and pictures and transfer content between an abundance of different media. When commenting upon a newspaper photograph, a visual and static picture is transformed to audible words; when making a movie based upon a graphic novel, a visual and static medium based on iconic structures and symbolic words is transformed to a similarly based audiovisual, spatiotemporal medium. In neither case does the transfer take place seamlessly.

27

The problem is that we do not have, so far, a comprehensive theory for analyzing and understanding the complex interrelations between media transfers' material and cognitive facets. The most influential recent study that touches upon the field is Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin's *Remediation: Understanding New Media* from 1999. While one of its great merits is its many observations of what the authors call remediation, the fundamental notions of media and remediation are only vaguely outlined. Furthermore, the authors refer mainly to visual media. The notion of remediation is a good start, but I believe that we need stern theory to really understand the complicated process of transferring characteristics among media. Such theories must ideally include aspects of media materiality and sensory perception as well as semiotic and cognitive aspects.

Consequently, the aim of this article is to develop a new theoretical framework for the study of media characteristic transfer, which I call *media transformation* as a general term. The goal of the framework, which

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<sup>1</sup> The paper was first published in *Palabra Clave* 20 (3), 2017: (Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0)). A substantially expanded version of it was also published as *Media Transformation: The Transfer of Media Characteristics among Media*, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.



I started to work with a few years ago, is to explain what happens when meaningful data is changed or corrupted during transfer among different media. To me, an in-depth understanding of such processes is an acutely important matter with far-reaching consequences for understanding communication.

My approach differs from earlier media transformation studies (for instance, Clüver 1989; Bolter and Grusin 1999; Wolf 1999; 2002; Rajewsky 2002), which I plan to discuss critically in a future publication. I rely on a bottom-up model of basic media traits. Instead of beginning with a selection of established media and their interrelations, I start with focusing on fundamental properties that are potentially shared by all media (Elleström 2010). The similarities and differences among media are necessarily fundamental for this approach: to transfer meaningful data among dissimilar media is to transform them, which is equivalent to keeping something, getting rid of something else and adding something new.

It should be noted that I do not wish to isolate certain media products and label them as transmedial. For me, transmediality is an analytical perspective. All media products can be investigated from both a synchronic perspective in terms of combination and integration, and from a diachronic perspective in terms of transfer and transformation. No doubt, certain media products, analyzed diachronically, tend to produce meaning prolifically vis-à-vis their relations to other, pre-existing media products; however, there are no media products that cannot be treated in terms of media transformation without some profit.

The article begins with a few fundamental theoretical distinctions concerning the creation of meaningful data by media. It then continues with a section about transmedial characteristics and ends with the sketch of a proposed model for analyzing the media characteristic transfer.

## Mediation vs. Representation and Transmediation vs. Media Representation

My main distinction, which is rarely highlighted in intermedial relations studies, is between *mediation* and *representation*. If these two notions are conflated, it becomes difficult to discern certain important media transformation stages and aspects (cf. Elleström 2013a; 2013b).

Mediation, as I define it, is a pre-semiotic, physical realization of entities (with material, sensorial, and spatiotemporal qualities, as

well as semiotic potential) perceived by human sense receptors within a communication context.

Representation, as discussed here, is the creation of meaning in the perceptual and cognitive acts of reception. To say that a media product represents something is to say that it triggers a certain kind of interpretation. This interpretation may be more or less hardwired in the media product and the way one perceives it, but it never exists independently of the recipient's cognitive activity. When something represents, it calls forth something else; the representing entity makes something else, the represented, present to the mind. As noted by Charles Sanders Peirce, a sign, or a *representamen*, stands for an *object* (see, for instance, CP 2.228–229 [c. 1897]). Representation, the very essence of the semiotic, is often a result of mediation.

The notion of mediation thus foregrounds the material realization of the medium, whereas the notion of representation highlights the semiotic conception of the medium. This distinction is helpful for analyzing complex relations and processes. In practice, however, mediation and representation are deeply interrelated. Every single representation is based on a specific mediation's distinctiveness. Furthermore, some kinds of mediation facilitate certain sorts of representation while rendering other sorts impossible. For example, vibrating air emerging from vocal cords and lips, perceived as sound, is well suited for iconic representation of bird song, though such sound cannot possibly form a detailed, three-dimensional iconic representation of a cathedral.

Hence, I use the term *mediate* to describe the process of a technical medium realizing potentially meaningful sensory configurations: a book page can mediate, say, a poem, a diagram or a musical score. If equivalent sensory configurations (that is, those that have the capacity to trigger corresponding representations) are mediated for a second (or third, or fourth) time by another kind of technical medium, they are *transmediated*: the poem that was seen on the page can later be heard when it is transmediated by a voice. In other words, the content of the poem is *represented again* by a new kind of sensory configuration (not visual, but auditory signs), mediated by another kind of technical medium (not a book page emitting photons, but sound waves generated by vocal cords).

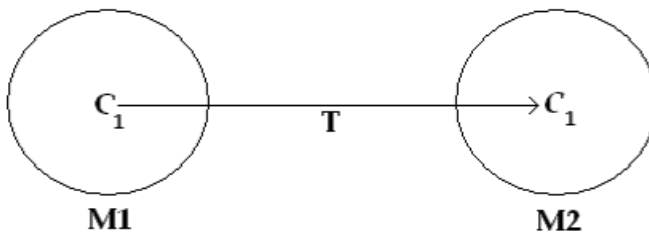
The concept of transmediation involves not only *re*-mediation, that is, *repeated* mediation, but also repeated mediation of equivalent sensory configurations by *another* kind of technical medium (please note that the term *remediation*, as used here, should *not* be understood in Bolter and Grusin's open-ended sense). Hence, the composite term *transmedial*

*remediation* would be more accurate for the concept in question. For the sake of simplicity, I prefer the brief term *transmediation*.

All transmediation involves some degree of transformation: the equivalent sensory configurations and the corresponding representations that they trigger may be only slightly different and clearly recognizable, but they may also be profoundly transformed (for example, musical narratives based on literature differ very much from their sources).

Transmediation is the first kind of media transformation. Also, *media representation*, the second kind of media transformation, involves modification in the transfer process. Such media representations as, for instance, a news article describing a documentary, or a photograph depicting a dance performance, should be understood as potentially representing both a medium's form and its content; media representation is at hand when one medium presents another medium to the mind. A medium, something that represents, becomes itself represented.

### Transmediation



### Media Representation

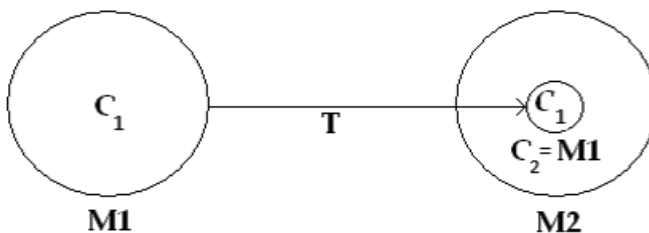


Figure 1. Transmediation and media representation

Note: M – Medium; C – media Characteristics; T – Transfer

Source: unless otherwise referenced, figures and tables throughout the volume are derived from contributors' own research.

The distinctive features of transmediation and media representation can be seen in Figure 1. The M circles should be understood as media products, or more specifically as technical media mediating sensory configurations. C, being placed within an M, should be understood as media characteristics represented by the sensory configurations. A circle and its interior is thus a depiction of both the mediation and the ensuing representation. The T arrows represent the transfer acts between two media products: the source medium (M1) and the target medium (M2). M2 is thus a new technical medium mediating more or less different sensory configurations compared to M1.

In the case of transmediation, the target medium (M2) represents the same content (C1) as the source medium (M1); in the case of media representation, the target medium (M2) represents the source medium (M1), which means that the source medium constitutes the media characteristics of the target medium ( $C2 = M1$ ). As represented content of M2, M1 still represents C1. In other words: In the first media transformation case, the target medium (M2) transmediates (represents again) the source medium characteristics (M1). In the second case, the target medium (M2) represents the source medium (M1). In both cases, the source medium's characteristics (C1) must be understood to remain the same, to a certain extent, after the transfer from M1 to M2.

31

Consequently, media representations may often be understood also as transmediations if they include, to some degree, a repeated mediation of equivalent sensory configurations. There is no contradiction between a target medium representing, on the one hand, a source medium, and, on the other hand, mediating sensory configurations equivalent to those of the source medium. This might be inferred from the diagram in Figure 1. A photograph representing a drawing of three kittens is obviously a medium representing another medium, but it also clearly includes repeated mediation of not only equivalent, but actually very similar (visual) sensory configurations by another technical medium. An auditory, verbal description of a drawing such as "I bought a drawing of three cute kittens" is also a case of media representation, but since it includes repeated mediation of equivalent sensory configurations by another technical medium (the voice is able to produce symbolic signs that represent substantial parts of the objects represented by the iconic signs on the paper: the notion of three kittens), it also includes transmediation.

Both these examples may be understood as comparatively complex instances of media representation and it is clear that if a medium is represented in some detail, the represented source medium characteristics

become transmediated by the transfer target. However, a very simple verbal representation such as “I bought a drawing” is a media representation, but not a transmediation; C1 (in this case, the represented kittens) is not represented again. Hence, in pure media representation, only M1, the empty shell of the source medium, so to speak, is transferred to M2. In pure transmediation, only C1, the source medium content, is transferred to M2. Often both M1 and C1 are transferred, which means that both media representation and transmediation are present. To be strict, then, the diagram representing media representation in Figure 1 actually depicts media representation including transmediation. Pure media representation should be depicted as in Figure 2.

## Media Representation

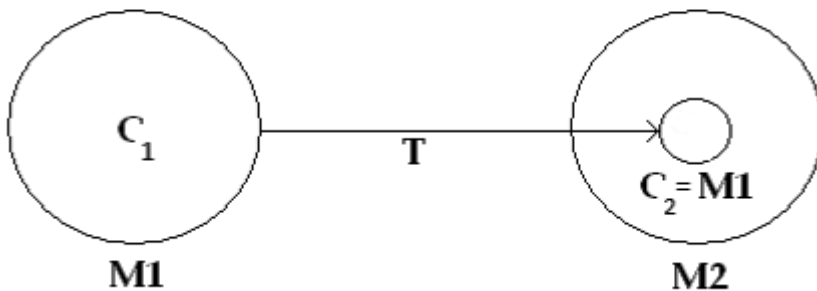


Figure 2. Pure media representation

Note: M – Medium; C – media Characteristics; T – Transfer

Other distinctions that should be kept in mind include that both transmediation and media representation can involve, on the one hand, specific media products (which has been assumed so far), and, on the other hand, general characteristics of qualified media. *Qualified media* is a term I use to denote all kinds of abstract media categories – artistic and non-artistic – that are historically and communicatively situated, meaning that their properties differ depending on time, culture and aesthetic preference. Qualified media include such categories as music, painting, television programs and news articles. A qualified medium is made up of a cluster of concrete media products (see Elleström 2010). Media products can represent other, specific media products as well as general characteristics of qualified media, both of which can be transmediated (see Elleström 2013b). While a novel may describe a particular piece of music,

it may also discuss and, hence, represent music in general. A poem may transmediate characteristics of a specific musical piece, but it may also transmediate general musical characteristics such as formal traits. Hence, the diagrams in Figure 1 can also be extended to illustrate transmediation and media representation involving general media characteristics, in which case M must be understood as the idea of a qualified medium and C as general media characteristics.

Certain types of complex, specific media product representations are commonly called *ekphrasis*. Whereas an ekphrasis is typically understood to be a poem representing a painting, the notion has been extended substantially during the last decades (see Yacobi 1995; Clüver 1997; Bruhn 2000; Sager Eidt 2008). Ekphrasis, in turn, is only the tip of the iceberg of media representation.

The general term for transmediation of media products is *adaptation* (cf. Elleström 2013a). While the archetypal adaptation is a novel-to-film transmediation, the term has not been reserved exclusively for this type of transfer (see Elliott 2003; Hutcheon 2006; Bernhart 2008; Urrows 2008; Schober 2013). Furthermore, far from all types of transmediation of specific media products tend to be called adaptation. Transmediations from libretti, scores, scripts and so forth, and transmediations from written, visual and verbal text to oral, auditory and verbal text (aloud readings of texts), or the other way round, to mention only a few examples, are very seldom referred to as adaptation (see, however, Groensteen 1988).

33

## The Transmedial Basis

So far, transmediation and media representation have been discussed without really asking how these phenomena are at all possible. Which features are involved in the transformational processes encompassing several media and how are they related? Initially, it must be restated that no medium can fully transmediate or represent all media. Both qualified media and individual media products have dissimilar basic properties; these differences set the limits for what can be transmediated or represented. In addition, transmediated and represented media characteristics are not equally transmedial; while certain traits are almost universally present in the media landscape, others can only be marginally transformed to fit other media.

I refer to this wide range of media features as the transmedial basis. The questions are: which characteristics can be transmediated or represented

by other media, and why? As media characteristics are often results of contextualization and complex interpretive practices, this question can be treated systematically only to a certain extent.

The most elementary transmedial basis consists of what I have called elsewhere the four modalities of media – the material, the sensorial, the spatiotemporal and the semiotic (Elleström 2010). A modality should be understood as a category of related characteristics that are basic in the sense that all media can be described in terms of all four modalities. All individual media products, and all conceptions of qualified media, may be understood as specific combinations of modes of the four modalities. The modes of the modalities do not cover all media characteristics – far from it – but they constitute a sort of a skeleton upon which all media are built.

The four modalities of media, and more specifically the modes of the four modalities, thus constitute an essential transmedial foundation. The flat surface, being a mode of the material modality, is an aspect of printed novels, etchings, posters, television news and so forth, and is a prerequisite for comprehensive and close transmediation of, say, a graphic novel to a motion picture. The audible, a mode of the sensorial modality, is an aspect of radio theatre, opera, ordinary conversation, gamelan music and many other qualified media. The best way of faithfully representing sound media characteristics is to produce similar sounds.

Temporality, which must be understood as a mode of the spatiotemporal modality, is an aspect of recited poetry, theatre and television commercials, but not of oil paintings and printed tourist brochures. While all media are perceived in time, only some media are temporal in themselves. Transmediation often involves media that are either temporal or non-temporal. Graffiti is easily and faithfully transmediated by still photographs, whereas stills can only partially transmediate dance. However, some qualified media, such as most written, visual literature, are conventionally decoded in fixed sequences, which makes them second-order temporal, so to speak, and hence well-suited for transmediation into temporal media, such as motion pictures.

Iconicity, a mode of the semiotic modality, is a vital aspect of creating meaning in media such as newspaper advertisements, statistical graphs, rock music, and scholarly figures (such as the ones in this article). Iconic structures create meaning on the ground of resemblance; similarities can be established over both sensorial and spatiotemporal borders. For example, visual traits may depict auditory or cognitive phenomena, and static structures may depict temporal phenomena; that is, a graph may depict both changing pitch and altering financial status. In general, iconicity interacts with the two other main modes of the semiotic modality:

indexicality (meaning created by contiguity), and symbolicity (meaning created by conventions). This well-known trichotomy originates in Peirce (see, for instance, CP 2.304 [1901]).

The modes of the modalities are clearly necessary for identifying media similarities and differences, and, consequently, essential for delineating processes of transmediation and representation, though they do not definitely determine their limits. It may be the case that shared modality modes facilitate extensive transmediation and representation, while some media are very difficult to transmediate or represent if the target medium does not possess vital modality modes. Nevertheless, due to the brain's cross-modal capacities, transmediation and media representation over modality mode borders are, to a certain extent, possible, common and, indeed, productive.

In brief: it is the material, sensorial, spatiotemporal and semiotic differences between source medium and target medium that allow for inventive alterations of media products into new creations. By the same token, modal differences make it impossible to transfer vital information without transforming it, as in news reports that include chains of interconnected media.

While the modes of the four media modalities are basic and universal transmedial characteristics, it is not the modality modes that are transferred in the processes of media transformation; rather, they are deeply integrated fundamentals that are required for forming what I call *compound media characteristics* (cf. Elleström 2013b). Many media products share modality modes, but each individual media product has a distinct set of compound media characteristics created by the arrangement of all details in the full medial expression, as discerned and construed by the media product's perceiver. Compound media characteristics should be understood as features of media products that are apprehended and formed when a structuring and interpreting mind makes sense of the mediated sensory configurations.

Compound media characteristics may be strongly linked to certain modality modes, to a specific media product, or to a qualified medium; they may also be transmedial to a considerable degree, meaning that they can successfully be transferred between many kinds of qualified media. However, compound media characteristics can never be fully transmedial: the modal differences between dissimilar media always make a difference. Nevertheless, the mind has the capacity of recognizing similarities that bridge media variances.

Compound media characteristics that can be transferred between media can roughly be divided into aspects of form and content, which



should be understood as a rough distinction between comprehensive media characteristics and more confined elements.

Form includes all kinds of structure, manifested sensorially in what can be seen, heard or otherwise perceived, or as cognitive configurations. There is a wide range of aspects or derivations of structure: pattern, rhythm, balance, proportion, relation, repetition, similarity and contrast, to mention only a few. In spite of their sometimes inaccessible nature, these notions have extraordinary longevity, which must mean that they correspond to basic perceptual inclinations and fulfil vital cognitive needs.

Other formal compound media characteristics are the intricate qualities of style and perspective. Lately, Werner Wolf has provided several volumes on formal transmedial characteristics, such as description and metareference (Wolf and Bernhart 1995; Wolf 2009). One complex transmedial characteristic that I have investigated myself is irony (Elleström 2002).

When it comes to content, some compound media characteristics are directly perceptible from the material interface of the media product as the appearance of symbolic and iconic microstructures, such as visual or auditory words and sentences and visual or auditory iconic details. Other compound media characteristics that have the nature of content are conceived as situations, spaces, places, persons, animals, objects, motifs and the like. All these characteristics are transmedial to a certain extent.

Narration, which includes aspects of both form and content, is one of the most important media characteristics. While narration is traditionally associated with literature and motion pictures, it has increasingly gained the status of a fundamental cognitive notion. Narration can be said to be an offspring of structured perception and spatial thinking. To narrate, and to interpret in terms of narration, is a way of creating meaning in sequential form. Narration is not limited to specific material or sensorial modes. Our two most cognitively developed senses, sight and hearing, are both well suited to narration, and all types of spatiotemporal configurations may display traits that can be connected to narrative sequences. Naturally, however, media that are temporal on the material level, such as movies and music, and those that are based on conventionally sequential sign systems, such as oral and printed literature, have an advantage when it comes to forming developed narratives. Furthermore, media that rely on advanced, symbolic sign systems (primarily verbal language), such as literature and motion pictures, are well suited to outlining complex narratives. Certainly, many kinds of narratives can be transferred between media. The phenomenon has been investigated by Marie-Laure Ryan, among others, who has explored what she calls transmedial narratology.

Plots and stories are two kinds of narrative sequential structures that can be more or less fully transferred between media. In addition, the storyworld, which includes an elaborated virtual space and should count as form, can at least partly be transferred among different media, as can portions of narratives, such as relations between particular characters or other figurations. Linda Hutcheon has listed a number of features that are certainly compound media characteristics and should be understood as transmedial narrative content: characters, motivations, consequences, events, symbols and themes, among others (Hutcheon 2006: 10).

It is clearly impossible to create an exhaustive list of transmedial compound media characteristics. Furthermore, media characteristic complexity makes neat classification very difficult. Nevertheless, the notion of compound media characteristics cannot be dispensed with if the idea of transfer among media shall be fully understood.

## **A Basic Formula for the Transfer of Media Characteristics**

On the basis of Figure 1, I would like to propose a formula for the rudimentary traits of media transformation; this involves recapitulating the central issues presented so far. Since “trans” means “across” or “beyond”, the term must be understood to represent a spatiotemporal notion: compound media characteristics are transferred from one place to another. First we read a novel in a book and then we see a motion picture and recognize it as more or less the same story. First there is a sculpture placed on the square and then we see photos and read newspaper descriptions of it. Hence, media transformation can be captured in the formula “A compound transmedial Characteristics is Transferred from a source Medium to a target Medium”, or “C is T from M1 to M2”.

The transfer is either a transmediation or a media representation or a combination of the two. In either case, it involves some sort of transformation. However, in what follows, I will mainly discuss transmediation in light of one practical example to make the rudimentary aspect survey as clear as possible: William M. Thackeray’s 1844 novel *The Luck of Barry Lyndon* being transmediated into Stanley Kubrick’s 1975 motion picture *Barry Lyndon*. This is a typical example of adaptation that I will refer to briefly in order to illuminate some standard transmediation traits.

Vis-à-vis *Barry Lyndon*, how should C, T, M1 and M2 be understood? M1 is the source medium, the “first place”, and M2 is the target medium, the “second place”. When thinking of media characteristic transfer in the most straightforward way, M1 and M2 are two particular media products, as in the case of *Barry Lyndon*, where the novel’s central, compound characteristics are transmediated by the movie. However, transmediation also occurs in cases where either M1 or M2 is a qualified medium or a submedium (genre) rather than a particular media product, which may be illustrated with the same example. One of the traits of the movie is voice-over narration. When seeing *Barry Lyndon* as a version of the novel, this voice-over is part of the general transmediation of *The Luck of Barry Lyndon*, yet one may also say that the voice-over is simply a novelistic trait of the motion picture. Indeed, there are many movies with voice-over that cannot be understood as transmediations of particular literary works. Nevertheless, they can be understood within the framework of the formula “C is T from M1 to M2”, the difference being that M1 is a genre of written literature, a qualified medium, and M2 stands for particular media products. The formula might then be “C is T from MQ1 to MP2”, where MQ means qualified medium and MP means a specific media product.

38

Furthermore, both M1 and M2 may be qualified media or genres (“C is T from MQ1 to MQ2”). It makes perfect sense to talk about, say, “novelistic traits in movies”, and indeed the transformation of *The Luck of Barry Lyndon* to *Barry Lyndon* may be understood as a particular instance of “novelistic traits in movies”.

As explained earlier, C represents transmedial compound media characteristics, such as form, structure, rhythm, narration, material, theme, motif and so forth. Obviously, characteristics that are not transmedial cannot be transmediated by other media and *all* kinds of transmedial characteristics cannot be transmediated by *all* media. In *Barry Lyndon*, a certain narrative form (the rise and fall of an ambitious man), many verbal micro-structures, several characters, themes and motifs, and probably very many other characteristics can be said to be transmediated from the novel.

However, the book and the cinema or television screen are entirely different technical media, so the transmediation necessarily involves several modal changes: the auditory mode is added, the novel’s conventional sequentiality is transformed to the material temporality of the movie, the degree of iconicity of the visual surface increases dramatically and so forth. Yet, vital narrative form aspects survive the transmediation from conventional sequentiality to material temporality:

the verbal micro-structures are easy to transfer from the visual to the auditory; many of the qualities of the characters in the novel can also be expressed in the movie since verbal language and images overlap to a large degree when it comes to what they can represent, et cetera.

T, finally, is the transfer. First of all, of course, T includes both transmediation and media transformation, although the focus is on transmediation for the moment. I will here pay attention to three further aspects of T.

The first aspect concerns the “thickness” of the T arrow and includes differences between what might perhaps be called more and less complete transfers, strong and weak transfers and so forth. Conversely, one may perceive differences between degrees of transformation; a less complete transfer is likely to include a higher degree of transformation.

As we have seen in the *Barry Lyndon* example, a particular transmediation may involve several compound media characteristics. The more characteristics it involves, the closer the target medium is to the source medium. If very few transmedial characteristics are involved, it might be questioned whether there is a point in treating it as a transmediation at all. As noted, transmedial characteristics are, as a rule, more or less modified by the modal changes involved in a media transformation, which certainly has an effect on the perceived transfer strength.

The second aspect concerns the “direction” of the T arrow. In the straightforward standard transfer, the arrow points from M1 to M2 (as in Fig. 1 and 2). This is how media representation must always be understood: one particular media product (M2) represents other media products or qualified media (M1). There is no question about what represents and what is being represented. In this respect, transmediation is more complicated. When both M1 and M2 are qualified media or submedia (genres), it is not always a point in saying that the compound media characteristics are definitely transferred from one place to another; the truth might rather be that they “circulate”, or go back and forth between MQ1 and MQ2 as in the development of forms and motifs in modern literature and film. The T arrow thus sometimes points in many directions.

The third aspect concerns the “extension” of the T arrow. Individual transfers must also be seen as parts of more far-reaching and complex networks involving many specific media products (MP3, MP4 and so on). The T arrow may be part of arrow chains, perhaps with weak and strong links or thin and thick branches. There may also be several source media that are transformed to one new target medium. The number of potential transmediation variations is probably endless.

Figure 3 illustrates one example: two qualified media that are transmediated to one media product, as when an advertisement borrows traits from both concrete poetry and comics, or when a photograph has the appearance of both a classicist painting and a scene from theatre drama.

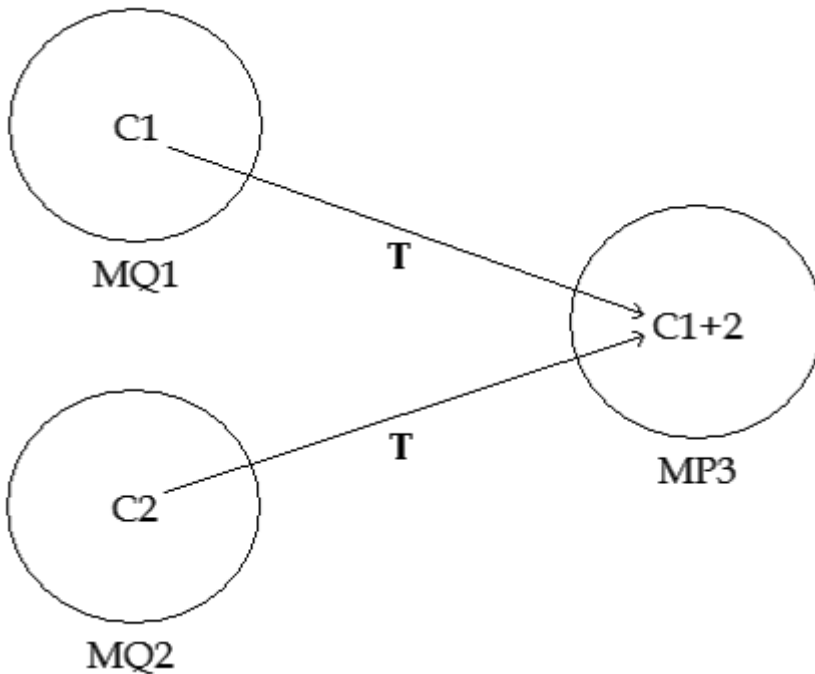


Figure 3. An example of transmediation


Note: MQ – qualified medium; MP – media product; C – media characteristics;  
T – transfer

After this rather formalistic presentation of distinctions, diagrams and formulas not intended to capture the phenomenon of media transformation in strict and endless subdivisions, but rather to make possible methodical analyses of a multi-faceted area that no doubt escapes neat classifications, I want to emphasize that there is necessarily a strong subjectivity element in all media transformation discussions. Hermeneutics can never be escaped. When finding traces of other media in media, whether they be specific media products or qualified media, it sometimes simply makes sense to say that some media should be treated as source media because they are recognizable in other media, which may then be treated as target media. Ultimately, theoretical analysis is nothing without interpretation.

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## From Translation to Intersemiosis: A Journey across Expressive Modalities

*Navegar é preciso*

I would like to start my contribution to this volume of *Moving between Modes* with an unfolding metaphor for journeys articulated in the context of translation and intersemiosis. I do so because at the end of this journey, as is the case with every true adventure, we return to the starting point, which is always the unpredictable, the unexpected: the meaningful. And this is precisely an aspect of intersemiosis – the capacity of semantically distant systems to generate *sui generis* forms of meaning – which concerns this study.

43

*“Navigare necesse est, vivere non est necesse”*. “To sail is necessary; to live is not”. It is with this call that Pompey, according to Plutarch, encouraged his sailors as they faced a formidable storm to fulfill their mission of delivering a needed cargo of grain to Rome. By extension, it has become a metaphor to fear not the challenges that lie ahead in order to achieve a higher goal. Pompey voiced his call in Latin; Plutarch recorded it in Greek. The maxim would later be retranslated into Latin and disseminated into Romance languages where it became a phrase used by sailors of old to hearten their souls.

As Helena González Vaquerizo details in her interdiscursive analysis, Pompey’s maxim would outlive its Greco-Roman origins and be used for different purposes: from the political rhetoric of Benito Mussolini or Ulysses Guimarães, to a source of poetic musings in various authors, which, as was the case in Gabrielle D’Annunzio, was also linked to politics (2014: 175). Here, we will start by considering the transposition of the phrase in one of Fernando Pessoa’s most memorable poems, “Navegar é preciso; viver não é preciso”, an unpublished and untitled text found years after the Portuguese poet’s death in 1935.



The use of the Portuguese word “preciso” instead of “necessário” adds the connotation of accuracy to that of necessity. In contrast to life, to sail is an art that requires precision, exactitude. And Pessoa goes on to rewrite the legendary call to action into the urgency for creativity: “Viver não é necessário; o que é necessário é criar” (“To live is not necessary, what is necessary is to create”) (2007: 72). Decades later, in 1969, and shortly before he was exiled by Brazil’s military junta (who perhaps had become aware of coded anti-dictatorship messages in his lyrics), Caetano Veloso used the refrain “Navegar é preciso/ Viver não é preciso” in “Os Argonautas”, a melancholic song set to the rhythm of the Portuguese fado.<sup>1</sup>

Music adds a different kind of semiosis and meaning to the old saying, which soon became associated with the song in the popular imagination. This semiotic complexity was further extended when the refrain and musical theme of the song was used in *Internet: Navegar é Preciso* (2007), a Brazilian animated video intended to educate new users about the benefits and risks of the internet<sup>2</sup> – in Portuguese, as in Spanish, a person sails (“navega”) rather than “surfs” the internet. Thus, following a series of transformations, the age-old nautical maxim gained a new set of meanings in reference to today’s global intermodal medium: the ubiquitous world of ‘screens’.

The notion of intersemiosis implies the coexistence of different forms of semiosis. For instance, verbal, musical, and visual, are the basic forms of semiosis that intervene in the sequence of transformation of the example I used. As Umberto Eco writes in *Experiences in Translation*, “the variety of semiosis gives rise to phenomena whose difference is of the maximum importance for the semiologist” (2008: 73). What started as a phrase yelled in Latin and translated into the Greek alphabetic code – which is a silent representation of the spoken word, a virtual sound, as Irmengard Rauch reminds us (2012: 5) – ended up as an instructional metaphor to navigate the boons and dangers in a sea of digitally coded messages.

The internet can be an instrument for creativity and valid information; but “screens”, as it has become quite evident, can also serve as an unprecedented tool for disinformation (a source of error as much as truth, as Eco put it). This opens a twofold question. “How are we to distinguish the kind and determine the value of the information we receive?” To answer the first part of this question we must first recognize the basic

<sup>1</sup> The following is a video of that song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1sXg-XcP9wM> [accessed Feb. 5, 2020].

<sup>2</sup> Video was produced by Comitê Gestor da Internet no Brasil: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vFI7zAgrDN0> [accessed Feb. 5, 2020].

principles governing the different kinds of semiosis that intervene in intermodal messages. Let us start with verbal and visual signs.

The distinct properties of verbal and visual (or iconic) signs is seldom discussed. "Iconic signs", as Lotman writes, "are notable for their greater comprehensibility" (1976: 5). It is easier to *show* with images. The silhouette of an airplane is recognized as a sign indicating airport throughout the world. A photograph or a video allows us to capture complex visual phenomena too difficult to describe in words. It is harder, on the other hand, to build narratives with visual signs. Conventional or learned signs offer greater flexibility to construct narrative sequences. It is easier to *tell* with words. As Sol Worth famously put it, "pictures can't say ain't".

The second part of the question, "how are we to determine the value of the information we receive", is inextricably tied to the first. Any attempt to answer a question regarding the value of the information we receive must be linked, to some extent, to our capacity to understand the kinds and properties of the different systems used in messages and the effect of their interaction. In an age of multimodality, understanding the intersemiotic production of meaning is critically more important than passively receiving (ingesting) a series of 'effects', which may be compelling but misleading. Intersemiosis is an increasingly necessary field of study, and yet it is one that remains largely unexplored.

45

To discuss the notion of intersemiosis, we must first offer a definition of semiosis. It is usually accepted today that the two leading branches of semiotics stem from the theories of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce. In a lecture delivered in Milan in 1968, Roman Jakobson, the Russian linguist and precursor of modern semiotic research, offered a definition of semiosis which brings together these two schools. "One of the great historical merits of Jakobson, writes Eco in "The Influence of Roman Jakobson in the Development of Semiotics", has been precisely that semiotics can be considered today an 'adult' discipline because Jakobson has imposed the convergence between linguistic structuralism and Peirce" (1977: 47–8).

In "Language in Relation to Other Communication Systems", Jakobson defined *semiosis* as the "variable relationship between *signans* [signifier] and *signatum* [signified]".<sup>3</sup> "Besides the diverse types of *semiosis*", he adds, "the nature of the *signans* itself is of great importance for the structure of messages and their typology" (1971: 701). Jakobson's

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<sup>3</sup> Jakobson uses the Latinized version of a tripartite division identified by the Stoic philosophers: *signum*, *signans*, *signatum*. This ancient distinction is the source of Saussure's division of the sign, *signe* (*signum*) into *signifiant* (*signans*) and *signifié* (*signatum*).

definition marks a distinction between the learned, conventional relation between *signans* and *signatum* (what Peirce called the “imputed quality” (1991: 30) of the two constituent sides of the symbol) which is typical, but not exclusive, of verbal signs, and the “multifarious relations between *signans* and *signatum*” in other forms of semiosis (1971: 699). In Saussure’s notion of a relation by convention, as in Peirce’s concept of an imputed quality, there may be, to one degree or another of specificity, a referential component.

Pompey’s cry may or may not have reached actual sailors. But due to verbal iconicity, whether Pompey’s call was real or legendary, we can still imagine all kinds of vessels – like the ones we see afloat in the various video interpretations of Veloso’s popular song.<sup>4</sup> Jakobson called this particular kind coding *extroversive semiosis*. The production of meaning in the non-verbal musical melody of Veloso’s song, however, follows different norms to those of denotative language. To describe this difference, Jakobson established the distinction between *extroversive* and *introversive* forms of semiosis.

In non-verbal music, meaning is primarily produced by the internal relations of its elements, or, as Eco puts it, where “the signatum of the entities is bare otherness, namely a presumably semantic difference between the meaningful units to which it pertains and those which *ceteris paribus* do not contain the same entity” (Eco 1977: 48). Jakobson found in music the prime example of *introversive* semiosis, concluding that the *dominant*, or “focusing component”, of the language of music was the *artistic* or, what he later called the *aesthetic function*. Following this distinction, Claude Lévi-Strauss likened the structure of myth to the semantics of music (1978: 52). The notion of internal semiosis remains a key to understand the production of meaning in music, as we can see by the work of prominent scholars on the semiology of music (cf. Nattiez 1990: 102–129).

Jakobson explained music’s *introversive* semiosis in terms of Peirce’s famous division of signs into indexes, icons, and symbols.<sup>5</sup> If the indexical sign is based on factual, or existential contiguity, the iconic on factual similarity, and the symbol on what Peirce calls “imputed” contiguity; the musical sign, Jakobson suggests, is based on a sort of “imputed similarity”. What Jakobson does, in effect, is to propose a new category to Peirce’s scheme in order to fill a logical and theoretical gap. “The interplay of the

<sup>4</sup> See, for instance, the following example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Jpl2BWDCtI> [accessed Feb. 5, 2020].

<sup>5</sup> A distinction that Peirce privately called “the gift I make to the world. That is my child. In it I shall live when oblivion has me – my body” (1991: 23).

two dichotomies – contiguity/similarity and factual/imputed” – he writes, “admits a fourth variety, namely, imputed similarity” (Jakobson 1971: 704). When applied to music (as well as abstract art), the notion of imputed similarity evokes a nonrepresentational, that is, a non-factual “image”.<sup>6</sup>

Jakobson linked musical semiosis to his earlier description of the poetic function. In “Linguistics and Poetics”, a seminal paper delivered 1958 and revised in 1960, Jakobson offered what is today the only scientific definition of poetry: “The poetic function projects the principle of equivalences from the axis of selection to the axis of combination” (2009b: 71). The alliterations in Plutarch’s “*Navigare necesse est, vivere non est necesse*” and in Pessoa’s “*Navegar é preciso/ Vivernão é preciso*”, are examples of Jakobson’s *poetic function*. Thus, an interplay of introversive and extroversive semiosis precedes Veloso’s melodic addition to Pessoa’s line. In order to refer to this function in different artistic modalities, such as poetry and music, Jakobson used the more comprehensive notion of *aesthetic function*.

The distinction between extroversive semiosis, where meaning is produced with reference to something external (such as words and images of sailing), and introversive semiosis, where meaning is generated internally within a system (as in nonverbal music), is a good place to begin to understand the relation between translation and intersemiosis. We have seen that these two kinds of semiosis intervene in some of the translations, interpretations, rewritings, and intersemiotic transpositions of a phrase that purportedly originated from a Roman general’s attempt to motivate his sailors.

The concept of the relative symmetry and asymmetry of semiotic systems helps to further understand the relation between these various processes. In *Universe of the Mind* (1990), the Russian semiotician Yuri Lotman proposes a model capable of describing the functioning of all cultures and languages. By analogy with *biosphere*, a notion introduced by the biochemist Vladimir Vernadsky, Lotman defined the *semiosphere* “as the space necessary for the existence and functioning of languages, not the sum total of different languages” (Lotman 1990: 123). We must keep in mind that the idea of language in Lotman’s semiotics of culture can range from Estonian to graffiti, from cryptography to dress or cuisine. It encompasses all cultural manifestations and expressive modalities.

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<sup>6</sup> We must add that various kinds of referentiality, more or less analogous to the linguistic concept of denotation, have been identified in music. Some common examples include onomatopoeic representations (the denotative quality of acoustic phrases characteristic of program music); the capacity of music to evoke similar emotions in diverse people without recourse to convention; and the rich sphere of synesthetic associations. See, for instance, Nattiez (1990: 118–29) and Nöth (1999: 431–32).

"The languages which fill up the semiotic space are various", writes Lotman, "and they relate to each other along the spectrum that runs from complete mutual translatability to just as complete untranslatability. [...] And since in many cases the different languages of the semiosphere are semantically asymmetrical, i.e. they do not have mutual semantic correspondences, then the whole semiosphere can be regarded as a generator of information" (1990: 125–27). The higher the asymmetry between systems, the lower their degree of translatability, but not so of information. According to information theory, a signal with a higher number of alternatives has less information than one with few or none. And since in Lotman, information and meaning are often used interchangeably, his model allows us to consider the production of meaning in semiotic exchanges that extend beyond the scope of merely semantic correspondences. On the other hand, the concept of intersemiosis, which Lotman himself does not use, helps understand the meaningful interaction of asymmetric systems.

Lotman's model allows us to frame the many long discussions about the nature of linguistic and literary translation in a context that includes the interaction of other semiotic systems that may be mutually untranslatable. Jakobson used the notion of *semantic equivalence* to refer to one of the goals of translation, but he stressed that there can be no absolute equivalence between words (Jakobson 2009a: 114). In his *Experiences*, Eco (2008: 9) observes that "there are no complete synonyms in language". And thinking about "The Task of the Translator", Walter Benjamin observed that "no translation would be possible if in its ultimate essence it strove for likeness to the original (1996: 256). These observations show that there is a degree of asymmetry even at the most fundamental levels of verbal translation.

A certain degree of asymmetry is evident in the notion of interpretation. As Eco notes in *Experiences in Translation*, there is an important distinction to be made between translation and the broader concept of interpretation, in the Peircean sense in which "the meaning of a sign is expressed by its interpretation through another sign" (2008: 690). Starting from Peirce's definition of the linguistic sign as a "translation into some further, alternative sign", in his essay "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation" (1959), Jakobson uses the concept of interpretation in each of his three definitions of translation:

- (1) Intralingual translation or *rewording* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language;
- (2) Interlingual translation or *translation proper* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.
- (3) Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of nonverbal sign systems (2009a: 429).

Plutarch's translation of Pompey's "Navigare necesse est, vivere non est necesse" from Latin into Greek, and its retranslation back into Latin (possibly by Turdetino Pacino around 1478, as González Vaquerizo suggests) posits problems in what Jakobson calls *translation proper*.<sup>7</sup> More complex problems of this kind of translation, tending towards looser forms of interpretation, can be found in the ways Pessoa and Veloso reimagine, verbally, Pompey's demand for courage and action. Pessoa turns it into the need to create ("o que é necessário é criar").<sup>8</sup> And as if following Pessoa's cue, Veloso transforms it into a text open to multiple interpretations, a melodic poem which mixes melancholy and passion with signs which could indicate a loved one's nonarrival or anticipate his own exile: "O porto, não! [...] O porto, silêncio!" ("The port, nothing! [...]. The port, silence").<sup>9</sup>

And yet, we can't forget that translating involves an effort, as Eco put it in reference to interlinguistic translation, to "say the same thing using different sign systems" (2008: 70). This is also true for intersemiotic translation or *transmutation*. In our example, we saw that the idea of sailing remains constant across semiotic modalities. It is present in Pompey's call to his sailors, in the images of boats in the various videos interpreting Veloso's song, and in the cartoonish *caravelas* that "navigate" the internet in *Internet: Navegar é Preciso*. And since the latter is a didactic video, there are clear semantic correspondences between the verbal message and the images that illustrate it (illustration here serves as translation).

We also find instances of marked asymmetry in our example. We have seen that aspects of the original message are transformed by processes of translation, interpretation, and rewriting. Moreover, a message that was intended to encourage sailors in the faces of danger is used by Veloso as a refrain in a love song with poetic images that would be too difficult to accurately illustrate using visual signs: "o barulho / Do meu dente Em tua veia" ("the noise / Of my tooth in your vein"). The need to resort to abstractions in the act of intersemiotic translation shows a high degree of asymmetry between expressions of verbal and visual semiosis.

<sup>7</sup> She observes, for instance, that in 1903 Meurer considered that the whole Latin translation of the phrase was mistaken because the original Greek meaning of *πλεῖν* (*navigare*, to sail) was *ἄποπλεῖν* (to solve) (González Vaquerizo 2014: 167).

<sup>8</sup> Richard Zenith cites (and interprets) various other reformulations of the ancient phrase in Pessoa's work (2017: n83).

<sup>9</sup> A link to a page with the official lyrics of "Os Argonautas" is listed in the References. Translations of the lyrics are mine.

Different kinds of semiosis intervene in both Pessoa's and Veloso's verbal interpretations of Pompey's maxim. They both make use of what ancient rhetoricians called *naked* (denotative) and *adorned* (introversive) modes of meaning. But they both also belong to the same type of semiosis, namely that of verbal or linguistic signs. Something similar can be said of the many musical interpretations of Veloso's melody: they all, at a fundamental level, respond to the same semiosis, namely that of music. At these levels of asymmetry, significant interpretative processes are still possible.

This is not the case in the intersemiosis of language and music. The relation between the words and the music in Veloso's song is not an act of interpretation. The song's melody does not automatically translate the lyrics of "Os Argonautas", or vice versa. Even if we say that the rhythm somehow carries the meaning of the words, there are no necessary semantic correspondences between the two; no more than there are between the music of Rossini's *La Gazza Ladra* and cooking spaghetti – despite the fact that the latter may become established in the minds of some readers of Haruki Murakami's story "The Wind-Up Bird and Tuesday's Women", in which the narrator describes Rossini's opera as "perfect spaghetti-cooking music" (1994: 4).

50

For many, the music of Veloso's song has become associated with the refrain "Navegar é preciso/ Viver não é preciso". By means of what Jakobson calls an "imputed contiguity", and Peirce, at times, simply a "habit",<sup>10</sup> a relation of what at best could be affinity between the lyrics and music turns into a conventional, necessary one. The desire to ride on the appeal of Veloso's famous song explains the use of the line *Navegar é Preciso* in the title of Brazil's internet educational video. It is interesting to note that the video makes no mention of the second part of Pessoa's line: "Viver não é preciso" ("To live is not essential"). Given what we know today about the addictive quality of screens, to tell young users that to surf the net is essential but that to live is not would certainly not be responsible.

We could say that all the visual transformations that are in some manner semantically linked with the maxim "to sail is necessary; to live is not" are examples of what Jakobson calls *transmutation*. To define the interpretation of verbal signs by means of nonverbal sign systems, Jakobson switches the notion of *translation* to the more flexible *transmutation*, which implies some kind of transformation in the form of expression. To account for the next logical kind of translation we should consider the inverse operation, that is, *an interpretation of nonverbal signs*

<sup>10</sup> See, for instance, the letter to Lady Welby dated 12 October 1904 (Peirce 1977: 31).

by means of verbal sign systems. Scrupulous as he was, Jakobson was certainly aware of this possible form of interpretation involving linguistic signs. We can understand his reticence, however, because here the notion of interpretation becomes problematic.

We use the term description, rather than translation or interpretation, when referring to a verbal depiction of a representational painting or a photograph. *Ekphrasis*, a practice dating back to antiquity, is commonly defined as a verbal *description* of visual art, probably due to the prevalence of extroversive forms of semiosis in premodernist art. The “interpretation” of abstract art, on the other hand, involves metasemiotic abstractions that are different from the translation task of saying the same thing. And for talking or writing about music, let’s just say a piano sonata, we think in terms of commentary, certainly not of translation or even interpretation.

Maybe because first two definitions in Jakobson’s typology, that of intralingual and interlingual translation, seem implicitly reversible, some critics have assumed that this reversibility is also part of Jakobson’s definition of *transmutation*.<sup>11</sup> But as Eco notes in *Experiences*, Jakobson does not deal with cases of verbal versions of visual systems (2008: 67). Neither does Eco elaborate to any great extent about these cases in his own reclassification of the forms of interpretation (2008: 99–130). Keeping in mind these observations, I use the term *transposition*, in the broad sense of *changing relative places*, to designate this category:

(4) Intersemiotic *transposition* is an interpretation of nonverbal signs by means of verbal sign systems.

Perhaps there is another reason why Jakobson did not venture in this direction. Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* is a theoretically more interesting phenomenon than verbal descriptions of nonverbal systems. In the series of paintings titled *Mensagem para Fernando Pessoa* [Message to Fernando Pessoa]<sup>12</sup>, for instance, Brazilian artist Newton Scheufler merges calligraphic expressions of passages from Pessoa’s work with abstract arrangements of shapes and colors. In one of the paintings we glimpse a partial reading of the phrase “Viver não é necessário”. We are also able, with increasing difficulty, to read other messages from Veloso’s oeuvre, but the semantic correspondences are soon lost in the intersemiosis of words

<sup>11</sup> See, for instance, Clüver’s “On Intersemiotic Transposition” and Torop’s “Translation as Translating as Culture”.

<sup>12</sup> Here is a link to the series: <https://www.behance.net/gallery/25021275/Message-to-Fernando-Pessoa> [accessed Dec. 17, 2020].



and images. All attempts at interpretation are lost in the coexistence and diffusion of interplaying modalities.

Fernando Pessoa was a complex writer who had a multifaceted approach to truth and beauty. He saw himself, for instance, as a kind of “medium”, or “a meeting place”, for over seventy “authors”, all of whom were part of himself.<sup>13</sup> Each of these heteronyms, as he called them, had a particular name and vision of the world. It is not surprising, then, to see that visual responses to his work are often themselves complex and multidimensional. I say responses rather than interpretations because these forms of intersemiosis respond to artistic affinities that are largely free of semantic correspondences.

Take, for instance, Mozambican artist Marco Ayres’s *Sequência Fernando Pessoa*, a sequence of paintings which is part of his “Genome Art Project”.<sup>14</sup> Ayres’s “sequences” are made up of sets of interconnectable “screens”, abstract paintings open to the aleatorily correspondences and surprises of the large number of possible combinations and permutations among them. These rotating signs, as Octavio Paz may have called them, offer a kaleidoscopic way of ‘representing’ that shifting “meeting place” of creativity and thought that we find in Pessoa. Some of Pessoa’s heteronyms translate and interpret each other’s works; similarly, we could say that each “screen” in a series redefines others as they interplay in different arrangements.

There is a thematic and compositional distinctiveness in each of Ayres’s sequences; they are *meant* to interact with each other. But it is not hard to see how the juxtaposition of pieces (“screens”) from different sequences, could yield new, unexpected forms of meaning. Here we approach the asymmetric end of the interaction of introversive visual systems. But Ayres’s *Sequência Fernando Pessoa* is not totally abstract; the depiction of Pessoa is an example of extroversive semiosis. Some of his sequences, however, are almost total abstractions.<sup>15</sup> We can see how the interplay among “screens” of different sequences could generate unexpected forms of meaning. And were we to mix these shifting arrangements with absolute music,<sup>16</sup> we would have an intermodal work with additional and more complex forms of meaning. This is not only a theoretical exercise involving highly asymmetric systems; this kind of intersemiosis is often

<sup>13</sup> “Another Version of the Genesis of the Heteronyms” (Pessoa 2001: 262).

<sup>14</sup> Here is an example of an arrangement in Ayres’s sequence: <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/cb/58/c1/cb58c106f468eb7ee576d9f28ed082cb.jpg> [accessed Dec. 17, 2020].

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.saatchiart.com/account/artworks/48000> [accessed Dec. 17, 2020].

<sup>16</sup> Music devoid of extratextual *denotata*.

used in cinema as metaphor to illustrate something indelible, such as death or a mystical experience.<sup>17</sup>

"On Linguistic Aspects of Translation", as the title indicates, Jakobson did not venture beyond the interpretation of verbal signs. He stopped short of considering the interpretative processes between nonverbal forms of semiosis. But he had already delineated a theoretical path which ended at a gateway open to a vast domain of intersemiosis where translation and interpretation become gradually more problematic. The progression of his typology leads towards increasingly asymmetric combinations. We will define the next category as follows:

- (5) Nonverbal transposition is an interpretation of nonverbal signs by means of nonverbal signs.

A classic example is *Pictures at an Exhibition*, Mussorgsky's ostensible "remembrance" of an exhibition of Viktor Hartmann's paintings and drawings (the titles of some of the suite's movements refer to Hartmann's paintings). We may assume that certain artistic affinity led Mussorgsky to offer a musical version of the pictures he remembered seeing, but we cannot reproduce Hartmann's art by simply listening to Mussorgsky's suite. If we allow them to interact even if it is in our memory, however, the semantic fields that surround the musical and visual texts become enriched with supplementary meanings, and consequently, expanded. As Jørgen Johansen suggests, these kind of *in absentia* forms of intersemiosis can take place in memory where seemingly instantaneous associations and contrasts are established.<sup>18</sup>

By intersemiosis we have been referring broadly to the semantic encounter, interplay, and varying levels of integration between systems with different kinds of semiosis. It concerns the particular properties of the intervening systems, their modes of interaction, and the supplementary meanings generated by these encounters. These largely untranslatable new forms of meaning elude the strictures of interpretation. We may venture a succinct definition of intersemiosis in the context of Jakobson's extended categories:

<sup>17</sup> We find a related example in the film *Kumiko, the Treasure Hunter* (2014), where Kumiko's death is signified by the juxtaposition of abstract shapes of nature with an ephemeral string piece by The Octopus Project.

<sup>18</sup> In *Literary Discourse*, Johansen extends intersemiosis to the connections we establish in memory: "In memory you have a kind of dormant semiotic network allowing you to recognize a very large number of [...] signs and to endow them with signification in given contexts" (2002: 72).

(6) Intersemiosis is the interplay of asymmetric systems that yields *sui generis* forms of meaning.

I changed the notion of interpretation for interplay because intersemiosis extends beyond both translation and interpretation. It is not, however, necessarily separate from the other categories of interpretation, but often coexists with them. Various kinds of intersemiosis are present throughout the translatability spectrum and become increasingly evident towards its asymmetrical end. Information theory shows that the interaction of systems that are semantically similar (symmetrical) generates less information and has a higher level of entropy than exchanges between those that are dissimilar (asymmetrical). Instances of intersemiosis resulting from markedly asymmetrical systems often produce the most unexpected, and thus richest, forms of meaning. It is at the boundaries between asymmetrical systems where we can find, as Lotman writes, “the hottest spots for semioticing processes” (1990: 136).

As described by Lotman, the production of meaning in the semiosphere extends beyond the scope of what is translatable. It is interesting to consider this wide notion of semiosis in the context of Pierce’s famous definition of meaning as “the translation of a sign into another system of signs” (CP 4.127). In “Thirty Years Later: A New (and More Modest) Recognition of Semiotics” (2010), and responding to Emilio Garroni’s *Ricognizione della semiotica* (1977), Eco reinstates this definition: “One has semiosis”, he writes, “when something not only stands for something else but can be translated into another expression that provides the same meaning” (2010: 13). It is precisely this process, which corresponds to Jakobson’s “*rélation de renvoi*” (“a sending-back”), that, according to Eco, Garroni calls “reformulation”.

As Eco notes, Garroni stressed “the fact that reformulation is never adequate and therefore that it is never complete and in any case never completely symmetrical (a traffic sign can be translated into words but a verbal discourse cannot always be adequately summarized by a visual signal), and that therefore every reformulation necessarily leaves what he called a residue, this appeared to him a limitation of semiotic science” (2010: 13). Lotman also used the notion of untranslatable residue, but in a different context. He wrote that, due to its polysemic and synchronic quality, the artistic text leaves a residue of information untranslatable by the languages of description. As we have seen, however, the interplay of asymmetric systems often yields, not mere residues, but rather some of the most interesting forms of meaning.

Eco's response to Garroni's observation of untranslatability as a limitation to semiotic science leaves us at the shore of intersemiosis:

All of the semiotic inquiry into the modes of so-called inter-semiotic translation (from linguistic text to film, from music to ballet, from sculpture to ekphrasis) is precisely what semiotic inquiry can say about the problems of reformulation that is new, interesting, unheard-of, not said by previous disciplines. What I mean is that, unless we assume an ambitious and excessively formalizing and formalized notion of semiotics, semiotics doesn't become interesting when the process of reformulation leaves no residue, but rather at the very moment in which one reflects on these residues (Eco 2010: 14).

Eco offers an example in *Experiences in Translation*. He quotes a passage from *La svolta semiotica* where Paolo Fabbri reflects on a transition in Fellini's *Orchestral Rehearsal*. In it, the slow, continuous movement of the camera seamlessly takes the viewer from a subjective to an objective point of view. "Although language allows us to say what the camera *did*", adds Eco, "the effect produced by its movement cannot be fully translated into words" (2008: 96).

Eco's example focuses on a verbally untranslatable lapse in point of view. He does not mention the many meaningful juxtapositions of image and music in this film (and in film in general), which generate striking forms of meaning impossible to translate into words. To simply call these kinds of interactions "effects" does little to help understand their function as signifying processes. In fact, an array of different kinds of intersemiosis is evident in film, where the simultaneous interplay of multiple registers (images, spoken language, written texts, sound design, and music) offers the opportunity to generate powerful new forms of meaning. This capability is an aspect of the language of new media, today's major intermodal channel for artistic and cultural expressions. If (natural) language is our primary modeling system, as Lotman famously put it, cinema is the primary modeling system of "screens".

Music videos often offer remarkable examples of intermodal communication. Some of them highlight the distance (asymmetry) between music and the other intervening semiotic systems – image, spoken and written texts, etc. Others strive to achieve a sort of complementary tension between the translatable and untranslatable aspects of the various systems. This is the case of *I'm Alive*, a 2014 collaboration between Caetano Veloso and a group of Brazilian musician-writers and filmmakers.<sup>19</sup> Filmed in Rio de Janeiro's Floresta da Tijuca, the largest urban forest in the world, the music begins by denotatively blending in with the sounds of nature.

<sup>19</sup> Caetano Veloso, *I'm Alive*. Brasil: The Floresta da Tijuca Sessions. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FvIyRzm8JMo> [accessed Dec. 17, 2020].

The various intermodal and stylistic expressions of the collaborating artists, which are at times contrasting, ultimately blend with each other around the shared message of the conservation of the rainforest and protection of the indigenous people who inhabit it.<sup>20</sup>

These are vital issues. I would like to conclude with an approach that calls attention to them by marking, rather than blending, asymmetric systems. Ciro Guerra's 2015 film, *El abrazo de la serpiente* [*Embrace of the Serpent*], tells the imbricated story of two western scientists, Theo and Evan, and an Amazonian shaman, Karamakate, the last survivor of the Cohivano tribe. Both scientists (who at one level are the same person) are looking, thirty years apart, for the sacred yakruna plant (believed to be an additive of the ayahuasca brew). This quest is framed in the historical context of the criminal plunder and commercialization of rubber in the Amazon leading up to World War II.

In a pivotal passage, the old Karamakate shaman asks Evan to get rid of all his belongings if he wants to continue the quest. Evan dumps most of his luggage from the canoe into the river, even his wristwatch, but refuses to get rid of one last suitcase. It contains a gramophone. When Karamakate asks what it is, Evan plays a record for him. What they and we listen to is the music of Haydn's "The Creation", which means one thing for Evan and quite another for Karamakate. For Evan, Haydn's music is a metonymy that takes him back to his father's house in Boston, to his ancestors. For the old Cohivano, the music is a metaphor for the warrior's way of solitude and silence, expressed in the film by a transition from his gaze to a shot of the forest's starry-night.

For Karamakate, the "music" we should follow is not a music at all – not in the sense of a learned, conventional language, not even the language of the heart, or of war: "Where are the songs of the mothers comforting their babies? Where are the stories of the elders, the whispers of love, the battle cries?" Karamakate asks himself, Evan, and us. Moved by the experience sparked by Haydn's music, the shaman walks towards his canoe, which is a metonymy for the river, and a metaphor for the mystical journey of the "wonderer in dreams", of the warrior who has abandoned everything and is guided only by his dreams. To embark and follow this path is more important than life itself.

We have come full circle. The assertion that to sail is necessary but to live is not is memorable because it seems to invert the species and the

<sup>20</sup> These values that are not shared by the current president of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro, a far-right supporter of the military dictatorship that arrested and sent Veloso into exile in 1969. Bolsonaro has praised the genocide of indigenous people. One of his first acts after assuming the presidency was to launch an attack on protections of the Amazon rainforest.

genus, and thus, too, their value. It opens an unexpected, unpredictable chasm. In the realm of intersemiosis, as is the case with certain types of metaphor, the interaction of dissimilar elements generates more remarkable and memorable forms of meaning than the confluence of those alike. As Salvador Dalí put it: "The first man to compare the cheeks of a young woman to a rose was obviously a poet; the first to repeat it was possibly an idiot" (1987: 13). Or, as information theorists put it, an expected occurrence (what in Dalí's example is a trivialized metaphor) loses information and increases the entropy of the system.

Something similar happens when semiotic systems come into play. The encounter of familiar systems often generates expected forms of meaning that have little impact and often go unnoticed. The clash of dissimilar systems, on the other hand, may bring about happy surprises. Which reminds us of the first line of Nabokov's *Ada* (which is an inversion of the famous first sentence in Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*): "All happy families are more or less dissimilar; all unhappy ones are more or less alike".

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57

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## From Intersemiotic Translation to Intersemiotic Aspects of Translation

### Introduction and Aims

The 1959 paper “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation” (1959/2000), in which Roman Jakobson proposed a division into intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic translation, proved seminal for the development of the study of translation and for bringing into it a semiotic perspective. However, in the Introduction to the 1998 *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, Mona Baker noticed that surprisingly little investigation had been conducted on the nature of intersemiotic translation, and that Jakobson’s triadic division only “alert[s] us to the possibility of such things as intersemiotic and intralingual translation, but we do not make any genuine use of such classifications in our research” (1998: xvii). Later, Teresa Tomasziewicz restated the scarcity of studies of the nature of transmutation, despite the developments in the theorizing of new media and the new forms of translation connected to them (2006: 65–66). 61

In recent years, among other enquiries into the subject, a comprehensive semiotic classification of translation was proposed by Henrik Gottlieb (2007). Nonetheless, terminological inconsistencies in the discipline are perceptible, which, in turn, can lead to misunderstandings and add to the difficulties in the research. For instance, Tomasziewicz cites an example of an intralingual translation being called intersemiotic (2006: 68), while Chiara Moriconi, when writing about the same work being rendered into a different language and into a painting, applies

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<sup>1</sup> The paper was first published in *Przekładaniec. A Journal of Translation Studies* 2018, vol. 34–35. (English version: *Word and Image in Translation*, pp. 7–35, <http://dx.doi.org/10.4467/16891864ePC.18.009.9831>; Polish version: *Przekładaniec* 2017, vol. 34, pp. 7–35). Reprinted here courtesy of the journal’s publisher, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.

the label “transmutation” to both processes (2014: 62). Even if terms in a given discipline are not neologisms but derive from previous usage – like “translation” and equivalents of this word in many languages – still, in a terminological framework they should be used in an accurate and consistent manner. Otherwise, there will still occur what Edward Balcerzan calls “terminological disturbances in translatology” (2011: 309) (*terminologiczne zakłócenia translologii*).

Despite the developments in translation studies, certain phenomena at the interface of translation and semiotics have not been defined unambiguously and with due precision. Therefore, the aim of the present paper is to sketch the distinction between several allied and complementary notions related to intersemioticity, polysemioticity and translation and to illustrate it with examples pertaining to the proposed categories. I postulate that the use of the notion of “intersemiotic translation” be limited in accordance with the name, i.e. exclusively to phenomena of a translational nature and ones that occur between sign systems. This is in no way meant to limit the field of research, but to make it more specific, as will be expounded in the last section. Furthermore, the notions of **semiotic complementation** and of **intersemiotic aspects of translation** are put forward.

62

The starting points will be concepts developed so far and present in current discourse. My propositions will be formulated in an interaction with them. I only remark in advance that my understanding of translation relies on the following premises: translation presupposes a change of code (consequently, something which remains within the same sign system cannot be an instance of translation), with the preservation of some kind of equivalence, which will, however, be defined differently for various kinds of intersemiotic translation, in view of a varying level of homology between the languages of particular arts; translation represents the original (replaces it in the target reception) and it has a single basis.

## Intersemiotic Translation

Roman Jakobson’s concept of *intersemiotic translation* or *transmutation* has been eagerly embraced across the humanities, and his understanding of translation is perceived as flexible (Clüver 1989: 75). Since 1959, however, new modes of expression have emerged in culture (e.g. computer games), and new types of translation accompany them (e.g. localization). Due to the dynamic developments in both spheres, the concept of transmutation has

been subject to re-interpretations and redefinitions in semiotic studies as well as in translation studies. The explosion of new cultural phenomena has also lead to an overuse of Jakobson's term and to the blurring of its scope.

To begin with, determining what is and what is not an instance of intersemiotic translation is made more difficult by the scarcity of the original definition. The term that proved so often cited had been introduced almost in passing: Jakobson defines it as "interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems" (1959/2000: 114) and then provides very general examples of such a transformation: "intersemiotic transposition – from one system of signs into another, e.g., from verbal art into music, dance, cinema, or painting" (1959/2000: 118).

The transformations explicitly named by Jakobson account for the following types of transmutation (unless stated otherwise, examples throughout the paper are mine – M.K.):

- from word to music – programme music (instrumental), e.g. Pyotr Tchaikovsky's *The Tempest*, Symphonic Fantasia after Shakespeare, op. 18;
- from word to dance – ballets whose librettos derive from verbal arts, like Rodion Shchedrin's *Anna Karenina* (1971);
- from word to visual arts, e.g. John Everett Millais' *Ophelia* (1851–1852, Tate Gallery) or *The Death of Ellenai* by Jacek Malczewski (paintings based on Juliusz Słowacki's 1838 visionary prose poem *Anielli*; cf. one of the versions, from 1907, in the Polish National Museum in Kraków).

The "target" semiotic systems enumerated in the definition also include cinema. Jakobson thus tacitly concedes that the result of the transformation may not only be a change of semiotic system, but also the emergence of a multi-code,<sup>2</sup> polysemiotic<sup>3</sup> work – like a film. This probably stems from the fact that cinema from its early days has been treated as an art with its own distinctive, if syncretic, "language" (cf. e.g. Stam, Burgoyne, Flitterman-Lewis 2005: 29ff; Del Grosso 2008: 9–10). In any event, this stance has been embraced both in film studies and in semiotics: film adaptations of literature have been called intersemiotic translations and approached as such (among others: Hopfinger 1974; Catrysse 1992; Del Grosso 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, in another text he stressed that the study of communication should distinguish between homogeneous messages (using one semiotic system) and syncretic ones – composed of different kinds of signs (Jakobson 1971: 705).

<sup>3</sup> Due to the perspective adopted, what is of interest for me in the present paper is the fact that a work is constituted by a certain number of codes; consequently, I use the descriptions "multicode" and "polysemiotic" (or "bi-semiotic"), which apply to the cases described here. I consciously renounce numerous other terms in circulation, such as "audiovisual", "audiomedial", "multimedial" or "multimodal".

By the same extension, scholars willingly classify as intersemiotic translations<sup>4</sup> such polysemiotic phenomena as: theatre adaptations of texts originally not meant for the stage (as well as stagings of dramatic texts themselves), musical-verbal works whose librettos are re-workings of verbal texts (e.g. Hector Berlioz's 1846 dramatic legend *The Damnation of Faust*, op. 24; André Previn's 1995 opera *A Streetcar Named Desire*), or – to include more recent genres – computer games based on literary material (e.g. on *The Lord of the Rings*).

Jakobson's list of "target domains" is not conclusive and additions proposed over time include the following:

- encoding a text into Morse code (cf. Toury 1986: 1117);
- translating into the tactile mode of Braille (cf. Toury 1986: 1117);
- communicating messages by means of systems of flags, etc.;
- informing, prohibiting, commanding, warning by way of conventional pictograms (cf. Tomaszewicz 2006: 86–96);
- replacing verbal text with graphic signs (punctuation marks) – as a manifestation of conceptual translation (Brzostowska-Tereszkiewicz 2016: 176–179).

As can be noticed, also from the examples so far, Jakobson's proposition is unidirectional: it only envisages translating *from* a human language into a non-verbal code. Hence, Jorge Díaz Cintas postulated extending the definition of intersemiotic translation onto the interpretation of non-verbal signs by verbal ones, so that it covered phenomena such as audio description (Díaz Cintas, Desblache 2007; see also Díaz Cintas 2005: 4). Actually, a theoretical framework that assumed unrestricted directionality had already existed. In 1986 Gideon Toury postulated a general binary division into intersemiotic translation (which involves a change of code) and intrasemiotic translation – within the scope of one system of signs (cf. Balcerzan's conclusion to the same effect, 2011: 303). Jakobson's intra- and interlingual translation would both then be branches of the intrasemiotic (Toury 1986: 1114).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> A differentiation is, however, postulated by Henrik Gottlieb: between the diasemiotic translation (consisting in changing the semiotic channel) and the categories of super- and hyposemiotic translation, in which the target texts display more or fewer semiotic channels than the original (2007: 35–36).

<sup>5</sup> Umberto Eco, in turn, postulates a tripartite division into intra- and intersystemic interpretation and transcription (with further elaborate subdivisions, 2000: 55–100). In his classification, Eco subjects the notion of translation to the notion of interpretation. NB, he flatly denies translational nature to the use of the Morse code, mentioned above, due to its automatic character: he points out rightly that it is an intralingual "transliteration".

Toury's framework allows us to classify as transmutation other phenomena:

- a change from music into text, e.g. Kornel Ujejski's "Translations from Chopin" (*Tłumaczenia Szopena*, a cycle of poems published in 1866);
- from film into (narrative) text, i.e. novelizations of films, e.g. *Four Weddings and a Funeral* by Richard Curtis from Mike Newell's 1994 film or *Rain Man* by Leonore Fleischer from Barry Levinson's 1988 production;
- reworking of the visual code into the verbal one, e.g. audio description.

Moreover, by criticizing Jakobson's division as being "readily applicable only to texts" (1986: 1113), Toury implicitly admits cases of "translation" in which (pure) language code is not involved on either side. This would account for extending the notion of transmutation over still more types of transformations:

- from a graphic novel into a film, e.g. *V for Vendetta* by Alan Moore and David Lloyd → *V for Vendetta*, dir. James McTeigue (2006);
- from a computer game into a film, e.g. *Tomb Raider* (1996) → *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider*, dir. Simon West (2001);
- from a film into a theatrical performance, like *Dziewczyny z kalendarza* (staged in Teatr Komedia, Warsaw), based on *Calendar Girls*, a 2003 film dir. by Nigel Cole;
- from a film into an opera, e.g. *The Exterminating Angel* composed by Thomas Adés in 2016 on the basis of Luis Buñuel's 1962 film *El ángel exterminador*;
- from opera to ballet, e.g. Rodion Shchedrin's *Carmen Suite* (1967), based on Bizet;
- from visual arts to music, e.g. Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1874, inspired by Viktor Hartmann's paintings) or Sergei Rachmaninoff's *Isle of the Dead*, a tone poem for orchestra (1908, inspired by Arnold Böcklin's *Die Toteninsel*, 1880–1886);
- from music to visual arts, e.g. Frederic Leighton's *Lieder ohne Worte* (exhibited 1861, title borrowed from Felix Mendelssohn's op. 30) or Piet Mondrian's [*Broadway*] *Boogie Woogie* (1942–1943);
- animation based on music, e.g. Wiesław Bober's realizations of Vivaldi's *Le quattro stagioni* for the Poznań Animation Studio, 1990–1995.

However, the broadening of the scope of the term should apparently end here. Already the last two categories (music ↔ visual arts) could perhaps be more appropriately classified as mutual inspirations rather than translations, in view of the distant homologies between the languages of those arts. Admittedly, Gottlieb is willing to consider them translations because he proposes a broad category of *inspirational translation* (2007:

36–37, 39). Yet in his framework this class is defined not in absolute terms, but relatively, in opposition to “conventionalized translation” (2007: 36–37, 39), from which it differs inasmuch as its relation to the original “is more free and less predictable” (2007: 37). Not only are the criteria of division far from specific, but also the categorization – displayed in a table (2007: 39) – is rather controversial: it remains unclear why live reporting of a football game on the radio should be more “inspired” than dubbing or subtitling a film, both of which are categorized as “conventional”, sharing this status not only with interlingual translation, but also with a number of processes which exemplify a mere transcoding (e.g. transcription between various alphabets in the framework of intralingual translation, or musical notation). Moreover, the mutual translatability of music and visual arts has not been substantiated or exemplified in Gottlieb’s paper.

66 To go back to the issue of the capacity of the notion under discussion, like Michał Pawica (1996), Harish Trivedi (2005/2007), or Edward Balcerzan (2011: 303–309), I am distrustful of catachrestic uses of the term “translation” with reference to phenomena which are not translations. And I do not mean metaphorical uses or ones which relate to, say, translation as “transferring”, but academic utterances concerning translation as the subject of translation studies. In this context, it is symptomatic that Henry G. Schogt dissociates himself from the “loose usage” of this notion with reference to “translating” the artist’s feelings and experience into an artistic message (1986: 1107, in the article preceding Toury’s considerations cited above). Meanwhile, Jakobson’s synonym “transmutation” provokes even translation (!) scholars to call such phenomena as “transmigration of souls (including gender transformations)” (Pánková and Beebe 2013, n. pag.), among others, instances of intersemiotic translation. But then – to go back to the definition – translation consists in interpreting signs by means of other signs; consequently, it must occur between semiotic systems. Therefore, such phenomena as “migrancy, exile or diaspora”, are not translations, as justly pointed out by Trivedi (2005/2007: 285), even though they may well put the experiencing subject in situations requiring translation.

Therefore, the broadening of the understanding of intersemiotic translation – which will doubtlessly continue, in order to cover new translation activities and new or re-discovered fields of academic interest – should only include such phenomena as **occur between semiotic systems**. If everything “translates” into everything else, the concept becomes so blurred that it loses its methodological applicability. “Everything is translation”? – beautiful as a metaphor, ineffective as an analytical tool.

## Factors Complicating the Semiotic Status of a Work. Intertextuality

Discussing and typologizing the phenomenon of transmutation is complicated by a number of factors, which influence the semiotic and semantic complexity of works and of their transformations. For instance, focusing on the creative process, rather than on the final work, can lead to perceiving a multicode work, like a film or a comic book, as a product of a *sui generis* translation in the sense of executing a script (cf. e.g. Gonçalves de Assis 2015: 251–252).<sup>6</sup>

A studied work may also result from an operation consisting of several stages. For example, the animated film *Dante's Inferno*, directed by Victor Cook and others, was made on the basis of Jonathan Night's computer game, losing on the way any closer affinity with *The Divine Comedy*.<sup>7</sup> Not infrequently, intersemiotic translation relies on interlingual mediation – among the examples cited above this is illustrated by *Dziewczyny z kalendarza*, a Polish theatrical performance based on an English-language film, or by *The Exterminating Angel*, with an English libretto despite its Spanish origin. To interpret both situations, it may prove helpful to employ an element of the conceptual framework devised by Carlo Testa for film adaptations or, in this author's terminology, for re-creations (2002: 4–13 and *passim*). Among other types, Testa distinguishes *mediated re-creations*, i.e. ones filtered through “an intermediate epiphany” of other works (2002: 18, 123–158). It is striking that in this context the scholar does not mention interlingual translations at all, despite the fact that he is studying the relations of Italian cinema with European literature written in various languages (from Stendhal to Tolstoy). For him, Francesco Rosi's film *Carmen* (1984), for example, is a mediated re-creation not because of the complexity of its cultural chain (Testa 2002: 135), but because the transformation relies on an earlier operatic transposition by Georges Bizet (Testa 2002: 19, the analysis of the film: 125–142).<sup>8</sup>

67

<sup>6</sup> In line with the perspective adopted here, I essentially treat such creations as multicode works. Toury, after all, stresses that the products of processes of a translational character are not necessarily translations themselves (Toury 1986: 1111).

<sup>7</sup> A fitting description for it seems to be the phrase coined by Katarzyna Lukas in view of typological difficulties: “a hybrid paratranslational creation” (Lukas 2013: n. pag.) (*hybrydyczny twór paratranslacyjny*).

<sup>8</sup> Inconsistencies of this classification are perceptible as well when the label of mediated re-creation is also assigned to Nanni Moretti's *Palombella rossa* (1989), a film realizing Moretti's original script which only quotes David Lean's *Doctor Zhivago* based on Boris Pasternak's novel (Testa 2002: 18–19, discussion: 143–158).



There is a further factor that complicates any typology, namely references to other works, pertaining to the same or to another semiotic system. When a verbal text refers to another one, this is normally classified as intertextuality, even if the relation encompasses the text in its entirety, as is the case with a travesty or parody. Thus, Tom Stoppard's play *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* is not perceived as a "translation" of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. If so, the conclusion should naturally extend to, say, a poem which takes as its subject a painting: intermedial allusions give it a referential but not a translational character.

In view of the existing, well-established terminology there is no need to call, for instance, William Carlos Williams' "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus" a "transmutation" of Brueghel's painting (although the definition with no restriction on the direction makes such an approach possible). Some scholars argue, however, that employing the concept of "intersemiotic translation" instead of "ekphrasis" is more effective analytically and offers broader interpretative possibilities (cf. Wysłouch 2007: 503). Yet the limited applicability of such a move becomes apparent in the case of texts referring to several art objects at once, like Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" – it is the category of intertextuality that comes to the fore then (I will return to this issue, also in the context of Testa's typology). Moreover, there exist fictitious ekphrases, which could not be called translations for lack of "originals" (certainly, there is a parallel to them in translation studies in the concept of "pseudotranslations", nonetheless, in both cases we are dealing with mystification). Finally, while a specification of an object in a museum's collection might be a pure "transposition" from the visual code into verbal signs,<sup>9</sup> literary texts will take works of art as a starting point for reflection and not aim at (re)presenting the source. That is why interpreting ekphrases in a translational paradigm can lead to paradoxes, as when Claus Clüver diagnoses a poem as a transmutation on the basis of... divergences from the source work (1989: 71); consequently, what he takes as an indicator of translational nature is a criterion evidently at odds with the commonsensical understanding of translation.

Furthermore, intrasystemic phenomena, such as musical quotations in music or painterly references in paintings, also alert one to the difference between intertextuality and translation. Let me name, e.g., Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*, op. 43, Marcel Duchamp's *L.H.O.O.Q.* (reproductions of a moustached and bearded *Mona Lisa*, a series initiated in 1919), or Raymond Gosin's geometric "remembrances" from the history

<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, even they are usually more than that, as stressed in the context of translation by Teresa Bałuk-Ulewiczowa (2004).

of art titled *Me Moirs* (2012). They are instances of various relations of an allusive nature occurring between works belonging to the same semiotic system. Robert Stam, Robert Burgoyne and Sandy Flitterman-Lewis deploy precisely the category of intertextuality (together with transtextuality) to characterize the referential and self-referential practices in cinema (2005: 207–215), while the discourses of the particular disciplines have embraced labels such as “intermusicality”, or “intervisuality”. At the same time, Toury’s typology offers a possibility to classify such works “of second degree” as intrasemiotic translations<sup>10</sup> – at this point a question arises about the boundary dividing the act of quoting within the same sign system from intrasemiotic translation. The issue of intertextuality will be revisited in a further section of the paper.

## **(Inter)Semiotic Complementation**

Furthermore, there are phenomena which do not fit Jakobson’s definition of transmutation since they imply **adding** a new code to an existing work instead of **changing** its code. Consequently, composing music for a poem to form a song is not an intersemiotic translation but rather a **semiotic complementation**. For instance, when the melody composed by Michael Kamen is added to the pre-existing text of William Shakespeare’s sonnet, the two layers together form a new bi-semiotic entity, which in itself is not of a translational nature.

Admittedly, in *After Babel* George Steiner analyses six musical versions (by five composers) of Margarethe’s song from *Faust* as if they were translations (1975/1998: 419–423). However, he makes beforehand a distinction analogous to what I propose here: between transmutation and combination (1975/1998: 415).<sup>11</sup> A composer’s work in creating a score that would achieve “equity” with respect to the lyrics (1975/1998: 422) is an act of intersemiotic translation, because it is essentially the same as a transposition into purely instrumental music (and Steiner draws interesting analogies with translation proper<sup>12</sup>). Even if one agrees with

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<sup>10</sup> For instance, George Steiner apparently treats in that way Chaim Soutine’s *The Skate*, which repeats the composition of Chardine’s still life of the same title (Steiner 1975/1998: 484).

<sup>11</sup> Although he calls “possibly a twofold translation” a work where music was set to a translated text (Steiner 1975/1998: 419).

<sup>12</sup> Trust, appropriation, incorporation and restitution as phases of both processes; the means available to a composer (key, rhythm, instrumentation) correspond to means

Steiner that the process is (or rather: sometimes is) a translation, still, the result of this process is not: the “translated” music *complements* the text and a new bi-semiotic text/work emerges. The product is of the same nature as when a work is from the outset created as consisting of more than one layer: an (original) song, opera, comic book, etc. The difference between translation and complementation can be represented in the following scheme:

translation:  $A \rightarrow A'$

complementation (of a pre-existing entity):  $A \rightarrow A + A'$  (or:  $A + B$ )

$A'$  – if derivative of  $A$ ;

$B$  – if not derivative of  $A$ .

The non-translational nature of the act of adding music is also demonstrated by unsuccessful musicalizations. Anna Barańczak points to cases of infelicitous combinations of music with a pre-existing text, e.g. two settings to poems by Cyprian Kamil Norwid – “W Weronie” set by Andrzej Kurylewicz, and “Bema pamięci żałobny rapsod” set by Czesław Niemen (Barańczak 1983: 42, 141). Although the author does not employ such terms, it follows from her argumentation that the failure of these compositions consists precisely in the fact that the composers did not “translate” the verbal layer. On the other hand, the continued presence of these songs in Polish culture proves that they were not obliged to do so: the melodic lines unquestionably remain in a relation with the poetic texts as their (inter)semiotic complementations. Neither does Erik Redling employ the notion of translation in the part of his article concerned with creating songs by setting poems to music (2015: 419–422).

By the same token, illustrations accompanying a text do not constitute – at least not by definition – its transmutation, but its complementation. To be precise: a specific illustration, or a graphic work, may be an intersemiotic translation of some episode or of condensed features or elements of a verbal text. Nonetheless, illustrating as an activity is not of a translational nature and illustrations are not translations in their essence or generically. I here take a stand against the outlook presented by Katarzyna Lukas: “A typical case of intersemiotic translation is an illustration in a literary work” (2013, n. pag.; trans. mine – M.K.). I renew the reservation made with reference to Steiner’s examples – there are

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available to a translator; a series of compositions to the same text – a translation series of the same source text; the necessity to choose the tradition according to which one interprets/composes; the risk of misreading the “original”; the text being possibly manipulated; “improving” on the original; a great setting means an added value, as an outstanding translation does (Steiner 1975/1998: 416–418).

some musicalizations and some illustrations which strive to “translate” the verbal text, yet neither composing (musical setting) nor illustrating is a creative act of a translational nature. Let us take illustrations as an exemplary phenomenon; that is to say, the reflections presented below can be extrapolated to analogous forms of complementation. Arguments to be substantiated and developed will be grounded in the following premises:

1. Illustrations – in principle – do not function separately (they are meant to coexist with the text, not to represent it).
2. Illustrations do not replace the text.
3. Illustrations are not subject to the requirement of equivalence.
4. Their relation with the text is not necessarily a unique one.

As can be seen, to test the nature of illustrations I intend to refer to some features which are typically attributed to translation and best epitomized by the interlingual one, i.e. “translation proper”.

Ad. 1. One of translation’s characteristics is that it **represents** its original for the target recipients, and this function (cf. Popović 2009: 104) lends it autonomy in the new, foreign context. By and large, translations of texts are printed and read on their own (bilingual editions constitute the exception, not the rule, and are not targeted at a prototypical, i.e. monolingual, recipient of translations). By contrast, illustrations are in principle meant to appear together with the text. This can be substantiated by dictionary definitions in various languages:

Ilustracja – reprodukcja fotografii, rysunku, dzieła malarskiego itp. dodana do tekstu, stanowiąca jego objaśnienie, uzupełnienie i ozdobę; rycina (Szymczak 2002).

[‘Illustration – a reproduction of a photograph, drawing, painterly work, etc. added to a text, constituting an explanation, supplementation and embellishment for it; a print’; trans. mine – M.K.].

Illustration – pictorial matter used to explain or decorate a text (Anderson et al. 2004).

Illustration – a picture or diagram that is used for clarifying or decorating a text, book, lecture, etc.; illustrate – [...] from Latin *illustrare*, *illustratum* ‘to light up’ (Robinson and Davidson 1996).

Illustration – a picture or drawing or diagram or some other sensory aid that helps make something (a book, a lecture), clear or more helpful or attractive (Webster 1993).

Illustration – action d’illustrer, d’orner d’images [...]. Ensemble des dessins et des gravures figurant dans un ouvrage, pour en augmenter l’attrait ou pour concrétiser des explications [...]. La «gravure d’illustration», insérée dans un texte, s’oppose à l’«estampe», qui est indépendante du livre (Larousse 1962).

What follows from these is that an illustration does have a certain function with respect to its text, but it is not to represent it. Illustration is something added (cf. Szymczak 2002), inserted (*Larousse* 1962), external in relation to the text. Characteristically, in Gérard Genette's classification of transcending relations, illustrations have been placed among paratexts (1982: 9). Admittedly, illustrations may be reprinted or exhibited separately, but then, firstly, they are taken out of their primary context and secondly, their status is changed: they are treated as independent works of art, exempt from the illustrating function, a distinction made clear in the French definition. Bibliologists, too, draw attention to that; to cite Janina Wiercińska: one can talk of an illustration "when and only when it appears concurrently with a written or printed text and accompanies this text" (1986: 37, trans. mine – M.K.). Crucially for the present considerations, in the context of intersemiotic translation this co-occurrence of illustration and text is noted by Clüver (1989: 57, 78).

Ad. 2. In the target culture translation replaces the original (Toury 1986: 1112); in the most basic sense an English rendition of Cervantes, Thomas Mann or Adam Mickiewicz **substitutes** for the English audience the Spanish, German or Polish original. Is it so with intersemiotic translations? Occasionally it is (although e.g. Clüver assumes the reverse, 1989: 76): realistically speaking, for many recipients a film adaptation does replace the novel in familiarizing them with a given work.<sup>13</sup> On the contrary, if a foreigner with no command of Polish is presented with an original edition of Adam Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*, however richly illustrated, for instance with all sixty classic engravings by Michał Elwiro Andriolli, the graphic material will hardly substitute for him the inaccessible text (an illiterate native speaker of Polish would be in the same position; cf. Fig. 1). And in the illustrator's intention the visual component was not meant to function as such a replacement, in which it differs from visual cycles created with precisely such an objective. The said contrast to illustrations can be found in *Biblia pauperum*<sup>14</sup> as well as in modern comics, and the distinction – intuitively perceptible, I believe – consists in narrativity (cf. Szyłak 1999: 26), which characterises illustrations (even their cycles) only to a limited extent. Symptomatically,

<sup>13</sup> Cf. a dialogue in *The Master and Margarita*, symptomatic for modern culture: "Forgive me, however, perhaps you've never even heard the opera *Faust*?". The question about the possible familiarity with Goethe's drama, i.e. the source, has been a priori excluded as futile (Bulgakov 1997/2008: 147).

<sup>14</sup> Clüver justly observes, however, that for illiterate recipients its contents became intelligible only thanks to oral verbal commentaries (1989: 57).

it is precisely with reference to this criterion that theoreticians of film adaptation, like Brian McFarlane, construct their understanding of the relations between literature (usually novels) and cinema. According to McFarlane, what belongs to the *narrative* can be transferred, what pertains to *enunciation* requires adapting in the process of creating a film version (1996: 23–30).



Figure 1. Michał Elwiro Andriolli, *Pan Tadeusz*, Book 12, engraving 1 (cf. Andriolli 1955)

Ad. 3. Prototypically, translation is defined by notions such as equivalence, adequacy, faithfulness of some sort, however distrustful towards the concept(s) scholars may have become. For the sake of the present verification, let me assume that **translation is a creation expected to be equivalent**.<sup>15</sup> Such an assumption has also been made with respect

<sup>15</sup> One could contend that intersemiotic translation is in principle a “free” one and any equivalence between, e.g., music and painting can only be purely conventional. Yet there is a range of arguments against this claim. First and foremost, it undermines the very concept of transmutation as a type of translation; it would mean subscribing to Émile Benveniste’s view that signs pertaining to various semiotic systems are not mutually convertible and that between the systems only a certain homology may obtain, and an arbitrary one at that (1969: 9). Secondly, and contrary to Benveniste’s statements, George Steiner (in the fragment of *After Babel* already referred to) so as to have the right to treat

to transmutation, e.g. Maryla Hopfinger clearly appeals to the criteria of adequacy when defining film adaptation “as transposing the meanings of a message formulated in one semiotic system in such a way as to achieve a message whose senses will be concurrent with the senses of the translated [source] message, thanks to selecting the most appropriate signs from another sign system and the most suitable combination thereof” (1974: 21, trans. mine – M.K.).<sup>16</sup>

As for illustration, it may be abstract or it may not derive from the text in any way. It can be inserted into a publication for embellishment, or even arbitrarily. Take the poem *La Prose du Transsibérien et de la Petite Jehanne de France* by Blaise Cendrars, originally (in 1913) published with stencil prints by Sonia Delaunay-Terk. It is, arguably, the first book in which the text and the visual layer play equally important parts (Markowski 2007: 314). Delaunay’s abstract compositions by no means “translate” the poem, nor the other way round. Autonomous contributions in their own right, the layers **complement** each other.

True enough, in children’s literature an illustration is expected to be suited to the words which it accompanies (cf. e.g. Adamczyk-Garbowska 1988: 159; Oittinen 2000: 100–114; Liseling Nilsson 2012: 233): the appearance of the characters should comply with that given in the descriptive passages of the text, there should not be any elements contradicting the verbal layer (e.g. anachronistic). Nonetheless, Joseph H. Schwarcz names as the possible relations between text and illustrations in this genre both *congruence* (with possible reduction, elaboration, complementation) and *deviation* – the aim of which may be to counterpoint the words (1982: 14–18).<sup>17</sup> Thus, even in

musicalizations as translations, indeed looks for adequacy between Goethe’s words and the musical means employed by the composers: in terms of tone, formal composition, orchestration, etc. (1975/1998: 419–423). Thirdly, a transmutation which strikes the recipients as inadequate with respect to the original, may be – and more often than not is – perceived as a failed translation, not as a non-translation. Film scholars also underscore this: McFarlane, for instance, mentions an inclination of “the general film-viewer” to compare adaptations with their literary sources, “usually to the film’s disadvantage” (1996: 23).

<sup>16</sup> There is a vast literature on the subject of the theory of adaptation, including adaptation understood as intersemiotic translation. An overview of it would go beyond the scope and aims of the present paper. Let us just note that e.g. considerations on the background presence of the original are not shunned by Alicja Helman (1979) and also Patrick Cattrysse, who locates his research in polysystem studies, employs the notions of invariance and equivalence (1992: 54).

<sup>17</sup> The interrelations between text and image have been variously classified by, among others, Teresa Tomaszekiewicz (2006: 58–63), Radan Martinec and Andrew Salway (2005), Scott McCloud (1994: 153–155), Andrew Goodwin (1993: 86–88). Presenting these typologies goes beyond the scope of this paper.

this field, where conformity with the verbal text is a strong theoretical and critical postulate, illustrating can hardly be unequivocally understood as an activity implying equivalence.

Józef Wilkoń, an eminent Polish illustrator, openly distances himself from the concept of illustrating as translating. He stresses that his work is “parallel” to the writer’s and likens it to musical accompaniment (Wilkoń 2009–2010: 299), a metaphor clearly concurrent with the concept of complementation proposed here. Although conceding that the task of creating “an adequate illusion” accounts for a certain similarity between an illustrator and a translator (2009–2010: 306),<sup>18</sup> Wilkoń also postulates that illustrating should not be literal; the closer it clings to the text, the less does an illustration have to say (2009–2010: 297, 299). His emphasis on non-literality strengthens the case for illustrations not being translations.

Ad. 4. Although it is not a feature particularly underscored in the discipline (which pays more attention to the fact that one text may generate multiple renditions), a translation refers back to one source text. Even in the case of textual variants, in a particular place a particular single segment of the original becomes the basis for translation – a segment recognized as canonical, although perhaps collated with several textual variants. There must also be segments of the bi-text corresponding to each other in a linear sequence. An illustration, even if related to a particular episode of the verbal layer, can bring together and fuse various elements of its source. It may also be inserted in various places of the edition, which testifies to its weaker relation with the verbal segment to which it owes its origin. Moreover, certain illustrations can equally well illustrate totally different texts—they sometimes even cross national barriers in that: the same prints by Stanisław Wyspiański that had served as vignettes in a turn-of-the-20<sup>th</sup>-century Polish literary magazine were inserted into a 2006 Russian edition of translations from the Polish modernist poet Bolesław Leśmian (Лесямян 2006: 13, 55, 101, 175, 263; see analysis in: Kaźmierczak 2010: 325–342).

While many an illustration may potentially **complement** a range of books as a cover, an adapted graphic novel unequivocally refers to a single source text, which attests to the translational character of the relation between the two (compare Fig. 2 and 3).

<sup>18</sup> With this concession Wilkoń seems to oblige the interviewer, who has restated her question, first answered negatively (2009–2010: 299).



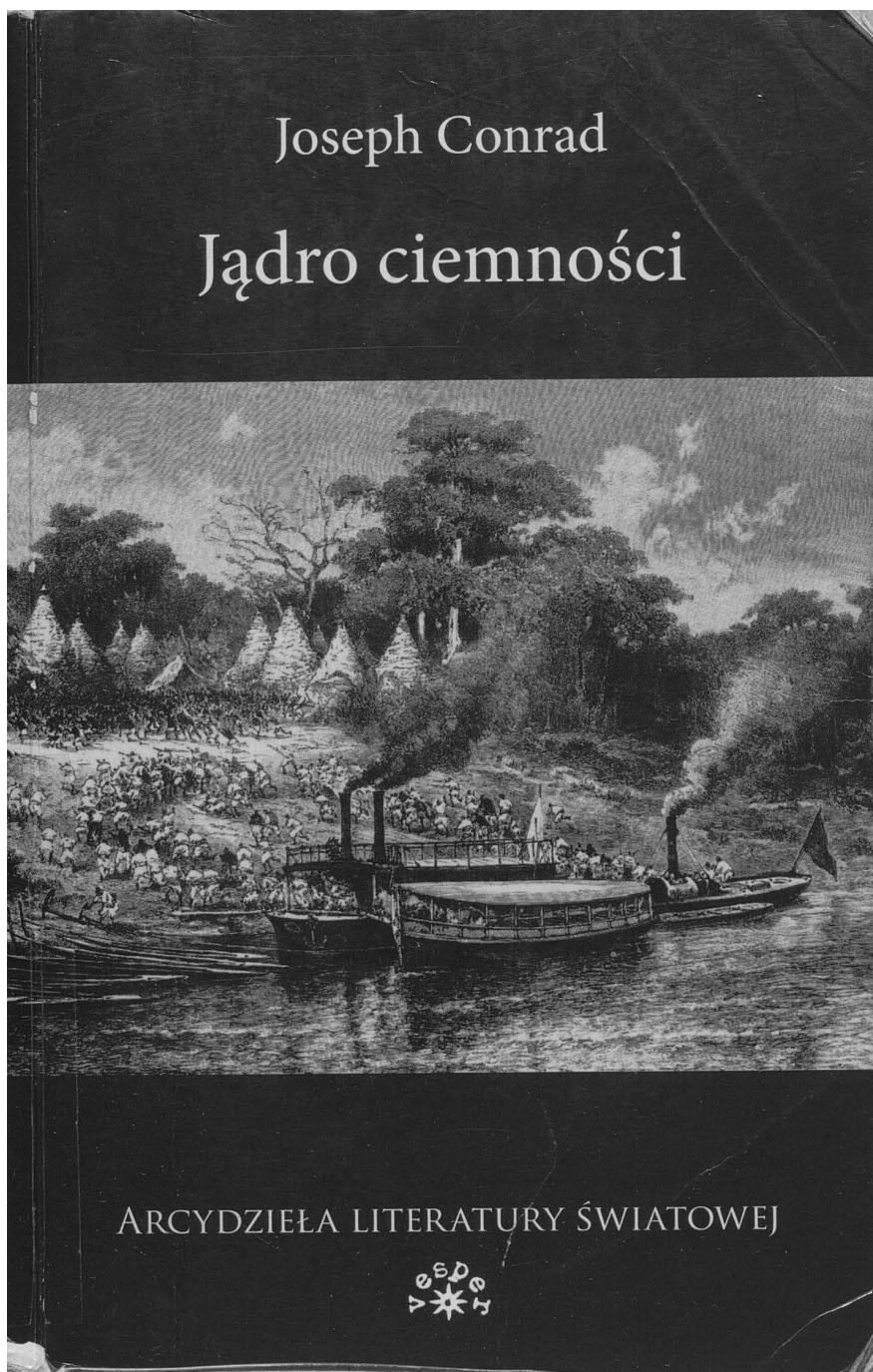


Figure 2. Joseph Conrad, *Jądro ciemności*, cover; publisher: Vesper (Conrad 2009)



Yet principally we are dealing with intertextuality: you know that you are perceiving a graphic version of *Heart of Darkness*, with overt (Mairowitz signals them in the introduction and the interpolations appear under the header *Congo Diary*) references to another text; you know that you are watching a theatrical rendition of Gogol's short story, with a certain thread added with a view to activating new allusive meanings. Moreover, even if the sources are plural, the link with them remains a single one – Khlestakov's subplot does not refer to, say, any comedy set in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian back country, but to a specific work. The overt quotations in Anyango and Mairowitz's text have one intertextual address, *Congo Diary*, whereas the illustration shown for comparison (Fig. 2) potentially connotes any novel whose action takes place on a river, from *The African Queen* to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

My intention is by no means to negate the importance of studying the ways in which visual arts transpose words, nor to question the significance of enquiry into illustrations for translation studies (see further in the paper). I only argue against taking it for granted that illustrations (or musicalizations) are by definition translations. Even when the graphic layer in microscale is based on a verbal text, in the macroscale many scholars show preference for more guarded terms and for emphasizing interactions. Hence, for instance, Sylvia Liseling Nilsson's "dialogue", derived from Bakhtin's concepts (2012: 227 in the context of illustrations; 41–45 for the Bakhtinian context of her study) or "visual interpretation" (Imperowicz-Jurczak 2014). I also intend to draw attention to misleading suggestions inherent in terminology like "translating pictures" (O'Sullivan 2006) or "graphic translation" (Jankowski 2014), if it is not the image that is subject to translation, but rather the verbal text. To compare, for Liangyu Fu (2013) "translating illustrations" actually means transforming the visuals and Tamara Brzostowska-Tereszkiewicz construes "graphic(al) translation" as replacing verbal text with graphic signs (2016: 170–180).

One more remark in this section, to refute the possible objection that introducing the notion of **semiotic complementation** complicates rather than facilitates categorizing some phenomena. Audio description, which – in keeping with the consensus in the discipline – has been classified above as an instance of intersemiotic translation, **complements** other elements of a film, and can be perceived as its semiotic enrichment, as adding another layer to the verbal auditory channel, already comprising the dialogues and possible background voices. Yet, at the same time, audio description is a prototypical case of replacing one semiotic code by another and for this segment of the audience for whom it was devised

(see Benecke 2004 on this aspect), for the blind, it **substitutes** one of the channels of the cinematic message – the visual. Other contexts, e.g. its use in museums, demonstrate as well that for the blind, audio description fulfils the function of representing visual art objects, which confirms its translational nature. Therefore, the differentiation between complementation and transmutation helps define with more precision the functions and status of AD, which change depending on the recipients and their needs – those resulting from sensory deprivation but also others: aesthetic or cognitive ones (nowadays AD plays a role in education, in developing cognitive abilities – cf. Krejtz et al. 2012; Gottlieb, in a related case, calls such an intersecting of functions “translation crossover”, 2007: 37).

## **Intersemiotic Aspects of Interlingual Translation**

Unquestionably, intersemiotic translation often coexists and overlaps with interlingual one. Polysemiotic works (some of which may be products of intersemiotic translation) which contain verbal elements are frequently translated into other natural languages. **An interlingual translation of a polysemiotic work/text** may not be an especially handy term, but it is a precise one. It should not be “cut short” to “intersemiotic translation” when a film, a graphic novel, a computer game, a song, an opera, etc. is translated from language to language. What takes place then is **interlingual translation in the process of which it is obligatory to take into account other semiotic codes / layers constituting the work**.

Admittedly, these kinds of translation are rather particular and therefore specific names, definitions, and subdisciplines have been developed in many cases: melic<sup>19</sup> (vocal) translation, audiovisual translation, localization (cf. Tab. 1). However, since some scholars apply the term “intersemiotic translation” to these subtypes, let me explain my claim in more detail.

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<sup>19</sup> The term “melic translation” has little currency in English; nonetheless, I have decided to use it in keeping with the Polish academic discourse wherein  *tłumaczenie meliczne* refers to the practice of translating a verbal-musical text in such a way that the product can be sung to the original music. It is, therefore, more precise than e.g. “song translation” which does not presuppose any specific approach from the many possible.

**Table 1.** Intersemiotic translation vs. NOT intersemiotic translation (but...)

Intersemiotic translation	NOT intersemiotic translation (but...)
graphic novel based on literature	illustrating (complementation)
programme music	setting a text to music (complementation)
audio description	translating a song, an opera (melic translation)
film adaptation	translating a film script (AVT)
computer game based on literature or film	translating a computer game (localizing)

80 Teresa Tomaszekiewicz classifies audiovisual translation (AVT) as “intersemiotic translation” (2006: 97–100) but uses the label with apparently little conviction (cf. also 2006: 67): she feels obliged to underscore that “the translator’s task is only to effect an interlingual transfer”, since he or she “cannot interfere with the visual layer”<sup>20</sup> (2006: 97, trans. mine – M.K.). The scholar comes to the definition of AVT as “a particular type of translation that combines elements of classic interlingual translation and intersemiotic translation” (2006: 100, trans. mine – M.K.). Yet this is contrary to the essential idea of transmutation, since no **change of semiotic form** occurs. A film translated from language A into language B continues to be a film, it remains in the same semiotic system (exactly like a remake in relation to its screen original). Even conceptualizing this operation as a “transfer between two semiological complexes”, as Tomaszekiewicz justly postulates (2006: 100), does not remove its fundamental incompatibility with the definition of intersemiotic translation by Jakobson and by Toury, with the requirement of code change. As Aline Remael observes, “in multimedia translation, we are not really dealing with intersemiotic translation, i.e., translation from one semiotic system to another, but with the translation of texts and intertextuality” (2001: 13–14).

To move to a different field, a graphic novel based on *Heart of Darkness* is an intersemiotic translation, whereas rendering such a graphic novel from English into other natural languages is not. Renditions of Anyango and Mairowitz’s work will be **interlingual translations which should account for the intersemiotic context**, i.e., for the coexistence of the layers constituting the text. Such an operation may, paradoxically, acquire traits of intralingual translation, if an existing target-language rendition of Conrad’s novella is used (note the same name of the translator in the case of the Dutch versions of both texts: Anyango, Mairowitz 2011 and Conrad

<sup>20</sup> This premise is not universally accepted, see also remarks on the graphic intervention in the next paragraph of the present paper.

1994; the Polish rendition of the graphic novel was published by Magda Heydel who had translated Conrad – cf. Anyango, Mairowitz 2017 and Conrad 2011<sup>21</sup>). Nowadays intervention in the visual channel in foreign editions is already possible. Tilmann Altenberg and Ruth J. Owen state that translating comics may entail both rewriting the text and redrawing the image, combined in varied proportions (2015: 1). Still, graphic intervention is applied to a limited extent,<sup>22</sup> the more so since redrawing “goes against [the] foundations of authorship, meaning and aesthetics” (Gonçalves de Assis 2015: 253). In the case considered here, a systematic replacement would not only efface the relation with Anyango’s work, but also remain... an intrasemiotic transformation.<sup>23</sup>

A similar restriction should be imposed on terminology relating to the translation of verbal-only works which carry references to non-discursive media. Rendering from one natural language into another a text containing allusions to cinema or music does involve intersemiotic aspects, yet by no means constitutes an act of intersemiotic translation. The distinction, however, is not always observed. For instance, when discussing the rendering of Jean Tardieu’s poem whose topic is the person and art of Henri Rousseau, Małgorzata Zawadzka asks in her title: “How do you translate a painting?” (2009: 213). She concludes: “Because of the continuous necessity to confront the text with paintings, the translator at times has the impression of translating a painting, not a poem. A painting created partly by Henri Rousseau and partly by the poet” (2009: 219; trans. mine – M.K.). The paper focuses on French to Polish translation proper, except in the title and in the final metaphor, and it is in this frame that the concept of intersemiotic translation becomes so diluted. The “painting” which the translator has “the impression” of translating does not, in fact, exist, as the addition about the “joint authorship” discloses. The metaphor enters the terminological field here, causing “terminological disturbances”, to quote Balcerzan’s phrase again.

Far from having the intention of introducing terminology and divisions for their own sake, I believe that making certain distinctions will

<sup>21</sup> For an analysis of the graphic novel as a transmutation, prompted by the appearance of Heydel’s rendition, see Jarniewicz 2018.

<sup>22</sup> Elżbieta Skibińska writes about the image as unalterable in foreign-language editions of comic books. She points to certain advantages of this situation – not necessarily taken in publication practice – for intercultural communication (cf. Skibińska 2008: 230–242).

<sup>23</sup> It is precisely as intrasemiotic translation that Rachel Weissbrod and Ayelet Kohn (2015) describe re-illustrating comic books while leaving the verbal text intact (within the same language). Admittedly, there occurs an evident change of aesthetic code – which was the intent of the transformations – but the result of this operation is a semiotic complex of the same kind (translating from comics into comics).

allow us to see with greater precision what is and what is not an object for translation studies analysis. For instance, what is of (professional) interest to translation scholars is how a song is translated; they are not, strictly speaking, concerned with how a poem becomes a song – unless they compare the two processes as Krystyna Pisarkowa does (1998: 60–87 on “Ode to Joy”: Schiller – Beethoven – K. I. Gałczyński’s singable Polish version; though even here the scholar does not, actually, deal with musicalization but rather with the composer’s textual operations). Analogically, painterly transmutations of literature become the object of translational study only when matched with interlingual translation (e.g. Moriconi 2014 on Dante in Rossetti’s twofold renditions). What deserves stressing, though, is that **intersemiotic aspects of translation** offer a promising and exceptionally **rich field of enquiry**. Let me enumerate certain issues worth exploring:

- verbal references to other media as a translation problem;
  - image as an obstacle and as a facilitation to text translation;
  - transfer of illustrations vs. creating new ones in the target culture;
- such analyses should simultaneously take the verbal text into account;<sup>24</sup>
- possible influence of the text of translation on illustrations for the foreign edition (cf. Kaźmierczak 2006);
  - possible discrepancies between the verbal and the visual channel resulting from translation;
  - influence of illustrations on the reception and interpretation of a translated text (cf. Teodorowicz-Hellman 1995);
  - illustrations as a source of knowledge about the original culture; the truthfulness of the information (cf. Liseling Nilsson 2012: 237–278); the explanatory potential of the visual material in foreign editions (cf. Lukas 2013 concerning German editions of Mickiewicz’s *Pan Tadeusz* in that respect);
  - melic aspects of the translation of musical-verbal texts;
  - typographic aspects of translation (cf. Kaźmierczak 2015; Schultze 2016);
  - reception of transmutations as paving way for the interlingual translation of the source work: e.g. an AVT of a film preceding the translation of the underlying novel (a trend of translating into Japanese Western books which had been filmed is mentioned by Masaomi Kondo and Judy Wakabayashi [1998: 491]);

<sup>24</sup> It is worth noting that Liangyu Fu’s interesting paper (2013) on translating illustrations is insufficient in this aspect: it omits the textual contexts in which the prints under discussion are embedded.

– an interlingual translation’s potential to generate semiotic complementations (cf. Barańczak 2004: 342 where the declared translation objective and the aim of particular metrical choices is to “open the way for new melodies to which this text can be set”; trans. mine – M.K.) and transmutations in the target culture;

– instances of suppressed mediation of interlingual translation in the process of transmutation (e.g. Leonard Bernstein’s *Serenade* after Plato’s *Symposium*, 1954, instrumental; the composer’s synopsis does not name the variant of the text – presumably a translational one – which inspired it; Bernstein 1998: 6–7).

## Conclusion

Having drawn the map of intersemiotic aspects of translation, I would like to recapitulate the key points of the present argumentation.

In whatever ways we broaden the understanding of the notion introduced by Jakobson as *intersemiotic translation*, its application should be restricted to transpositions **from one sign (semiotic) system to another**. Consequently, if intersemioticity is understood as all sorts of reference of a verbal text to non-discursive media and arts, then translation of works containing such references should not be called intersemiotic translation, since no change of code occurs; neither does it take place in audiovisual translation (translating a poem into a poem, film into a film, etc., does not have intersemiotic character).

Secondly, the scope of the term should be limited to phenomena which are of a translational nature. Semiotic transformations which entail adding a new code to an existing work, rather than changing its code, do not actually fit Jakobson’s definition and, in view of this, the notion of **(inter)semiotic complementation** has been proposed here.

In turn, translating between natural languages a polysemiotic work, or a verbal text which refers to non-discursive media, constitutes an **interlingual transfer accommodating intersemiotic aspects** and should be studied from precisely such a perspective.

I believe that the proposed differentiation between intersemiotic translation as such, intersemiotic complementation of an existing work and intersemiotic aspects of interlingual translation can contribute to the clarity of defining research objectives. If the distinction is adopted, it becomes apparent that what is relevant for the discipline of translation studies is not intersemiotic translation in itself but its implications for interlingual



translation: (1) translating poems, graphic novels, films, operas, etc. in a way which accommodates their inter- or polysemiotic nature and intersemiotic contexts; (2) taking into consideration intersemiotic aspects when studying such renditions. The difference perhaps accounts for the scarcity of translation studies research on transmutation underscored by Mona Baker and Teresa Tomaszewicz.

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## **Why Intersemiotics Isn't Enough? Remarks on Intersemiotic and Intermedial Studies**

This paper has been classified as theoretical. This fact makes me a bit uneasy, since I do not regard myself as a theorist. In this respect, I share Jonathan Culler's ambivalence as to the vast concern for theory in today's humanities (Culler 1997: 15). Being a literary scholar with a musicological background, I have been focusing, instead, on specific analytical problems concerning relationships between poetry and music. However, while dealing with these problems, I have not been able to exclude numerous other phenomena usually considered insignificant for the art forms mentioned: such as visuality, spatiality or materiality. Thus, this article will demonstrate my own search for adequate tools to explore artistic projects of a transgressive nature, commonly referred to as borderline phenomena.

89

At the outset, let me mention an event which occurred while I was working on this paper, while using the on-line dictionary thesaurus.com to check vocabulary. Inserting the term CRATILISM (which designates an ancient theory, as opposed to the structuralist assertion of the arbitrary nature of linguistic signs), I got the following answer: "No thesaurus results. Did you mean CRETINISM?"

This may seem quite funny and I had a really good laugh, until I discovered the undeniable logic at the roots of the operation performed by the search engine. Not having found the requested word, the software offered the most likely word, instead, on the basis of the image of the word. In fact, both these words are really close to each other as to their sign content: that is, certain graphic signs in a certain order. These two words are only differentiated by two graphic signs:

CRATILISM  
CRETINISM

By the way, how would we react seeing an incomplete word like this: CR TI ISM? Maybe CRITICISM? Well, if we do not know the context, we are not better than our computer.

As a matter of fact, the computer did well, according to the principle of probability, which is a numerical – not a linguistic – order, however. This is the fact corrupting our expectations as to potential results. Here, we get to the heart of the matter. We operate within a great number of overlapping semiotic systems that constitute the basic conditions for communication, for which the linguistic system appears as paradigmatic. As social beings, we have learned to decode and comprehend signs, not only within first-order semiotic systems (i.e., natural language), but also second-order systems, based on culturally established conventions (i.e., literature). Consequently, the interpretive energy may be successfully transferred beyond particular semiotic systems toward intersemiotic translation, even called transposition (Clüver 1989: 59)<sup>1</sup> or transformation (Lund 2002: 21).

The topic of this volume, *Intersemiotic Translation*, seems to be based on a positive assumption about the phenomenon and its relevance for numerous artistic endeavours. However, the title of my paper suggests this might not be a universal perspective for examining complex genres of modern art and communication. It alludes to William P. Germano's article, "Why Interdisciplinarity Isn't Enough?" (1997: 327–334) published in the volume, *The Practice of Cultural Analysis: Exposing Interdisciplinary Interpretation* (Bal, Gonzales 1997). That text aimed at separating the notions of cultural studies and interdisciplinary studies, arguing that they differ as to the subject of their study, focusing on – respectively – the variety of contemporary culture and the 19<sup>th</sup> century's concept of fine arts. My presentation will have a similar standpoint when it comes to intersemiotic and intermedial studies, since I regard the latter as a considerable extension of the former.

Roman Jakobson is credited with extending the notion of translation beyond the area of linguistics. The assumption that meaning can be transferred between different sign systems brought about a breakthrough in comparative studies that expanded beyond the traditional academic fields, stemming from the principles of aesthetics. As a matter of fact, semiotics served as a common basis for dealing with different art forms treating them as the outcome of the same signifying power governed by universal rules.

<sup>1</sup> Clüver adopted this term from Gisbert Kranz' typology of relationships between picture and poem in *Bildgedicht* (Kranz 1981: 29).

Claus Clüver was among those who adapted his interdisciplinary oriented scholarship to the emerging theoretical endeavours – from intersemiotic via interart to intermedial studies. Nevertheless, as approving of the idea of intersemiotic translation as he was, he pointed out some of its limitations. Firstly, he noted a privileged position of the source text (or “original”) compared with the target text, which was to be examined as to its adequacy, not for its own sake: “To be considered successful, the target text is expected to offer equivalents for all aspects and features of the source text” (Clüver 1989: 59). On the other hand, the notion of translation – or transposition – actually involves a single text, whether the other is absent, implicit or merely assumed. Is that not an echo of the ancient platonic cave where the real thing, ideas, cannot be rendered in its entirety?

Clüver also raised the issue of the mode of interpretation, depending on whether a text is approached as an intersemiotic transposition or without any hints about the preexisting text (Clüver 1989: 56). Moreover, he noticed that some art forms were more likely to be transformed, i.e., visual to verbal, and not in opposite direction – quite an astonishing lack of symmetry. Finally, he believed that intersemiotic transposition could not cover all possible affinities between visual and verbal texts, pointing to genres such as *Bildgedicht* or *ekphrasis*, which encompass a wider range of relationships between the texts concerned, such as “an interpretation, a meditation, a commentary, a critique, an imitation, a counter creation” (Clüver 1989: 69).<sup>2</sup> In this light, intersemiotic translation is only one of the possible intersemiotic relationships. Needless to say, various genres and art forms encompass two or more semiotic systems at the same time, where intersemiotic relations can be found and scrutinized. In such cases, the mode of translation, transposition, or transformation appears far too narrow, as there is no transfer but, instead, there are coexistence, cooperation and mutual influences that produce new meanings.

What Clüver observed in the intersemiotic analyses was the predominant focus on the hermeneutic interpretation at the expense of other features of the art works:

Less has been said about correspondences between signifiers as such, and very little indeed about the ways in which the textures of visual marks and of sounds and graphic marks, the material aspects of the texts, may be seen to relate to each other. It is at that level that the texts constructed and interpreted, and the verbalisation of these interpretations by individual readers, will vary most, and it is here that we are most aware of the inadequacy of words to render visual data (and perhaps also of the violence done to the visual text in the process) (Clüver 1989: 83).

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<sup>2</sup> Note well that *ekphrasis* can recreate a non-existing visual object, which is the case with the “Ode on a Grecian Urn” by John Keats (Clüver 1989: 77).



Following Clüver's re-orientation toward a broader analytical perspective, as well as from my own scholarly experience, I regard intersemiotic studies as a more or less historical stage in the practice of comparing, confronting and merging arts and media, which has its limitations, especially as to the widely understood materiality of signs. The mentioned neglected properties of texts would become essential for intermedial studies, which have been growing since the 1990<sup>s</sup> along with interart studies, but quite recently even replacing the latter. Moreover, they aspire, and not without strong foundation, to become "the discipline underlying any conceivable study of cultural artifacts" (Arvidson et al. 2007b: 14), since intermediality is regarded as a precondition of art and communication in general.

Going through the variety of definitions and approaches within this field falls beyond the scope of this paper. Let me just name some that turned out to be especially long-lived and applicable. Clüver's distinction of texts as medial constructs in multimedia, mixed-media and intermedia texts, as to the degree of integration of the media involved is still valid (Clüver 2007: 25), as well as Hans Lund's useful division of relationships between media: combination, integration and transformation (Lund 2002: 20). Nevertheless, today's intermedial studies focus rather on W.J.T. Mitchell's assertion that all media are mixed-media (1994: 5). Consequently, it is not the nature of particular media but their acting and functions within artifacts that are subject of scrutiny.<sup>3</sup> Recent research in the theory of intermediality, held predominantly in Scandinavia, with Lars Elleström as one of the leading scholars in the field, brought about new categories of intermedial relationships, stressing the notion of border – not in order to separate the areas within borders, but to investigate the borders themselves, where all intermedial actions usually take place. Two influential volumes mark the state of the art in the field of intermedial studies: *Changing Borders: Contemporary Positions in Intermediality* (Arvidson et al. 2007a) and *Media Borders: Multimodality and Intermediality* (Elleström 2010a).

The proposed framework for intermedial investigations does not, in any way, oppose research in semiotic (and intersemiotic) qualities of art works, which are regarded as only one of the aspects of intermedial relations. Thus, Elleström avoids defining the medium but, instead, names four so-called modalities of media which are the most basic categories

<sup>3</sup> Let me just mention the 10<sup>th</sup> international conference of the Nordic Society for Intermedial Studies (NorSIS) "Media Acts" held at the Department of Art and Media Studies at NTNU in Trondheim 2011.

of their possible features: material modality (the way of mediating signs), sensorial modality (the way of perception and involvement of the senses), spatiotemporal modality (concerning the cognitive conditions which tend to fix perception data in space and time), and – last but not least – semiotic modality, connected to meaning (Elleström 2010b: 17–24). This requires semiotic qualities to be based and, thus, be dependent on material, sensorial and spatiotemporal ones.

I am not going to discuss those categories in more detail, since they have been thoroughly elaborated on, in the books mentioned. I would prefer to present my own search for an appropriate perspective for coping with Swedish neo-avant-garde art forms flourishing in the 1950<sup>s</sup> and 1960<sup>s</sup>, invalidating the traditional aesthetic principles of art and the established rules for artistic communication. Let me again refer to the episode I mentioned at the beginning, concerning failing communication between the user and the search engine (cratilism versus cretinism). As long as we operate within established sign systems, we are able to decode, interpret and – by incomplete message – even make assumptions about the function and meaning of signs. However, without any contextual framework, when the familiar codes and conventions seem not to work, we are confused, disoriented or – alert to solving the problem by seeking new strategies of comprehension.

93

Swedish concrete poetry emerged in the early 1950s as a phenomenon coinciding with other concretist endeavours in Brazil, Switzerland, and Germany, but fully independent and based on other premises. Unlike the Swiss or the Brazilian, it did not aim at reducing language material and achieving the effect of verbal-visual purity, but developed the so-called dirty concrete, a term coined by Marjorie Perloff (1991: 114; see also Olsson 2005: 13) describing artifacts derived from ecstatic production of texts, according to the method of treating “language as concrete material”, launched by Swedish neo-avant-garde artist Öyvind Fahlström in his *Manifesto of Concrete Poetry* (1968: 75).

The language of Fahlström’s poems (see Fig. 1) is defragmented. Its segments are combined according to serial patterns and permutations. More recognizable units as citations, phrases, fragments of conversations and verbal “ready-mades” are arranged according to the logic of collage, mimetically reflecting the polyphonic world. Graphically, the linear language order becomes disintegrated and changes into spatial organization – vertical (in the form of independent text blocks) or spread across the page, which – as Clüver put it – “invites or even obliges the reader to pursue different paths through the text” (Clüver 2002: 165).

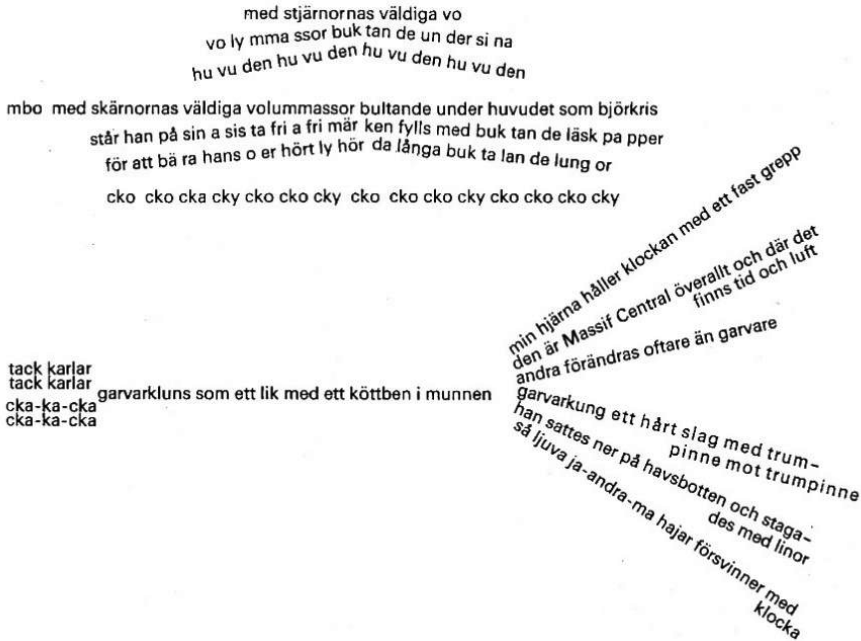


Figure 1. "Det stora och det lilla" (Fahlström 1966: 27)

What Fahlström was after was not a message, constructed as an interplay of the words' meanings and their visual form, which otherwise often highlighted an iconic relation between them. His aim was to abolish language rules for good and establish new ones, taking modern music as paradigm with its serial procedures, punctualism (so-called point music) and chance operations. He seems to have found pure material, devoid of conventional meanings, in music – the more so that experimental music of that time abolished all classic-romantic conventions that had established certain musical codes and could be semantically interpreted. To put it in another way, his intention was to explore the language as a medium and especially its overlooked aspect – namely, materiality. Materiality became the privileged quality in his poetics and a source for new, unforeseen energy of language, freed from its former functions and implications.

Having adopted the ideas from his manifesto in written or – more accurately speaking – printed poetry, Fahlström went on to exploit the oral potential of language signs. While carrying out experiments in a broadcast studio, he invented radio poetry based on recorded and electronically manipulated language sounds. In the meantime, his written poems were employed as verbal material for diverse live

actions which gave raise to the genre of happening. Fahlström's artistic endeavours illustrate his vital interest in the possibilities of media. He did not consider language as *a* medium but explored different channels of its mediation, which, together with the material signs, constitute media: print (to be looked at); orality (to be perceived aurally but even with other senses, depending on the situation); technologically mediated sound, that is, according to Walter J. Ong, secondary orality (1992: 183); and last but not least, performative aspects of language involved in stage actions.

Concrete poetry in Sweden did not follow the genres established by the early avant-garde – visual poetry and sound poetry. The poems were often labeled as visual sound poems (in Swedish *bild-ljuddikter*), the fact stressing that their medial shape could be varying. Bengt-Emil Johnson was another representative of the Swedish neo-avant-garde who put into effect Fahlström's artistic ideas. Let us have a closer look at some of Johnson's pieces of concrete poetry from the 1960s which expose his struggle to explore the potential of media as well as of language treated as "concrete material". He started with typed poetry (see Fig. 2) in which the language signs are detached, dissociated and spread all over the page, creating irregular patterns of varying density of signs. The arrangement undermines the principles of linearity, unidirectionality, readability and comprehensibility. This fact proves that applying semiotic analysis would be rather pointless here.

95

However, there is a hint that sheds light on the desired meaning of the poem: namely, its title, "Tribute to John Cage". Now the strategy of the poem becomes apparent: namely, a parallel between the fragmentation of language signs and the extended definition of music regarded by Cage as "the entire field of sound" (1961: 4), "a total-sound space" (1961: 9) and "the activity of sounds" (1961: 10) which are "events in the field of possibilities" (1961: 28).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Along with Fahlström, Johnson was very much involved in contemporary music and was fascinated by Cage's experiments. According to Erika Fischer-Lichte, Cage would expose performative aspects of music in his "events" and "pieces" (2004: 24).

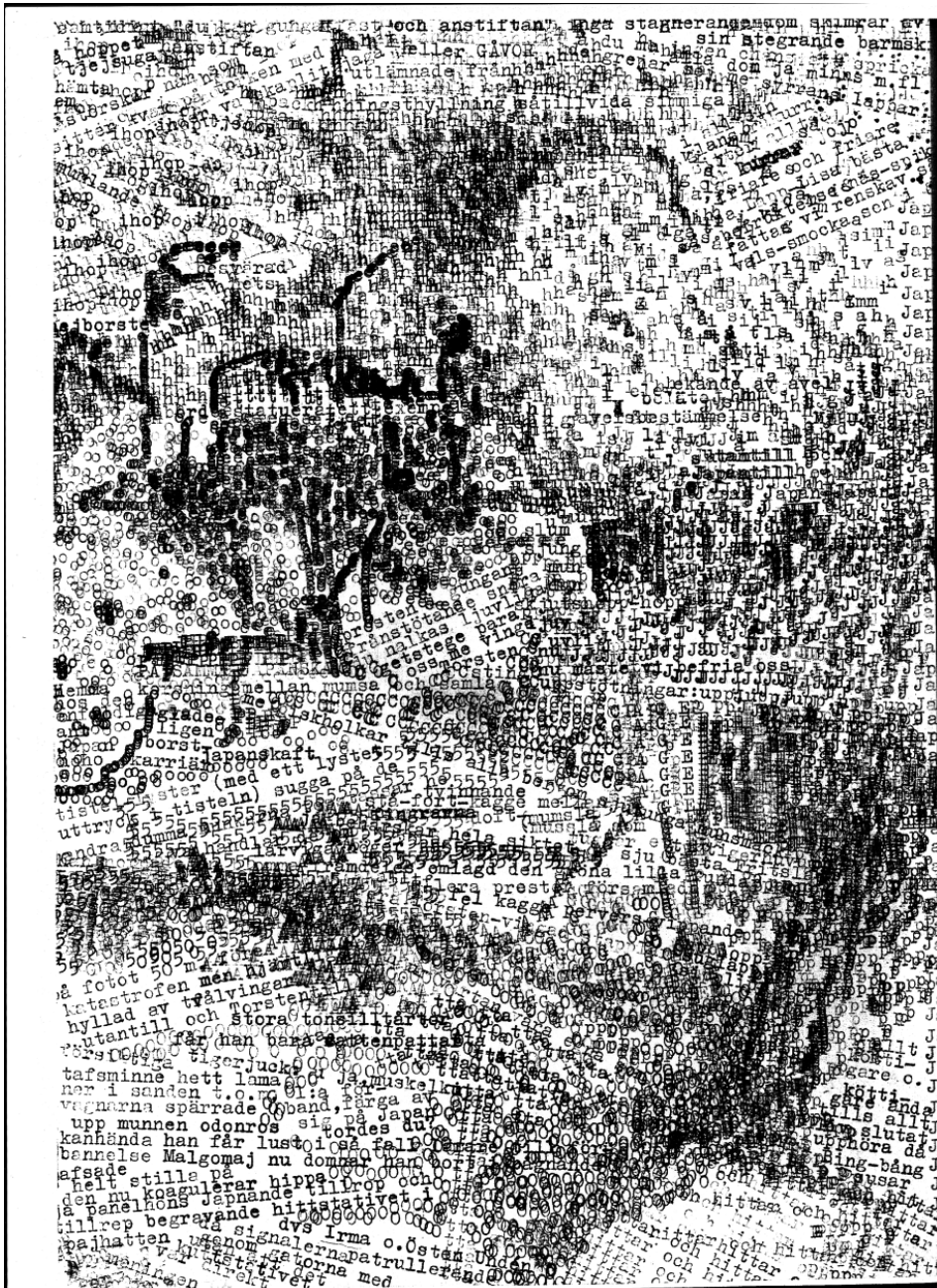


Figure 2. "Hyllning till John Cage" (Johnson 1964a)

The poem is not meant to be read, nor is it to be taken in as an abstract visual composition. Its meaning emerges from, on the one hand, attempts to decipher the signs by way of trying various strategies and, on the other, to realize that no single strategy makes the text comprehensive. In fact, some coherent sequences of signs can be distinguished here: for instance, the name C A G E can be found among the overlapping letters in the middle of the composition. However, most of them lack the context and continuity which would make them meaningful. Hence, they remain separate fragments, like the material elements in a collage, and with their ontological duality of the primary materiality and semiotic function in the new context (Perloff 1986: 49). The principle of collage, underlying many concrete poems, makes us aware of materiality of signs before they gain their sign-status.

What I find in compositions like this is, first and foremost, the artistic examination of and reflection on the written medium. Experimental treatment of language signs, which violates the conventional rules of their usage, exposes their materiality and, thus, the medium itself along with the conditions of its mediation. I would say that such texts illustrate Marshall MacLuhan's well-known dictum, "the medium is the message" (2004: 39). The printed medium, once it ceases to be transparent, constitutes the message about its complexity and latent mediating power.

Another vital aspect of Swedish concrete poetry is its potentially varying medial shape with many hints about oral or stage performance, confirming the thesis about artists' concern about media as crucial for the art of that time. Johnson's collection of concrete poems *Gubbdrunkning* does not show such typographic variety as his earlier typed poems. However, their typographic shape was, to some extent, the result of a compromise, a fact the author mentioned in the commentary to the book: "This book contains a selection of poems from the cycle 'Gubbdrunkning' (a shortened version). Due to the technical obstacles, my previous ideas about the typographic shape could not be realized" (Johnson 1965: 5).

As a matter of fact, some poems had been published before in the periodical *Ord och Bild* (1963–64) in a graphically more differentiated form and thus inviting to another strategy of reading. Let us have a look at typographic modifications in both texts (see Fig. 3 and 4).

The comparison between both images of the page confirms the book version (Fig. 4) was simplified compared to Figure 3, where the variety of font types and sizes, along with blank spaces, calls to mind the tradition of Futurist collage with its characteristics of newspaper and affiche typography. Both versions are based on nearly the same verbal material, but Figure 4 contains more performative hints which are rare in Figure 3.

## "POLISKAMERA"

dit kan han inte komma  
inte längre smålänning  
de vågar han inte  
inte

**långsamt:**

»sjukdom . . .»

**"s-j-u-k-d-o-m"**

koloniträdgård med sjöfåglar:  
klotter, hovtänger, medaljongerna fr. höger t. vänster  
d.v.s. »hästlass»  
»omkoppling»

sätt på honom grimman hörrudu, vi ska förhöra honom  
vi ska förhöra honom

sätt på honom  
(väderkvarnar: han tycks pulsa, åberopa)

## hå, tjallare: RÄTTVISA

**RÄTTVISA** skvaltalarare under pseudonym  
**RÄTTVISA** »äh, de va vel inte så farlit,  
**RÄTTVISA** de kan va till sen hörrudu»  
 skimrande av stjärtfjädrar

vi laga mat tillsammans:	<b>STRAFFARBETE</b>
<i>du, du</i>	<b>STRAFFARBETE</b>
<i>va, du, du</i>	<b>STRAFFARBETE</b>
<i>va, du, du, du, va, du</i>	<b>STRAFFARBETE</b>

valfria i rymden i himlen: fiskvatten  
badvatten  
sköljvatten  
dricksvatten  
tvättvatten  
sjövatten  
saltvatten  
smältvatten  
mineralvatten  
bäckvatten

(gong-gelé)

ifall vi kunde klämma åt honom,  
**PÄLSMÖSSA**  
han sitter ju på bänken fetknoppar, han  
badar ju, han e ju förskräckt hörrudu.

## FRUKTUPPVAKNARE

4 ggr. varje da.  
de e va *han* säjer,  
**KRÅK, GE ER!**

Skiftgång i vissling, poliskamera.  
Anländande: dala in så långsamt han  
nalkas, vaknare.

släpa-vackla  
utspridda

upprepning i provkök »durkdriven»  
»Underverk»

strofforboto, strofforboto, stroffor  
inom förtöjningsområdet  
frötöjning **MRA**  
hä, örtgök, äh  
bossen för skärarna, allt ensammare,  
tunnare.

Figure 3. Johnson 1964b: 252

(långsamt, utdraget, ganska svagt: "sjuk-dom . . .  
 sjuuuuuuuk-doooooooooom . . ."  
 etc.)

ifall vi kunde klämma *åt* honom (pälsmössa)

**FRUKTUPPVAKNARE.**

.....  
 ~~~~~.

4 ggr. varje da –  
de e va *han* säjer,  
**KRÄK, GE ER!**

sätt på honom grimman hörrudu, vi ska förhöra honom!  
vi ska förhöra honom

4 ggr. varje da –

sätt på honom

(väderkvarnar: han tycks pulsa, åberopa.)

**hä, tjallare: RÄTTVISA**

## RÄTTVISA

## RÄTTVISA

## RÄTTVISA

under pseudonym: "äh, de va vel inte så farlit".

"äh, de kan va till sen, hörrudu".

m.fl. – alla skimrande av stjärtfjädrar.

upprepning i provkök:

### 1. Durkdriven.

2. "Underverk".

Inom förtöjningsområdet,

valfria i rymden i himlen: fiskvatten

**badvatten**

sköljvatten

tvättvatten

dricksvatten

sjövännen

**saltvatten**

smältvatten

mineralvatten

bäckvatten

ăn du dĩa, va?

*du dă, va, va, du?*

*du, va, du, du, va, du, va, va?*

*va, du, va, va, du, va, va, va, du, va?*

(tydligt: "gång på gång, eftersom förhållandet mellan de olika lukorna – gluggarna – förskjuts")

Figure 4. Johnson 1965: 13



It should be noted that the poems from *Gubbrunkning* were performed on some occasions, and one of the performances was recorded and released as a single included with the book. Hence, an assumption can be made: namely, that the book version had been influenced by the performances towards a more acoustic-oriented concept, which had to be suggested by means other than visual artifice, as its possibilities were technologically restrained. The new solutions involve materialization of the voice, whereas Figure 3 is arranged according to visual syntax.

Generally, Figure 3 makes the impression of co-existing freestanding fragments spread all over the page, whereas Figure 4 seems more homogenous, due to the blocks being placed closer to one another, with less font variety and a stronger suggestion towards linearity. The means of treating language as “concrete material” are also different in both and related to the overall idea. Let me demonstrate this with a short example:

I (from *Ord och Bild* – see Fig. 3)

långsamt:

»sjukdom...»

“s-j-u-k-d-o-m”

[slowly: / »illness...» / “i-l-l-n-e-s-s”]

II (from the collection *Gubbrunkning* – see Fig. 4)

(långsamt, utdraget, ganska svagt: ”sjuk-dom...

sjuuuuuuuk-doooooooom...”

etc.)

[(slowly, long-drawn-out, rather quietly: “illness.../ iiiiiiil-neeEEEEEEess...” / etc.)].

In the first example, the word “långsamt” [slowly] can be understood as a performative suggestion in the light of the quotation marks followed. The first instance of “sjukdom” [illness] conveys the lexical meaning; the sign is almost transparent with some suggestion of a pause marked by suspension points. Yet, the image of the word has been modified visually in the repetition. As a result of “radical artifice” (a term coined by Perloff in *Radical Artifice*), the length of the word concerned has been materialized by way of graphic means in the medium of print (spelling marked by hyphens). However, its atomizing does not match the rules of oral articulation, as it transforms the arbitrary language sign with its implied sound into a *picture* of the word. The performative instruction “långsamt” [slowly] is being realized as ‘long’ in the spatial sense, which, in turn, according to the strategy of the metaphor, is to be perceived as ‘long’ in the temporal sense: that is, uttered slowly, for a longer time.

It is only the second version that implies oral aspects of the word as it conveys the manner of its articulation with graphic means according to more specified instructions in the text: "långsamt, utdraget, ganska svagt" [slowly, long-drawn-out, rather quietly]. Note well the parenthesis which indicates performance instruction. This time, the artifice matches the oral performance: first, by segmenting the word into syllables; then, by extending the vowels in accordance to its instruction (long-drawn-out).

As I have mentioned before, the text was performed in public and recorded. According to a description of the event, four readers were standing on ladders in the audience and performing the text – in sequence or simultaneously, using microphones and electronic manipulation of voices, especially reverberant effects (echo). However, the recorded text does not match the printed text in either version but it makes use of the verbal material found in both. It is a kind of collage of voices, which makes use of spatial effects: dynamics, echo, simultaneity, and rhythmic and phonetic organization stressing the oral aspects of language.

While the notion of collage in print is highly metaphorical (Perloff 1986: 72), suggested by typography, it becomes explicit in performance, as simultaneity and the overlapping of voices, together with their various locations, create the perception of a spatial arrangement. The methods of cut-up and montage of arbitrarily chosen, real, sound material are the same as those used in concrete music and aleatorism, and the result of applying them is a new sonic reality: heterogenic and polyphonic, but – contrary to reality – remaining constructed. Moreover, it could be constructed each time anew, with new relationships between the entities. Consequently, the symbolic space of a page became a real setting, whereas visual language modifications became events immersed in reality. Therefore, previously thought of as limited by time, this art has exposed the space and the body of a performer as well as the transience and the moment of the event, thanks to its performative effects.

These analyses assert that concrete poetry in its Swedish appearance of the so-called dirty concrete was conceived not so much as the conceptual integration of text and image in a constellation, governed by visual and verbal semiotic codes, but as an experimental examination of the media of print, voice, recording and performance, which exposed the materiality of signs mediated by different channels. Materiality became the central feature, overshadowing the verbal content and making it, to a great extent, irrelevant. At the same time, an aesthetics of the performative appeared as a phenomenon of particular importance, which led to the so-called performative turn (Fischer-Lichte 2004: 22).

Among the fundamental indicators of the aesthetics of the performative is a physical closeness of performers and audience, which invites feedback (Fischer-Lichte 2004: 49); and materiality which emerges as a result of an activity within a performative space. A work of art is not an artifact but an event focusing on the present, presence and one-time effect (Fischer-Lichte 2004: 55–56). The aim of performative art is thus not to generate and convey certain meanings but to create phenomena to be received as they are (Fischer-Lichte 2004: 242). An event is defined through its materiality and, therefore, is self-referential (which means that the sign and the meaning are identical). It evokes, in a spectator, a luminal state: a sense of being somewhere between the mode of representation and presentation, and between experience and understanding.

To sum up, performative art aims at moving the recipient and not establishing certain meanings. In such cases, the semiotic perspective seems not to be able to embrace all aspects of signs and sign-making. Thus, it calls for an extension by media-related theories that involve other circumstances as to signs beyond just their significance. Many phenomena in contemporary art do not make use of the mode of representation but, rather, of the mode of presentation, for which it is experience – and not understanding – that is of central importance.

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**PART TWO**  
**MODES OF LITERATURE**



## Between the Visible and the Legible: Raymond Pettibon's "I" Caught in Translation

Raymond Pettibon is a contemporary American artist whose practice is perhaps best described as writing-drawing. Both writing and drawing often collocate on the sheet of paper, acting as extensions, supplements, revisions, negotiations, in short: interlocutors, of each other. In fact, Pettibon does not seem to regard them with much difference, instead one is calling for the other. In a Derridean sense both *verbal* writing and *pictural*<sup>1</sup> writing are writing. In a graphic sense, which is ultimately not very different, both are forms of mark-making, traces and tracings on paper, signs and signings off on the page.

107

Pettibon's work has often borrowed from canonical literary writers, especially of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In responding to Walter Pater, Marcel Proust, Henry James and others in his drawings he translates, transposes, transmutes them picturally and verbally. In the following, this shifting and on-going intersemiotic translation from verbal to pictural and vice versa will be investigated based on one letter, that refuses to be letter, in an untitled 1998 pen-and-ink drawing – or perhaps it should be called a writing. In exploring this singular stroke the problematic of the graphic qualities of writing is opened up to exploration. The persistent legibility-visibility dichotomy, in which writing is trapped between mere allographic trace, whose graphic appearance beyond readability is irrelevant, and sign, whose semantic value is constituted multiply through its verbal and pictural qualities, will be examined. Through this analysis, persistent notions of logos, the discursive desire to harness an image, and the primacy of speech are interrogated.

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<sup>1</sup> The increasingly obsolete term 'pictural' is used to describe pictures as graphic depictions (i.e. literally 'of or relating to pictures') as a necessary differentiation from verbal images, which are ubiquitously evoked by 'pictorial' texts. This usage corresponds to the French and translations of Jacques Derrida's writings (*Truth, Memoirs, "Spatial Arts"*), as well as related commentary.



What do we see when we look at writing? Raymond Pettibon writes "I no man goes to the guillotine with greater apprehension than I sit down at my desk" (Fig. 1). More accurately, he does not type, he does not print, his hand draws brush and pen, he *leads* a line across the paper, marks it. Written and drawn. But even in saying that it is drawn, it remains written. And though remaining written we cannot say that he marks it with a giant I. For he may return and give us the remainders of his list:

II No man is more cauterized than I smoothing the page.

III No man plunges lower from the gallows than I from the end of my pen.



Figure 1. Raymond Pettibon, *Untitled (No man goes)*, pen and ink on paper, 27.9×20.3 cm, 1998

Pettibon's hefty I is then also the side-view of the guillotine's priapic post. The beam of a gibbet. The logogrammatic self-portrait of the artist. The homophonic eye looming large, looking at us. Hell's double doors opening after the guillotine. The graphic *cut* that separates head and trunk. It becomes difficult to continue calling it the letter I, or more precisely to even equate it to a (12 pt *Times New Roman*) typographic translation encapsulated in this I. Thus, do not read this sign as letter but as the translated mark of Pettibon's drawing; the I that signs itself as letter, numeral, post, organ, space between doors and so on.

When Tim Ingold observes that writing used to denote “a practice of inscription” leaving hardly any difference “between the craft of the draughtsman and that of the scribe” (Ingold 2007: 3), we see in Pettibon the author as (in)scribe(r), not the typist or wordsmith. Pettibon’s pen is not simply a tool for neutral transcription of speech, or more specifically oral signs, into graphic marks of similar or even equivalent *signification*. This is not to say, that the pen is boundless or superior to the typewriter, word processor or printer; all remain mediators of writing. Nevertheless, acknowledging the graphic qualities of writing is to confirm that texts possess a material character, a physicality imbued by and in their production.

The materiality of texts is often denied by separating legibility from visibility. Jean-Gérard Lapacherie notes that the *visibility* of typography, in other words, to read (*legère*) typography as typography, is often seen to spell the end of reading the text.

A page is meant to be read. It is not meant to be looked at. Printed words on a page are barely noticeable. As soon as reading begins, our perception of typography ends. Typographic artifices force the reader to look at the text. They make it visible as a thing and as a thing endowed with an existence of its own (Lapacherie 1994: 64).

From a historical perspective, visibility and legibility are usually regarded as irreconcilable oppositions (Leenhardt 1994: 82). Lapacherie’s puzzling 19<sup>th</sup> century example, according to which some psychiatrists had shown an interest in writers who displayed an overenthusiastic use of typographic marks characterizing them as “fous littéraires” (literary madmen), illustrates the perception of the relationship between typography and writing (Queneau qtd. in Lapacherie 1994: 63). Similarly today, literature, textbooks, almost any printed publication, is dominated by the word as text alone, graphic considerations are applied afterwards. Apart from rare exceptions of artists’ books and concrete poetry, the spatial dimension of script is “normally backgrounded” and the physical characteristics of a text are usually determined by means of production, economic considerations or marketing (Mitchell 1980: 550).

We can be acutely perceptive of the visibility of script in graphic design products when typographic forms are used to enhance messages, produce memorable *Schriftzüge*,<sup>2</sup> create typo-pictographic brand associations, subvert or supplement images etc. Nonetheless, at other times we look *through*

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<sup>2</sup> *Schriftzug* (German) is usually translated as logo, in the sense of lettering, however it also designates the particular and characteristic manner in which a word, group of words or script (typeface or longhand) is executed. It literally indicates the “pull”, “draw”, “attraction” of “writing” or “script”. It is perhaps closest to ductus in English, although it

texts, perhaps taking note whether a particular typographic arrangement is eye-pleasing or not, yet hardly considering if the justified layout of the text contributes or distracts from its apparent meaning, or if a particular typeface undermines the message. Furthermore, to whom, amongst (literary) writers, can we turn for a use of script that is irrevocably bound up with the production and experience of the text? The typographic experiments of Dada, Futurism, Lettrism, Situationists International, Fluxus and concrete poetry receive occasional if, however, marginalized interest, but there is a hesitance amongst contemporary writers and perhaps a hostility amongst editors and publishers towards typographically experimental work (Drucker 1991: 232–33).

Differentiating texts according to their relationship between visible form and content, Leon Roudiez describes texts which do not point at their own material make-up as readable or *transparent*, and contrasts them with those that are *opaque* and show themselves materially (Roudiez 1978: 232–33). This understanding is interwoven with and a deliberate distortion of Roland Barthes' *readable* and *writable* texts. The former are restrictive, authoritarian and closed; they have a determined set of possible, predictable readings. The latter are open and fluctuating, irreducible to a single meaning (Barthes 1974: 10–12). Roudiez adapts this notion to include opacity, the quality of texts which point at their own material visibility, and fullness, the quality of writing which affirms its own audibility (Roudiez 1978: 233). In this conception, writing's visibility is consequential beyond its necessity for a text's legibility; an understanding that differs strikingly from a transcriptural idea of writing as a form of recorded speech.

Perceived as transcribed speech, writing acts as a storage vessel for a language whose chief purpose is vocal articulation and aural perception. Such implicit vocal primacy is reinforced by observations such as by Carol P. James, who notes that written words "have no visual worth [and] reading is generally a visual experience only physiologically" (James 1985: 439). Underlying this presumption is an assumed neutrality of the graphic trace, a *transparency* of the mark which allows unmediated access to a signification, meaning or substance that is located somewhere behind it, or in it, but not bound up with it. Johanna Drucker conjectures that the disregard for typographic materiality is indicative of a continued belief in a higher linguistic transparency, which grants unmediated access to an underlying *truth*. She suggests that employing the visibility of texts productively and experientially works "toward negating the transcendent character of logos by refusing to

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is reserved only for writing, with Linienführung ("leading of the line") used for drawing (and occasionally for writing) and Duktus applied similarly to both.

allow the linguistic sign to be represented in a supposedly transparent visual mode" (Drucker 1991: 254).

Furthermore, a double paradox is identifiable in a transcriptual understanding that renders writing transparent (Roudiez 1975: 75). Firstly, reading texts must acknowledge the visibility of the sign but also equally disavow the selfsame visibility. "[N]o sooner do those black signs become visible, if the text is transparent they almost at once become invisible again, having been replaced with mental images of various kinds" (Roudiez 1978: 233). Secondly, because the purpose of (transcriptural) texts is a meaning wholly outside of their graphic make-up, their substance is not in their materiality; their "materiality could be termed immaterial" (Roudiez 1978: 233).

In order to discuss the formal qualities of the linguistic sign, it is perhaps necessary to disentangle two different connections that language (written and oral) may have with any imaginable referent. To affirm the strictly arbitrary character of the linguistic sign to its referent is not the same as (or even a necessary condition for) demanding a unitary, dichotomous relationship between the form and content of a sign. Simply because a sign has an established conventional relationship to a referent does not preclude the selfsame sign from also having multiple other, even contradictory, reference values or being able to accrue them. A simple example based on the grapheme <x> may illustrate the point. As a character of the Latin alphabetic script, it has a conventional, representative function for a phoneme. Nevertheless, this does not prevent it from maintaining or accumulating additional and irrevocably linked values, for instance: Christ (through the nomina sacra: XP, XC, XPC), kiss, cross (verb, noun, adjective), map position, mistake or incorrect answer, indication of a vote, chiasmus, adult content rating, death or unconsciousness (if replacing eyes), signature of the illiterate, indication of a hybrid, abscissa, the unknown or variable, and so forth (cf. Green 2006). To read <x> henceforth is to read it within this expanded field of reference. It would be permissible to dismiss this example if <x>'s relation to the other referents was merely one of abbreviation, however, it is (also) one of picturality, phonetics, pictographics and ideographics. Precisely because <x> has a *visually* representative function for a phoneme – without being reducible to that phoneme – it also has other codified representative functions, which perhaps cannot be satisfactorily summed up but nonetheless inscribe the sign as text. Differently however to Pettibon's I, <x> operates as a letter, whilst I is irreducible to <i>. To insist therefore on the notion of transparency (or invisibility) of texts is also to re-assert some intrinsic antagonism and dichotomy between the form of the sign and its content. It appears to be a conflation of the arbitrary character of (readable) linguistic signs with the corollary expectation that a sign's (viewable) visual

appearance acts unitarily as a placeholder identical to a sound, disregarding that a transcription, in other words a medial translation, has taken place.

Pettibon's work is instructive here. Reading and looking at a text are usually represented as "mutually exclusive" and inevitably there is a conflict between the signs used in representation for language and the same signs in drawing with their own autonomous meaning (Lapacherie 1994: 65). Nonetheless, re-reading and re-viewing the untitled drawing enables us to observe the graphic (sc. legible and visible) multiplicity of its writing. The towering I neither remains a static character of legibility nor an invariable mark of visibility; it is neither and both. As a graphic mark, it remains both legible and visible numerically, hieroglyphically, pictographically, picturally, alphabetically, logogramatically.

If we can both read and view a text, how ductile is this sign that can be repeated with the same legibility but differing visibility? How can a text remain legible and iterable as language whilst being differently visible? How can we reconcile this apparent gap in the graphic between visibility and readability of a text? Where do we locate this gap in the sign that has form yet also remains free from any particular form?

112 Is it possible to subtract a materially inscribed mark from its context, from itself? Material language takes place within a field of inscriptions, exchanges and erasures, forever repeating itself—and also always differing from itself. It traces a path between itself and other, between form and formlessness, ultimately offering itself as a site of negotiation and transition between the receiver of language and the world (Armstrong, Mahon 2008: 12).

Through Nelson Goodman's germinal analysis of the notational character of different symbol systems in his *Languages of Art* we might be permitted to attempt to answer some of these questions. Discussing authenticity in art, Goodman differentiates autographic art, in which the distinction between forgery and original is significant, from allographic or non-autographic art, in which no copy of a text may be considered a fake and which "is amenable to notation" (Goodman 1976: 121). Painting, sculpture, printmaking and others fall into the category of autographic practice, whilst no musical performance, copy of a literary text or poetry, or enactment of a play can be considered a fake (unless it changes the source text) and are therefore allographic. The precise distinction shall not interest us here, what is however relevant is Goodman's terminology. One aim of his book is to delineate the semantic and syntactic rules governing notation. In very abbreviated form, notational systems are those symbol systems in which each symbol refers to only one characteristic of the world it describes, conversely, every single characteristic belongs to only one symbol in the system (Goodman 1976: 128–30). Musical scores are almost full notational systems because every note played may be associated with

only one symbol and vice versa. There are however certain aspects of volume, tempo and choice of cadenza which are imprecise and therefore not notation (Giovannelli 2012). Crucially for Goodman, poetry and literature are not full notational systems because of certain semantic characteristics of language, though they may qualify syntactically (Goodman 1976: 210–11). Importantly, Goodman conflates language, speech and writing – through its implicit comparison with the musical score. The only time that Goodman comes to consider the visibility of writing as distinct from language, he comments on the need for clearly differentiated alphabetic characters (1976: 148). He does not, however, consider writing's materiality, such as extra-alphabetic characters or the variability of writing's visibility through typefaces, sizes, font styles (italics, bold, underlined) etc. These are characteristics, which cannot easily be encircled under the header of language – not to mention speech – yet are inevitable considerations within writing. Their semiological relationship to language is thus not uniform but heterogeneous.

In noting the syntactic necessity for alphabetic characters to be clearly differentiated, Goodman manifests that writing is neither transparent nor invisible to him. Yet, how does he arrive at a position in which writing has again lost its visibility? He probably does not arrive there, but sets out from there. In terming literature and poetry allographic, he marks them as linguistic events. Sentences, clauses, words and, more closely, letters are units of writing, mere characters of and in language. Again, writing is legible alphabetic language, not visibly written. Allographs are all possible forms and alternatives (graphs or glyphs) of a letter or other grapheme (Fig. 2):



Figure 2. A number of glyphs or graphs that function as allographs of the letter <a>

Hence, all possible graphs of the letter <a> indicate but one character and are interchangeable, whether minuscule, majuscule, uncial, cursive, italicized, superscript, subscript, black letter, Gothic, single story, double story, with exit strokes, without, calligraphed, cacographed, drawn, typed, printed and so forth. Goodman observes that in a notational symbol scheme all marks of a character are interchangeable, viz. there is “character-indifference” between the graphs of a character (1976: 132). Consequently, as long as graphs remain legibly assigned to a specific grapheme, Goodman is indifferent to their visibility. To assign literary writing (that does not also purport to be a drawing or painting) the category of allographic art is therefore not a deductive conclusion, but predetermined by Goodman’s application of the linguistic principle, which rules out a priori, not only any possible significance in the graphic qualities of texts, and any heterogeneity between language, speech and writing, but also that any verbal text could ever have been considered for the autographic category. This prearranged *conclusion* may perhaps be abbreviated to its implicit tautology: writing, which is allographic, is also a non-autographic art.

This analysis permits us to understand that any linguistic or literary approach to writing that disregards the graphic qualities of a text is concerned with *allographic writing* that recognizes texts as language events but conversely cannot account for the visibility and legibility of writing inside and outside of language. To satisfactorily address the multiple motions which Pettibon’s writing – as script and text – offers, requires a reading-viewing that considers the graphic visibility of texts beyond an allographic notion of legibility. *Allographic reading*, a seemingly translatory practice that transliterates all graphs of corresponding allographs into the unitary value of one resultant grapheme, is visually only concerned with a(llographic) legibility that does not account for graphic qualities. This should not be misunderstood as advocacy for a revitalisation of graphology or the establishment of a new typology but to acknowledge the irreducibility of writing to linguistic events. Similarly, the difficulty of reading and seeing writing, which assumes contingencies and characteristics similar to *other graphic* practices, is an insufficient reason to ignore the impact of visible *traits*. Whilst writing has allographic characteristics, which make it legible as language, it is irreducible to these. The differential quality of the *graphic mark marks* writing both inside and outside of language. In *regarding* the visibility of writing with indifference, or more precisely by not *regarding* the visibility of writing, we are *disregarding* its semantic and syntactical import and are thus not fully reading the text. The auralty or orality of reading this kind of

writing could be similarly investigated. Had Pettibon inscribed his page with a lowercase we would have found him decapitated. i beheaded I. Capital punishment. Prone on the ground. A little head a little ahead. The microcephalic toppling the phallic.

The pervasive complexity of the inherent conflict between the need to read writing and the implicit, overlapping, and in part contradictory necessity to see it, is even perceptible in two earlier examples, although both authors had themselves drawn attention to the visual qualities of texts. Strictly speaking, Roudiez' notion that some signs can "point away from the material body of writing that they constitute" whilst others point towards it (Roudiez 1978: 232), cannot be upheld once we accept that writing is constituted both visibly and legibly. Rather than pointing away, signs can perhaps – to return to Goodman's term – be indifferent to the graphic materiality of writing and mark themselves as allographic writing by being open to any imaginable allographic visibility. Similarly, despite Lapacherie's attempt to remain a clinical observer of typographic history, he notes in the aforementioned quote, that it requires "typographic artifices" to awaken the reader to become a viewer (Lapacherie 1994: 64). What is a typographic artifice? When does non-artifice typography trail into artifice typography? If there is typographic artifice, whom should psychiatric professionals examine today? Is "italicisation" more or less of an artifice than *inverted commas*? Arguably, language as an arbitrary system is artifice full stop. It would therefore be difficult to determine what convention makes writing more or less artificial. Lapacherie is careful to analyse the chasm between legibility and visibility but even he cannot avoid wanting to read a text allographically. Notwithstanding, Lapacherie also notes that typography possesses the heterogeneity of a system that on the one hand replaces language by a sign, yet on the other exhibits signs that have no – or no clear – referent.

Capitals A, B, or E, among others, do not have the same design as their corresponding lower cases: a, b, e [...]. From a semiological point of view, punctuation marks, underlining, numbers, blanks (and other typographic devices) are very different from letters and stand at the opposite pole from the alphabet. They do not replace any unit of language. They have no value (in the sense that they do not stand for a unit), but they signal a meaning, a rupture, a hierarchy, an analysis. As a result, a printed text which retains punctuation marks, blanks, upper cases, etc. [...], cannot be uniform because it is made up of heterogeneous signs (Lapacherie 1994: 69).

To understand graphic qualities as constituents of writing's signs is to recognize the physicality of writing which exists and asserts itself within, without, and despite of language. Indeed the language of typographic



signs is the language of drawing and graphic marks, after all, we talk of: dash, stroke, underline, ellipsis, hash, rule, asterisk, obelus, circumflex, highlight.<sup>3</sup>

Accordingly, there is a difference, however no clear distinction, even less an insurmountable border, between the visibility and legibility of writing. As Michel Butor reiterates, as soon as verbal text enters the rectangular frame of the page, it is inevitably also constituted as image (Butor 1994: 18). Therefore, any actual, existing difference between legibility and visibility of verbal signs should nevertheless, not be confused with any rigid permanence or impermeability (ibid.: 18). Visibility and legibility, like Derrida's *Riss und Zug*, are paralleling each other to meet in infinity.

[They] confirm each other, notch each other and each signs in some way in the body of the other, the one in the place of the other. They sign there the contract without contract of their neighborhood (Derrida 2007: 74).

What separates and connects the two neighbours, Derrida calls the *trait*. In it is marked their difference, but rather than being just the cut between two "adversaries [...] it attracts adversity toward the unity of a contour [...] a frame, [and] framework" (Derrida 2007: 78). The adversity attracted between the legibility and visibility of writing concerns the shape and form – as well as the process of shaping and forming – and the combination of alphabetic (and typographic) character, the *ductus litterarum*. For visibility, the ductus (literally "leading") is semantically and syntactically significant. For strictly linguistic legibility however, ductus only decides on allographic assignation, ultimately between illegibility and legibility. Indeed, if writing is contingent on the faithful reproduction "of an established set of signs [...] 'sanctioned' [...] by various authorities, from school on", it always teeters on the edge of illegibility (Reid 1994: 6). Language, recognizable as writing, but allographically illegible, leaves visibility alone, redrawing the writing-drawing relation.

Illegible writing indicates in fact that the sign has been remorsefully eaten away by its own figurative nature, and that it does indeed take almost nothing at all for the figure to resort back to its status as a mere drawing (Reid 1994: 6).

<sup>3</sup> Hatch is suggested as etymological origin for hash, circumflex translates the Greek perispōmenos "drawn around". Notable also is the physicality (although not necessarily related to drawing) that is bound up in letterpress terminology: type (from tuptein, "to strike"), font (from fondre "to melt"), leading (from the chemical element), strike(through), etc. More recent additions to the typographic toolbox display the same attachment to printmaking's and drawing's materiality: outline type, drop shadow, emboss type, engrave type etc.

It is thus perhaps in writing's interest not only to be legible but also, threatened by illegibility, to impugn its own visibility. Ductus in writing, as in drawing, "*describe[s] the movement of a gesture and inscribe[s it] in the trace it yields*", its "quality, tone and dynamic" becomes part of the semantics and syntax of the *script* (Ingold 2007: 128, italics in original). The navigation of the pen across the page is then the description of its (own) journey along the edge of illegibility as inscription on the page. If *led* too close to the edge, ductus crosses the line to dys-scription, a *bad* writing in which writing has begun the description of its own dis-scription, it works towards an *un*-writing of writing. Crossing the edge to linguistic illegibility, the line however remains as description of a dis-scription of writing's legibility. Many genitives inscribe themselves in the line of writing. The line as inscription of its own description. Description of its inscription. Inscription of its dis-scription. Description of its dis-scription. Dis-scription of its inscription. However not, dis-scription of description. Neither will it ever be completely dis-scribed, for as long as it inscribes itself as dis-scription it will be the rem(a)inder of its own description. The *il*-legibility that cannot assign marks allographically to a particular letter is, therefore not a *without*-legibility or *not*-legibility, describing a lack of legibility, but rather the excess of too many contingent legibilities that inscribe themselves as a line traced between writing and drawing.

What we then recognize in Pettibon's I that refuses to be an <i> is a Derridean *trait*; the stroke, trace, feature that draws and writes but also graphic rem(a)inder that bridges and divides writing and drawing and cannot be contained by either of them (Derrida 1987: *passim*; 1993: *passim*; 2007: *passim*). It breaks the truce of the their co-mingling, their normally easily differentiated nature. Pettibon's I is Derrida's

rebel to appeased commerce, to the regulated exchange of the two elements (lexical and pictural), close to piercing a hole in the *arthron* of discursive writing and representational painting, is this not a wild, almost unnarratable event? (Derrida 1987: 160)

This rebellious I remains unrepresentable to drawing's picturality because with every new glance the "glottic thrust of reading" (Derrida 1987: 160) wants to enunciate it, wants to pull it back into discourse, where it cannot remain either, being similarly irreducible to it. The trait that marks I, also marks the attraction (*at-trait*) and traction between legibility and visibility. "[T]he *trait*, it induces, precisely, *duction*, and even the 'ductus'" (ibid.: 192, italics in original). The duction that *leads* and *draws* (*dūcĕre*) the *untitled's* production, induction, seduction, conduction sooner or later its inevitable abduction and reduction by this not "ductile enough" discourse

(ibid.: 195). Notwithstanding, this will not have been the last attempt of discursivity to draw a bead at, draw in and then draw the line under an I that withdraws (*re-trait*) from being an *«i»*. The I's *silence* on the matter of its I-ness, although it is already

full of virtual discourses, [...] is all the more powerful because it is silent, and that carries within it, as does the aphorism, a discursive virtuality that is infinitely authoritarian [...]. Thus it can be said that the greatest logocentric power resides in the work's silence, and liberation from this authority resides on the side of discourse, a discourse that is going to relativize things, emancipate itself, refuse to kneel in front of the authority represented [...]. (Derrida 1994: 13)

Self-reflexively, this text itself is then also inevitably an attempt to capture the pictural of the I (and other texts) and to return it to a discursive centre, where it can be contained and silenced by speaking for it and about it. The logocentric desire to command and restrain the differential trait that draws on and describes the border of the verbal and the pictural also permeates every word on this page.

In Pettibon's hands, writing may be shown to possess pictural qualities, which are syntactically and semantically *significant* for writing's *signification*; a conclusion, which bears import for our general understanding of writing. Although, any attempt to articulate the shifting effect that graphic characteristics of writing produce is bound to be persistently insufficient and incomplete, it is perhaps preferable to an allographic linguistics that conflates writing and speech, inevitably disregarding relevant traits of written texts. A belief in the transcendent value of logos, which seeks to locate meaning exclusively outside the materiality of the mark that signifies, is equally inconsistent with the observations made in and through Pettibon's work. And finally, by exploring the relationship between writing's legibility and visibility through Derrida's trait, it has been possible to propose a flexible, non-binary, non-exclusive reconsideration of the two terms and to highlight the graphic multiplicity and reciprocities of writing.

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<https://doi.org/10.18778/8220-191-8.08>

## From Broken Communication to the Technique of (Linguistic) *Anamorphosis*. Edwin Morgan's Concrete Poetry<sup>1</sup>

*Like perspectives which rightly gaz'd upon  
show nothing but confusion; ey'd awry  
distinguish form*

William Shakespeare

### Concrete Poetry as *Arrière Garde*

121

In one of the first concrete poetry manifestos, "From Line to Constellation", Gomringer (1954) proposed that poetry might offer a strictly non-individualistic approach to the fundamental elements of language. In Gomringer's terms, concrete poetry would constitute "a reality in itself and not a poem about something or other" (qtd. in Solt 1970: 67). "Perceived visually as a whole as well as in its parts", this sort of elementary textual composition was conceived of as "an arrangement, and at the same time a play-area of fixed dimensions" (qtd. in Solt 1970: 67), within which the reader's eye could freely roam – or "play" – across its extra-linear structure. Emphasizing its formal, material qualities, Gomringer's subsequent manifesto, "Concrete Poetry" (1956), specified that the concrete poem should function first and foremost as "a linguistic structure" rather than as "a valve for the release of all sorts of emotions and ideas" (qtd. in Solt 1970: 67–68).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A substantially expanded version of this essay was published in Monika Kocot, *Playing Games of Sense in Edwin Morgan's Writing*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> To some extent, then, concrete poetry anticipates the equally linguistic structural values advocated by Roland Barthes in the mid sixties in essays such as "The Death of

As Bense puts it, concrete poetry “produces neither the semantic nor the aesthetic sense of its elements, words for example, through the traditional formation of linear and grammatically ordered contexts, but which insists upon visual and surface connectives” (qtd. in Solt 1970: 73). The word is not used primarily as an intentional carrier of meaning, but as a material element of construction. “Simultaneity of the semantic and aesthetic functions of words”, Bense observes, “occurs on the basis of simultaneous exploitation of all the material dimensions of the linguistic elements which, of course, can also appear to be broken into syllables, sounds, morphemes or letters to express the aesthetic dependence of the language upon their analytical and syntactical possibilities. In this sense it is the constructive principle of concrete poetry alone which uncovers the material wealth of language” (qtd. in Solt 1970: 73).

The “extra-linear” or non-linear character of concrete poetry, combined with non-individualistic approach to language, let alone decontextualisation “policy”, might suggest that the relationships functioning within imagery/ construal of linear poetry are going to be questioned and eventually suspended.

In “Pilot Plan For Concrete Poetry” we read that concrete poetry can be classified as either dynamic or static, representational or nonrepresentational; some poems may be seen as passive exercises or as active demonstrations. The large body of Morgan’s concrete texts might be seen as a rich collection of all these forms, together with various hybrid forms one can think of. In *Nothing Not Giving Messages: Reflections on Work and Life*, Morgan speaks of his idea of blurring the boundaries between poetry and painting, sculpture, advertising, music (1990: 256). Similarly to other (especially Brazilian) concretists, he sees concrete poetry as fundamentally indebted to experimental modernism (Kocot 2016b: 79). Interestingly, the (inextricable) links between modernist avant-garde poetics and concrete poetry as the second avant-garde, are also explored by contemporary historians and theoreticians of literature. Let us look at two examples. In the introduction to *Les arrière gardes au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, William Marx discusses the concept of the avant-garde and he makes clear that it is inconceivable without *arrière garde*, a “hidden face of modernity” (2004: 6). His ideas are further developed by Marjorie Perloff who devotes one chapter of her *Unoriginal Genius: Poetry by Other Means in the New Century* to a comparative study of the two avant-gardes. In her opinion,

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the Author” (1968), in which Barthes also more or less claimed that texts were play-areas of fixed dimensions, where “everything is to be disentangled, but nothing deciphered”.

concrete movement, or *arrière garde*, might be thought of as “bringing up the rear” (Bell 2012) of modernism:<sup>3</sup>

In military terms, the rear guard of the army is the part that protects and consolidates the troop movement in question; often the army’s best generals are placed there. When an *avant-garde* movement is no longer a novelty, it is the role of the *arrière-garde* to complete its mission, to ensure its success (Perloff 2010: 53).

For Perloff, concrete poetry was at the same time *arrière-garde* and formally innovative, with its own agenda(s) and radical/ subversive energy<sup>4</sup> (Kocot 2016b: 79). As Barthes puts it, “Être d’avant-garde, c’est savoir ce qui est mort; être d’arrière garde, c’est l’aimer encore” [“To be *avant-garde* is to know that which has died. To be *arrière garde*, is to continue to love it”] (qtd. in Marx 2004: 99).

Morgan was surely drawn to modernist *avant-gardes*: to the ideograms of Pound and Fenollosa, Marinetti’s *parole in libertà* and to Russian modernists: Vasily Kamensky’s “ferroconcrete poems”, Ilya Zdanevich’s and Velimir Khlebnikov’s *zaum*, as well as Vladimir Mayakovsky’s language poetry. But, at the same time, he saw the concrete as connected with the here-and-now and fast-travelling communication:

I’m interested in concrete poetry as an extension of technique. It’s a new instrument which you have to learn to play. You have to find out what it can do and what it can’t do. As a language it can be very dense and compressed or very light and delicate, and yet both of these different characteristics are held within a common ideogrammatic quality which seems peculiarly right at the present time. I mean that it’s a system of signs, of striking and uncluttered flashes of language which find their place in a world of multiplex and speeded-up communications (Glasgow University Special Collections Acc 4848 / Box 69 Concrete / Sound Poetry).

123

<sup>3</sup> The point here is that whereas the Surrealists were concerned with “new” artistic content – dreamwork, fantasy, the unconscious, political revolution – the concrete movement always emphasized the transformation of materiality itself. Hence the chosen pantheon included Futurist artworks and *Finnegans Wake*, Joaquim de Sousa Andrade’s pre-Modernist collage masterpiece *The Inferno of Wall Street* (1877), and the musical compositions of Anton Webern, Pierre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and John Cage (Perloff 2010: 67–68).

<sup>4</sup> Commenting on the paradoxical nature of concrete poetry, Perloff writes:

Here is the important distinction between *avant-* and *arrière-garde*. The original *avant-garde* was committed not to recovery but discovery, and it insisted that the aesthetic of its predecessors – say, of the poets and artists of the 1890s – was “finished”. But by midcentury the situation was very different. Because the original and *avant-gardes* had never really been absorbed into the artistic and literary mainstream, the “postmodern” demand for total rupture was always illusory. Haroldo de Campos, following Augusto’s lead, explains that the concrete movement began as rebellion – “We wanted to free poetry from subjectivism and the expressionistic vehicle” of the then poetic mode (Perloff 2010: 67).



Morgan also connects the art of concrete with the future and scientific developments. Concrete poetry, he writes, “is definitely post-existentialist, it’s reacting against the world of Kafka and Eliot and Camus and Sartre. It’s more interested in Yuri Gagarin and Marshall McLuhan. It looks forward with a certain confidence. It sees a probable coming together of art and science in ways that might benefit both” (Glasgow University Special Collections Acc 4848 / Box 69 Concrete / Sound Poetry).<sup>5</sup> As Eleanor Bell aptly notices, “it was therefore this forward and, simultaneously, backward looking nature of concrete poetry which offered Morgan [...] a new aesthetic with which to challenge ‘well-known insularity’ on the one hand and to explore new forms of spatiality on the other” (Bell 2012: 113). And if he praised Khlebnikov and Mayakovsky for their mind-bending imagery and juxtaposition, inventive use of word and sound in every device of onomatopoeia, alliteration, assonance and dissonance, pun and palindrome, morphological play and dislocation, then we surely find all that in his concrete experiments.

If, as David Kilburn asserts, concrete poetry “does not refer to any consciousness and is not concerned with worlds or experience, real or imaginary and is thus not ontological” (1996: 10), then the connection with mindscapes, human or otherwise, of Morgan’s poetic work might show the exact opposite. Morgan sees concrete poetry as related to concrete human experience and is not concerned with its potential for producing non semantic or abstract patterns, and even if he occasionally uses such patterns he does so in order to achieve an overall semantic purpose; he sees the concrete “as an instrument of immediate communication: a flash; a blush; a burst; a curse; a kiss; a hiss; a hit; a jot; a joke; a poke; a peek; a plea; an ABC. An instrument of communication, but also an instrument of pleasure” (Glasgow

<sup>5</sup> For McLuhan, as for Morgan, verbivocovisual experimentation was inextricably linked to changes in the world “outside” of the text, to the new media of communication. Morgan’s archives from this time show that he shared many views with McLuhan:

Marshall McLuhan describes [...] the movement away from the printed book, away from the linear, towards a more “open”, instantaneous, spatial experience which technology has presented us with in newspaper and radio, film, TV, advertising, and in computers which offer us a kind of extension of human consciousness [...]. He says. “All the new media, including the press, are *art forms* that have the power of imposing, *like poetry*, their own assumptions. The new media are not ways of relating us to the old “real” world; they *are* the real world, and they reshape what remains of the old world at will”. (*Explorations in Communication* (1960). – This, I think is relevant to concrete poetry. The concrete poem isn’t meant to be something you would come across as you turned the pages of a book. It would rather be an object that you passed every day on your way to work, to school or factory, it would be in life, in space, concretely *there* (Special Collection Acc 4848 / Box 69).

University Special Collections Acc 4848 / Box 69). Despite the Brazilian call “against the poetry of expression”, Morgan points out that “expressionisms, individualisms, and romanticisms move in and out of concrete poetry and have to be reckoned with” (1974: 24). He acknowledges, and certainly affirms, a great range of effects in concrete poetry from “warm” to “cold”. He finds some of the poems humorous and witty; some of them he deems stark and hermetic; he mentions political, religious, mathematical, sculptural poems; he affirms those two- and three-dimensional, those abstracts concrete forms such as animals, and those which concretise abstract forms such as grammatical relationships. Morgan sees most his verbivocovisual experiments on the “warm” side of the concrete (Glasgow University Special Collection 4848/21). He notices a peculiar correspondence between his own work and that of Ian Hamilton Finlay, and suggests that his humour and Finlay boats “may be of some use, both tying concrete to certain bollards of human life and human pleasure” (qtd. in McGonigal 2012: 156).

## Broken Communication?

Broken communication as a cultural phenomenon is undeniably one of the major themes in Morgan’s writing, and some of his best known poems exploit it, humorously in “The Computer’s First Christmas Card” (Morgan 1996: 177), “The Computer’s Second Christmas Card” (Morgan 1996: 142), “First Men on Mercury” (Morgan 1996: 267), “Canedolia”, or “Loch Ness Monster’s Song” (Morgan 1996: 248), and more seriously in the *Emergent Poems*.

*Emergent Poems*, as Morgan calls them, exemplify the poet’s predilection towards playing games with quotations taken from well-known texts of culture. Amongst “emergent” poems, there are “written through” versions of passages from Dante’s *Inferno* (“Nightmare”), Robert Burns’s “To a Mouse” (“Dialeck Piece”), Bertold Brecht’s “Von der Kindesmörderin Marie Farrar” (“Plea”), Rimbaud’s “Une Saison en Enfe” (“Seven Headlines”), or even *Communist Manifesto*. The poems’ final lines, quotations from Dante, Burns, Brecht, and Rimbaud, are in the original Italian, Scots, French and German, respectively, while that from the *Communist Manifesto* is in Russian (though Morgan uses the Roman alphabet); all the poems which emerge are in English. Interestingly, “Message Clear” is written entirely in English, with its concluding line taken from the *Gospel of John* chapter 11, and it would seem to offer no visible challenge for the reader. Its title (which can read “message received”,

“message checked”, “message confirmed”, or obviously “simple message”) suggests that the message is clear, but in close reading – and it also applies to other “emergent” texts – more and more previously omitted elements reappear as it were, which in turn might change the readers’ perception as well as their projections concerning the message of the poems as such. In “emergent” poems Morgan explores the limits of communicativeness and, by transgressing them, he “makes the message clear” to the skilful reader.<sup>6</sup>

“The Computer’s First Christmas Card” (below) and “The Computer’s Second Christmas Card” concern the “relations that will exist between computer creativity and human creativity, the challenge to the second from the first” (Morgan 1990: 258). “The Computer’s First Christmas Card” with its open spacing, and giddy warping columns of Ys and clusters of consonants, festively celebrates the machine’s movement toward producing its Christmas card. It makes use of a formal grid: there are 35 lines consisting of 10 letters; in each line there are two words, each of which having consonant-vowel-double-consonant-y; and at the same time it suggests that the machine is scanning a semantic “store”, all the words (for instance “jolly”, “holly”, “merry”, “berry”, “happy”, “jelly” “belly”) are somehow related to Christmas cheer (Morgan 1990: 258).

It goes without saying that the poem is goal-seeking, and it is equally certain that it misses its goal – even though from the poem’s very beginning we are expecting the machine to produce “Merry Christmas”, and even though we find lines such as “merry merry / merry merry / merry Chris”, when we finally reach the end of the poem we find MERRY CHRYSANTHEMUM. Given the joyful quality of the poem, it would be difficult to agree with Jo Allen Bradham who projects quite baleful (as the title of his article suggests) quality on it: “Obliterating Christ, the techno-voice sends greeting divorced from Christmas and Christ but definitely connected with someone called Chris who joins jolly Molly, merry Harry, and merry Barry in a secular merry merry of some sort” (1987: 51). The way I see it, the computer’s failure in producing the expected message points to a need of changing the perspective. When adopting a lateral perspective, we may notice that the lack of standard “Merry Christmas” is substituted with the machine’s discovery of an acceptable equivalent: the chrysanthemum as a symbolic good luck flower, and also as a flower one might buy or give at Christmas.

<sup>6</sup> My in-depth analysis of the text can be found in “From Anaphoresis to Metaphoresis. Scene-graphs in Edwin Morgan’s ‘Message Clear’” (Kocot 2012: 125–138), and in *Playing Games of Sense in Edwin Morgan’s Writing* (Kocot 2016b: 55–75).

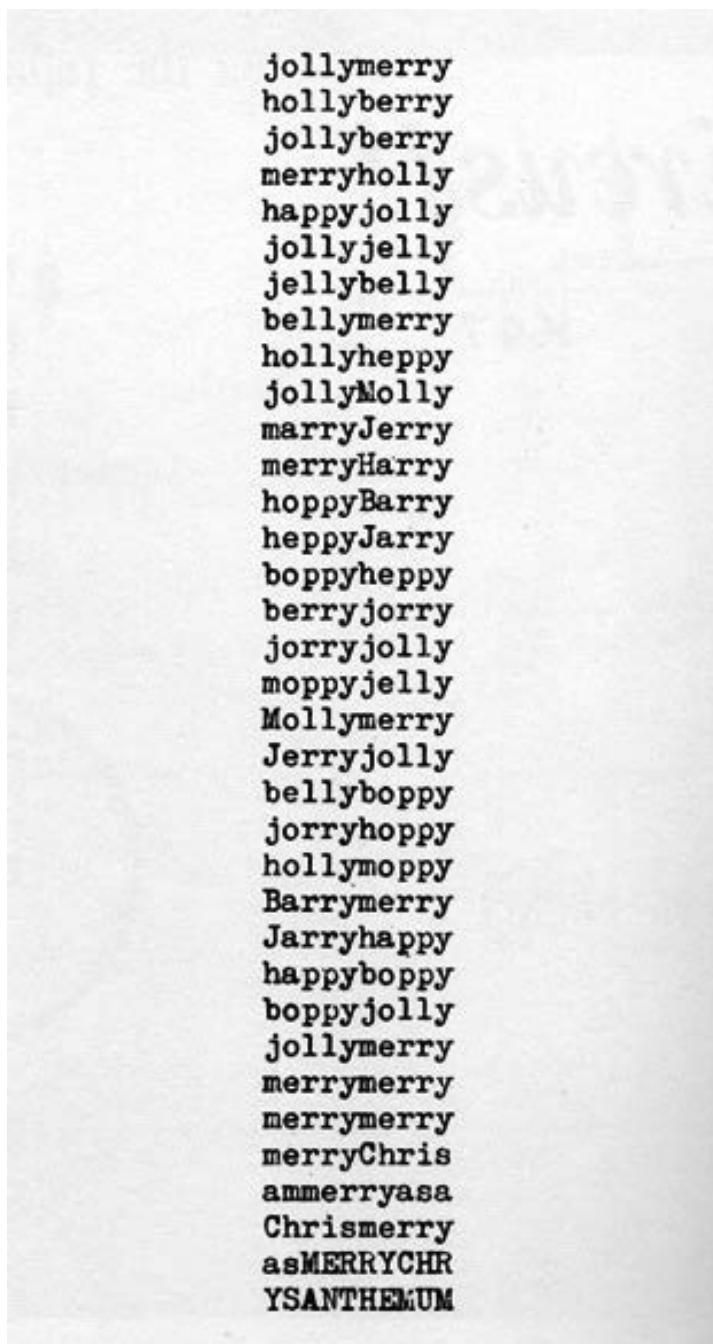


Figure 1. Edwin Morgan 1996: 177

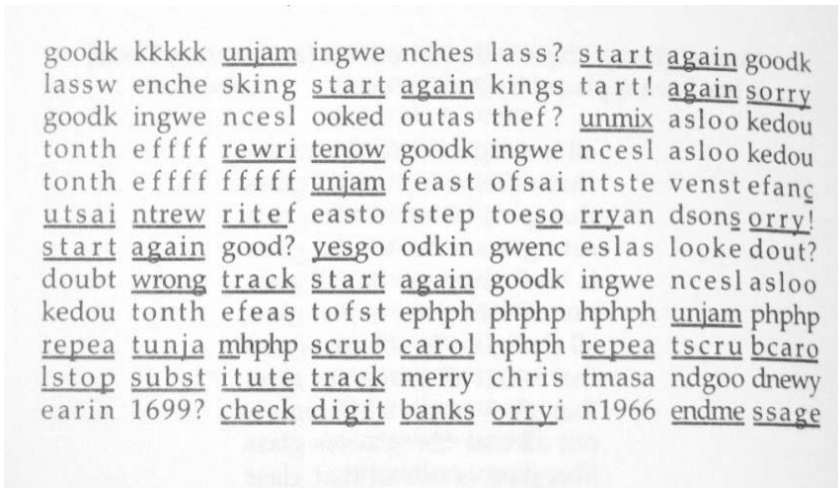


Figure 2. Edwin Morgan 1996: 142

In "Computer's Second Christmas Card" (above), Morgan replaces "carefree vertical streamers" (Edgecombe 2003: 105) of the first card with a more horizontal composition, with nine columns each consisting of 5 letters / signs. The reading of the poem makes sense only when we read it from left to write in a linear fashion. But even then we notice that the poem's movements are as Edgecombe puts is "full of neurotic crunches and fussy self-revisions" (2003: 105). Whether these crunches are neurotic or simply playful games with the readers' expectations quite obviously depends on the attitude of the individual. In my opinion, the goal-seeking columnar enjambment, where the words are almost always breaking in the wrong places, foregrounds not the neurotic obsession with failure but rather the idea of openness to constructing meaning despite the obstacles on the way – the computer, as Morgan explains, has to find the carol Good King Wenceslas,<sup>7</sup> and even though the assignment appears to be a bit problematic, the computer does not surrender: "goodk kkkkk unjam ingwe nches lass? start again goodk / lassw enche sking start again kings

<sup>7</sup> The carol is a 19<sup>th</sup> century translation of a Czech poem from the Catholic Bohemia. One can find traces of the first stanza of the carol in the poem:

Good King Wenceslas looked out  
On the feast of Stephen  
When the snow lay round about  
Deep and crisp and even  
Brightly shone the moon that night  
Though the frost was cruel  
When a poor man came in sight  
Gath'ring winter fuel.

tart! again sorry". The computer's self revisions ("with just a touch of semantic voluntarism in the outriders on Steptoe and Son, good-class wenches", 1990: 258) are very amusing indeed: "start again good? yesgo odkin gwenc eslas looke dout? / doubt wrong track start again". We can notice here the truly dialogical nature of the message – the computer asks questions ("good?") and provides answers ("yes") which, as we can see, make the poem going; additionally, the computer engages in sound games as in "looke dout? / doubt" and metatextual comments ("wrong track start again"). At some point the computer experiences some mechanical faults and decides to create a straight Christmas greeting ("lstop subst itute track merry chris tmasa") which nevertheless gets wrong until finally corrected "(tmasa ndgoo dnewy / earin 1699? check digit banks orryi n1966 endme ssage". But why does Morgan's column consist of five letters, one might ask, why not four or six? The answer can be found in Morgan's notes: "since the message here involved a narrative and not a mere phrase, I set it out in the conventional five-letter pattern used for coded messages" (1990: 259). This short quotation testifies to the fact that for Morgan the content and the form of a poetic text, even a short and insignificant one, should not be separated from its philosophy, in this case the philosophy of coded messages.

## Looking Awry

The concept of "encoding" messages and composing seemingly unintelligible texts brings me to the practice of anamorphosis,<sup>8</sup> which, as Slavoj Žižek observes, is "the element that, when viewed straightforwardly, remains a meaningless stain, but which, as soon as we look at the picture

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<sup>8</sup> The term is derived from the Greek prefix *ana-*, meaning back or again, and the word *morphe*, meaning shape or form. The most informative monograph on *anamorphosis* is undoubtedly Jurgis Baltrušaitis's *Les perspectives depraves – anamorphoses ou Thaumaturgus opticus*. When defining *anamorphosis*, Baltrušaitis quotes Diderot's *Encyclopédie*. I will refer to *Cyclopaedia, or an Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences* which gives the following definition of the term: "in perspective and painting, a monstrous projection; or a representation of some image, either on a plane or curve surface, deformed; which at a certain distance shall appear regular, and in proportion" (Chambers 1728: 84). In his insightful *Pragnienie obecności: Filozofie reprezentacji od Platona do Kartezjusza*, Michał Paweł Markowski devotes one of the chapters to the theme of anamorphosis, and, what seems to be of great value, he pictures it within a whole array of techniques of representation, beginning with Plato and ending with Descartes (who was an ardent practitioner of anamorphic deformations, as can be seen in his *Dioptrics*).

from a precisely determined lateral perspective, all of a sudden acquires well-known contours" (1992: 90).<sup>9</sup> By carefully studying Morgan's *Emergent Poems*, we can observe how the poems are not only about written words or letters, but first and foremost the empty slots between letters and words, waiting for the reader to activate the hidden potential meanings of words and phrases. The reader is expected to pursue a processual interpretation of the category of visible / invisible, featured / non-featured, present / absent. Morgan employs here the technique of *anamorphosis* due to which the meanings of overt and hidden text may be questioned, de-constructed / re-constructed.

Markowski observes that *anamorphosis* can also refer to a given, modelled kind of cognitive perspective as well as its representations in external objects (1999: 189–200). Ślósarska adds that in literary texts, the technique of *anamorphosis* is usually realised along with techniques of animisation and anthropomorphisation of objects, but also together with the technique of metamorphosis of a given element of representation. Viewed in a wider perspective, the technique of *anamorphosis* stands as a peculiar element of the poetics of point of view (Ślósarska 2005: 72), and it might be referred to as a conceptual *anamorphosis*.

In 1970, Morgan publishes a series of poems called *The Horseman's Word*; the title of the collection is quite telling, as it refers to the ancient language understood between beasts and men (McGonigal 2012: 4). And it would seem *The Horseman's Word* presents a cross-cultural journey – within its small space the series of horse poems ranges across Scottish, Norse, North American, Greek, English and Hungarian sounds, images and myths. In an interview with Marshal Walker, Edwin Morgan remarked: "[a]nimals are also a part of the environment: they are there and why should the poet not try to give them voice, as it were. I think a lot of my poetry is either a straight or in some disguised form dramatic monologue, and I quite often do try to give an animal a voice just as I might give an

<sup>9</sup> In order to show the workings of *anamorphosis*, Žižek refers to one of the most recognisable examples of anamorphic gaze – Holbein's *Ambassadors* (1533):

At the bottom of the picture, under the figures of the two ambassadors, a viewer catches sight of an amorphous, extended, "erected" spot. It is only when, on the very threshold of the room in which the picture is exposed, the visitor casts a final lateral glance at it that this spot acquires the contours of a skull, disclosing thus the true meaning of the picture – the nullity of all terrestrial goods, objects of art and knowledge that fill out the rest of the picture [...] nothing is what it seems to be, everything is to be interpreted, everything is supposed to possess some supplementary meaning. The ground of the established, familiar signification opens up; we find ourselves in a realm of total ambiguity, but this very lack propels us to produce ever new "hidden meanings" (Žižek 1992: 90–91).

object a voice as in 'The Apple's Song',<sup>10</sup> just to get *everything* speaking, as it were" (Morgan 1990: 77). And the concept of "getting *everything* speaking" certainly informs Morgan's lateral perspective of looking at the world; every creature and even every object may at some point be given voice and thus change the way we humans perceive our environment; in some poems, Morgan's *anamorphosis*, understood literally or conceptually, works as a catalyst, it successfully challenges our projections of the world we live in. We will come back to this theme in the latter part of this essay and now will focus our attention on the anamorphic dramatic monologues.

In "Centaur", one can sense a real development through the repetition, as well as the punning and palindromic effects within the words that, in Marshall Walker's view, dramatise a mounting frustration and anger (Morgan 1990: 61). For Morgan, the poem is "a kind of dramatic monologue, like 'Message Clear,' it's 'Thoughts of a Centaur,' if you like" (Morgan 1990: 61).

och och  
laich loch  
hoch heich  
moch smeuch  
sauch souch  
rouch pech  
teuch skreich  
each oidhche  
stech eneuch

131

(Edwin Morgan 1996: 211)

As the thoughts of the centaur are paradoxical ("i am, horse / unhorse") it is hard to sort them out, but, as Morgan suggests, "there could very well also be a kind of agony and I think [...] this does come in the end where perhaps it moves towards being more a statement or cry from the human part of the centaur" (Morgan 1990: 61). It is interesting to notice Morgan's anamorphic (in the sense of the anthropomorphisation of the horse) perspective in the psychological drama which is so carefully controlled and economical in its use of words. We guess that we are listening to the cry of a man who is partly horse rather than a horse which is partly man,

<sup>10</sup> Who knows what apple thinks! We don't really know – it doesn't give signs of thinking, but because we don't get signs of what an animal or a plant or a fruit is really thinking, I don't think we are entitled to just switch off and say it's not feeling or thinking. I like the idea particularly that we're surrounded by messages that we perhaps out to be trying to interpret (Morgan 1990: 131).



as the man, it seems, would be more conscious of the animal part of him. But when at the end of the poem the speaker cries out “unhorse me!” we get the sense of the real drama of existence – there is no escape from the situation, the two creatures are one.<sup>11</sup> The oppressive limitation having its source within the creature is expressed also in the poem’s typography: “Centaur” is in the shape of a long rectangle, or metaphorically speaking a deep and narrow well; the speaker’s cry visually “lying” at the bottom of the rectangle-well seems to foreground the idea of his crying out from the depth of his being; it is a dramatic cry for help (from the outside), but at the same time the shape of the poem suggests that his chances of gaining freedom as an individual are rather slim.

But a real anamorphic treat, especially for someone with a good command of Scots is “Kelpie” (Morgan 1996: 211); the poem speaks of a Lowland Scots water-spirit usually appearing as a horse:

i am, horse  
unhorse, me  
i am, horse  
unhorse, me  
i am, horse  
unhorse, me  
i am, horse  
unhorse, me  
i am, horse  
unhorse, me  
i am, horse  
unhorse, me  
i am, horse  
unhorse, me  
i am horse:  
unhorse me!

(Edwin Morgan 1996: 210)

There are two one-syllable words arranged in nine lines which viewed as a whole form a sort of a diagonal. The first line introduces a surprising element (“och och”), and as each line is more indented than the preceding one, we literally and metaphorically speaking step into the mythical realm. The variations on a distinctively Scottish fricative in the form of playful onomatopoeia witness as it were a scene from the myth: in the middle of the night (“each oidhche”) we find ourselves in the misty atmosphere, with mystical energy in the air (“moch smeuch”), and we witness a strange phenomenon – to the sound of rushing water,

<sup>11</sup> See Morgan 1990: 61.

a panting, untamed creature (“sauch souch”) unexpectedly moves in the water, and possibly, emerges from the loch. The shape of the poem might then reflect Kelpie’s movements in and above the water. As the poem’s reception relies on Scots meanings, I have decided to quote Nicholson’s list of translated words to facilitate the reading (obviously, it is merely one way of deciphering the meaning, and the reader is free to create his / her own images within the poem): “laich = low-lying; hoch = hindquarters; heich = high; moch = misty atmosphere; smeuch = energy; sauch = tough; souch = sound of rushing water; rouch = untamed; pech = panting; teuch = vigorous; skreich = screech; oidhche = (Gaelic) night; stech = gorged; eneuch = enough” (Nicholson 2002: 93).

Scottish folklore and another instance of anamorphic gaze can be found in “The Loch Ness Monster’s Song” (Morgan 1996: 248). This poem, or a song, is an example of quite a sophisticated *zaum*-like play of pure sound, and, as the title suggests, the speaking “I” is the Loch Ness Monster him/herself:

Sssnnnwhuffffll?  
Hnwhuffl hhnwfl hnfl hfl?  
Gdroblboblhobngbl gbl gl g g g glbg.  
Drublhafblhafbhabgabhaflhafil fl fl –  
gm grawwww grf grawf awfgm graw gm.  
Hovoplodok – doplodovok – plovodokot-doplodokosh?  
Splgraw fok fok splgrafhatchgabrlgabrl fok splfok!  
Zgra kra gka fok!  
Grof grawff gahf?  
Gombl mbl bl –  
blm plm,  
blm plm,  
blm plm,  
blp.

133

For Morgan, the poem is an example of a performance piece. “It absolutely demands to be read aloud”, he stresses when commenting on the poem’s “imagery.” His expressive performances can be found on YouTube and other websites.<sup>12</sup> Here is what the poet has to say about the structure of the poem and its message:

the way the lines are set out, the spelling, the punctuation are all devised [...] to help the performance [...]. I imagine the creature coming to the surface of the water, looking round the world, expressing his or her views, and sinking back into the loch at the end. I wanted to have the mixture of bubbling, gurgling, plopping sounds

<sup>12</sup> One of such performances can be found here: <http://www.poetryarchive.org/poetryarchive/single Poem.do?poemId=1683> [accessed May 15, 2019].

of water and the deep gruff throaty sounds that a large aquatic monster might be expected to make (Morgan 1990: 255).

The sound-messages and their relation to language creation, but also language deconstruction, is what draws critics to this performance piece. In his insightful analysis of poem, Edgecombe notices that “because combinations of velar plosives and liquids have a phonaesthetic connection with passage of air through water (as in ‘glug’) and bilabial plosives with the sudden expulsion of air (as in ‘burp’)” (2003: 141), it seems that the lake has reduced the monster’s messages to a string of bubbles;<sup>13</sup> in his view, “the consonantal clusters of ‘The Loch Ness Monster’s Song’ draw on this conversion” (Edgecombe 2003: 141). Edgecombe adds that if “a fabulous monster lays claim to a voice, we shouldn’t be surprised that language itself dissolves into a dialect of the irrational” (2003: 141). For W. N. Herbert the song as also a kind of literary dialect, “combining Scots sound-units [...] with those of other languages, principally East European” (1990: 73). As I argue elsewhere, the monster’s song is not written in a dialect, but a language, “and it is not irrational but rather unintelligible, at least to human species” (Kocot 2016b: 118). It is interesting to see how critics respond to Morgan’s sound experimentation. In her article on Morgan’s multilingualism, Hanne Tange appreciates the fusion of linguistic codes through which Morgan creates a sort of world language (Tange 2004: 98), but she immediately adds that “such an absolute amalgamation can only be achieved at the cost of all sense” (2004: 98). Is that so?, one should ask. Agreeing with Tange would immediately imply that English is superior to any other language, especially given the fact that Morgan clearly, and playfully, affirms the non-anthropocentric perspective. The poem seems to celebrate the multiplicity of codes, sounds, moods, and modes of expression. In our reading of the poem, we automatically move beyond conventional sense creation (Kocot 2016b: 118). By listening to Morgan’s performance, we may discover more senses than those we find on the page. We can actually hear the music of what happens. For instance, we can hear the Monster’s melodious soliloquy introduced by the affirmative (“Gdroblboblhobngbl gbl gl g g g g glbgl”, “gm grawwww grf grawf awfgm graw gm”), exclamatory (“Splgraw fok fok splgrafhatchgabrlgabrl fok splfok! / Zgra kra gka fok!”) and interrogative (“Sssnnnwhuffffll? / Hnwhufflhhnnwflhnflhfl?”) (Kocot 2016b: 118). Nessie’s temperamental nature can be noticed in the sudden change of mood, from the initial interest in the world above the water (“Sssnnnwhuffffll? / Hnwhuffl hhnnwfl hnfl hfl?”) to highly expressive sounds of frustration or resentment (“Splgraw

<sup>13</sup> For a more elaborate analysis, see Kocot 2016a: 33–34; Kocot 2016b: 117–119.

fok fok splgrafhatchgabrlgabrl fok splfok! / Zgra kra gka fok!") (Kocot 2016b: 118).

The way Nessie disappears from sight might offer another example of anamorphic sense creation:

Gombl mbl bl –  
blm plm,  
blm plm,  
blm plm,  
blp.

If the typography of these last few lines suggest that the monster slowly sinks back into the lake, the aural design might suggest that Nessie disappears only to appear in another sense. This is where the genius of Morgan's sound instrumentation is fully in operation. As Edgecombe rightly points out, it is impossible to say "blp" without voicing the epenthetic "i" (2003: 141), and once we do so, "blp" transforms into "blip". Seemingly simple cluster "blp" hides as it were the moment where Nessie becomes silent and disappears from sight but suddenly appears on the radar screen (as signalled by the "blip") (Kocot 2016b: 118). Again, Morgan encourages the readers to activate various perspectives of looking at the same scene.

Last but not least, we can see examples of *anamorphosis* in Morgan's *News poems* (Morgan 1996: 117–30). Published in 1987, *News poems* exemplify Morgan's various experiments in anamorphic perspectives, as he poetically recycles cut-outs from newspapers. To my mind, the poems in this collection can be seen as conceptual *anamorphoses*; with each newspaper article / advertisement, Morgan adopts such a perspective that the objects, in our case words, or letters, presented in new light lose their original meaning, and new forms / words / letters appear, and this is how new texts emerge. In the introduction to *News poems*, Morgan presents his poetic objective:

The *News poems* were cut out from newspaper and other ephemeral material, pasted on to sheets of paper, and photographed. Most people have probably had the experience of scanning a newspaper page quickly and taking a message from it quite different from the intended one. I began looking deliberately for such hidden messages and picking out those that had some sort of arresting quality, preferably with the visual or typographical element itself a part of the "point", though this was not always possible. What results is a series of "inventions" both in the old sense of "things found" and in the more usual sense of "things devised". (Morgan 1996: 118)

This technique may have its origin in Morgan's collections of scrapbooks into which he would paste cuttings from various sources,

as McGonigal argues (2012: 41), but all the more important is the idea the “found object” / “found poem”. We might say that this is not an implementation of Pound’s “Make it New!” but Jasper Johns’s “Take an Object. Do something to it. Do something else to it” (Johns 1996: 54).

Morgan composed numerous found poems, and each of them is different; some are concrete, some philosophical, political, there are also literary re-writings. We will now focus on the one which, in all its simplicity, opens more vistas than one would expect. In “Holy Flying Saucer Satori”, Morgan deconstructs an essentialist view concerning seeing a flying saucer, experiencing holiness and Satori (a Buddhist term for awakening, realising one’s true identity, seeing one’s true nature, attaining one’s Buddha-nature):



Figure 3. Edwin Morgan 1974: 63

The poem’s typography resembles the 17<sup>th</sup> century experiments in mirror *anamorphosis*, or possibly the famous Hans Holbein’s *Ambassadors*. The shape of the letters is slightly distorted, they are radiating as it were from the invisible centre below the text; the letters on the left-hand side are set “straight” whereas those which follow are bent diagonally to the right. Given that the title mentions a flying saucer, the poem could be seen as a freeze frame from the video featuring a spinning UFO. Interestingly, whether in film or theatre, a freeze-frame technique is used to emphasise special moments that are considered particularly significant. In “Holy Flying Saucer Satori” we are certainly dealing with such a moment. Morgan constructs the title as a cognitive amalgam consisting of three elements: the concept of holiness, the phenomenon of UFO and the Buddhist concept of Satori. The poem itself foregrounds the issue of seeing, or to be precise the implied impossibility of seeing “it”, where “it” stands for the amalgam

in the title. In this remarkably concise poem Morgan manages to transmit both the wisdom of Buddhist thought and the mystery of life, regardless of ancient or futurist origin – some things are unspeakable, some ideas are not transmittable by means of the senses, as it were; one cannot see beyond oneself as long as one applies a dualist perspective of the seer and the seen. Seeing is possible only when one abandons the illusion (or cognitive dissonance) of separating oneself from the object of seeing.

Morgan habitually questions standard cognitive figures by means of *anamorphosis*. By actively studying the imagery of his poems and their typographical design we may discover seemingly invisible dimensions of being. By means of (linguistic) *anamorphosis*, Morgan playfully destabilises what we know and expect in language, and very often he creates an alternative, disturbing voice whose role is to take charge and speak to us, often in a language we are not familiar with. That requires taking a different, lateral perspective of looking at things (including Morgan's poems), which in turn may bring us closer to experiencing the beauty of simple things. The messages we un/discover in our deep listening to Morgan's performances, and in mindful reading of his poems, may change our mindsets forever.

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## Perception and Conceptualization of Visual Arts in Ekphrastic Poetry

James Heffernan is the author of the most popular contemporary definition of ekphrasis: "ekphrasis is the verbal representation of visual representation" (Heffernan 1993: 3). This statement shifts the original tension in ekphrastic texts from the long-standing antagonism between the verbal and the visual to the fact that ekphrasis deals with visually represented objects: "what ekphrasis represents in words, therefore, must itself be representational" (ibid.: 3).

Claus Clüver proposes an extension of Heffernan's definition: "ekphrasis is the verbalization of real or fictitious texts composed in a non-verbal sign system" (Clüver 1998: 49). The definition relates to the semiotic concept of text, understood here as a complex sign in any sign system. Clüver calls verbalization "a form of verbal re-presentation that consists of more than a name or a title" (ibid.: 45). As such it retains certain degree of *enargeia*: vividness or a particularly vivid description (*enargeia* in Greek; *evidentia* or *perspicuitas* in Latin). Clüver's clarification also integrates approaches towards the subject of ekphrasis which may be fictitious or real, visual and non-visual, an artwork or an everyday object. It broadens the scope of ekphrasis, attributing ekphrastic potential to various aspects of the interart dialogue. Clüver avoids drawing clear lines defining various forms of intersemiotic relationships, maintaining that it would create an obstacle for interarts studies, due to the fact that "[b]oundary lines tend to have the fixity that does not reflect the actual situation in contemporary interarts discourse" (ibid.: 47).

139

Ekphrastic texts transgress semiotic boundaries, combining the spatial medium of the visual arts with the temporal medium of literature. In the case of ekphrastic poetry, intersemiotic translation will be looking for equivalence between the two systems: the verbal and the visual modes of artistic expression. Due to the fact that each element has a certain place or function in a sign system, thus in translation it may be substituted



by another element which has the same place or function in another system. Equivalent does not mean identical, so the studies in the field of ekphrasis should not limit themselves to the description of similarities or differences between the source text (visual) and target text (verbal). They need to show the mechanisms governing such a translation. Among others we may distinguish: a transition of particular details from the source to the target, an omission of some aspects of the visual artwork for the sake of other elements, a substitution of certain visual traits with verbal techniques which more precisely convey poetic thought. Thus, intersemiotic translation is an act of interpretation made clear, ekphrastic poems are traces of invisible and frequently unobservable processes. They are fascinating also for the readers because in most cases they are able to have an immediate access to the object of poetic ekphrasis.

Cognitive poetics is particularly apt in this context as it offers an ample set of ready-made tools which can be used in a critical analysis. In cognitive view, the meaning of a poem or a picture is not to be found in the text alone, but in the conceptual content the text evokes in the reader's or the viewer's mind. Art perception is an activity making sense of a work of art the same way as making sense of the real world. An art viewer applies methods already known from the interaction with everyday world, so there is no specific cognitive model for aesthetic experiences. What distinguishes those two types of perception is the degree of cognitive effort involved in their production.

There are certain features shared by poetic translation and ekphrasis: it provides a kind of afterlife to the original, being a propagation of its cultural, aesthetic, and ideological aspects. Ekphrasis widens the impact of a work of art and its content, it is a process of decoding and encoding: a poem may explain certain painterly techniques, exemplify visual metaphors by means of poetic metaphors, iconically represent the theme of the visual artwork. As much as translation, ekphrasis is both an activity and a final result (Lhermitte 2005: 101–103).

The contemporary American poet Donald Hall ekphrastically represents one of the most popular pictures by Edvard Munch, entitled *The Scream*. The poem, published in its first version in 1957 consists of two parts. The first one attempts to describe and verbally recreate the overwhelming pictorial content of Munch's painting, while the other part refers to the process of perception of a visual artwork and creation of ekphrastic poetry.

*The Scream* by Donald Hall<sup>1</sup>

Observe. Ridged, raised, tactile, the horror  
of the skinned head is there. It is skinned  
which had a covering-up before,  
and now is nude, and is determined

by what it perceives. The blood not Christ's,  
blood of death without resurrection,  
winds flatly in the air. Habit foists  
conventional surrender to one

response in vision, but it fails here,  
where the painstaking viewer is freed  
into the under-skin of his fear.  
Existence is laid bare, and married

to a movement of caught perception  
where the unknown will become the known  
as one piece of the rolling mountain  
becomes another beneath the stone

which shifts now toward the happy valley  
which is not prepared, as it could not  
be, for the achieved catastrophe  
which produces no moral upshot,

no curtain, epilogue, nor applause,  
no Dame to return purged to the Manse  
(the Manse is wrecked) – not even the pause,  
the repose of art that has distance.

We, unlike Munch, observe his *The Scream*  
making words, since perhaps we too know  
the head's "experience of extreme  
disorder". We have made our bravo,

but such, of course, will never equal  
the painting. What is the relation?  
A word, which is at once richly full  
of attributes, thinginess, reason,

reference, time, noise, among others;  
bounces off the firm brightness of paint  
as if it had no substance, and errs  
toward verbalism, naturally. Mayn't

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<sup>1</sup> Hollander 1995: 285–286.

we say that time cannot represent  
space in art? "The fascination of  
what's impossible" may be present,  
motivating the artist to move.

So the poet, the talker, aims his  
words at the object, and his words go  
faster and faster, and now he is  
like a cyclotron, breaking into

the structure of things by repeated  
speed and force in order to lay bare  
in words, naturally, unworded  
insides of things, the things that are there.

142 The first line of Hall's poem offers the reader a chance to look at the work of art as if through the poet's eyes. It starts with an imperative: "Observe, the horror/ of the skinned head is there". The reader's attention is directed by the poet, who enters the domain of perception through the sense of touch and focuses on tangible attributes of the picture: "[r]idged, raided, tactile". How can something we can see but not touch be perceived as tactile? It is due to a basic metaphor: SEEING IS TOUCHING that our eyes are understood as hands and identify what they touch. When we feel something sharp or rough the movement of our fingers becomes cautious and hesitant, it slows down or interrupts. Correspondingly, when we look at a picture riddled with details, where the use of colours, brush strokes and the depicted scene evoke contemplative and ominous mood, our gaze cannot just sweep the painting (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 142). Instead, our sight fixes on the elements that are most powerful visually and contextually, as the process of perception is aesthetic, emotional and intellectual. One of the most notable ideas of Cognitive Linguistics is that our physical embodiment determines the nature of human experience. Human body serves as an important resource for the construal of reality and understanding of abstract concepts (Evans 66–68). Evoking the touch experience also means provoking the sensory and emotional aspect of human body. These sensimotor adjectives stress the feeling of closeness and immediacy of what the first noun in the poem represents: "the horror".

The strong visual impact of the painting is achieved through the contrast between the pale human figure, represented by a common metonymy PART FOR WHOLE as a "skinned" or "nude head" and the red sky which occupies most of the background. In the poem, the color of blood is mapped onto the color of the sky, such mapping of images

leads us to map knowledge of one image onto the other, forming a so called *one-shot metaphor*. *One-shot metaphors* are “more fleeting metaphors which involve not the mappings of concepts but rather the mapping of images (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 89). Here the domains are mental images and images structure includes attribute structure – such things as color, intensity of light, physical shape, texture. “The blood not Christ’s,/ blood of death without resurrection, winds flatly in the air”. Even though the sky in nature can possibly have a red hue, we must resort to conceptual knowledge associated with the red colour and yet another metonymy: DEATH IS SHEDDING BLOOD. Why this metonymical expression? One reason is that it highlights the picture’s menacing atmosphere, the visual image of blood winding in the air is more powerful than a verbal statement and it points directly to the content of Munch’s painting. Moreover, this metonymy is frequently used in biblical language and it activates *CHRISTIANITY* frame, highlights the concept of divine death and determines a certain perspective in which the frame is viewed. Here the frame is mentioned only to be negated “blood not Christ’s” or “death without resurrection”, so it introduces a human, more deterministic point of view.

The poet observes that a traditional critical analysis of a work of art will not be possible in this case. “Habit foists conventional surrender to one / response in vision, but it fails here”. Hall juxtaposes in this poem two types responses to art. This short, emotionally intensive representation of Munch's painting is an example of an ekphrastic moment when the poet attempts to stop, ‘to freeze’ this very intimate and personal encounter with art. On the one hand it is possible to treat art as a closed system which enables an intellectual analysis of its elements. In the case of painting it is the analysis of its style, technique or historical context. On the other hand there are such works of art whose charm, appeal or grandness result from their emotional content which frequently seems to be more important than the formal aspects.

Ekphrastic poetry commonly involves multiple seeing schema, inside and outside the painting (Fig. 1). The traditional components of the schema include (Langacker 1987: 73):

|                      | <b>inside</b>    | <b>outside'</b>       | <b>outside''</b>                                                               |
|----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| VIEWER               | human figure     | poet                  | reader (implied viewer)                                                        |
| VISUAL FIELD         | nature           | painting              | painting (limited)                                                             |
| OBJECT OF PERCEPTION | catastrophe      | painting              | poet's perception                                                              |
| PERSPECTIVE          | close, immediate | close, immediate      | more detached                                                                  |
| FOCUSING             | sky<br>valley    | head<br>sky<br>valley | head<br>sky<br>valley<br><i>mountain</i><br><i>avalanche</i><br><i>theatre</i> |

Figure 1. Prototypical viewing arrangement in *The Scream* by Donald Hall

As we can see, the perception schema is tripartite, as it engages three distinct viewers: the human figure depicted in the painting, the poet/speaker who gets inspiration from seeing *The Scream* by Munch and finally the reader who becomes an implied viewer of the ekphrastic translation of Munch's artwork. Interestingly, the last viewer's (the reader's) perception, even though limited to what the poet conveys, focuses on much more elements than the other viewers'. The poet introduces extra objects and ideas to the painting, marked in italics in Figure1. In order to explain the visual content, the framework of DRAMATIC PERFORMANCE is used, with its integral elements of classical drama: curtain, epilogue, applause, resolution, catharsis. The visual medium is verbally interpreted by means of theatrical performance, which itself is an example of intermediality. The notion of intermediality is understood here as "a communicative-semiotic concept, based on the combination of at least two medial forms of articulation" (Rajewsky 2005: 52). The speaker of the poem stresses the temporal character of verbal arts, due to the fact that they do end at some point, whether they are read or performed. On the contrary, visual arts are always 'there' ('there' is deictically repeated twice in the poem), they are atemporal, so they do not create such a distance between themselves and the viewer: " – not even a pause, a repose of art that has distance". Munch's picture certainly does not distance itself from the viewer. On the contrary, its bright colors, bold brush strokes, and sinusoid lines completely overwhelm the viewer, as if attracting towards the inside of the painting. The scared, and scary, figure placed in the central point of the painting has become a universal symbol of the existential fear, and affects us psychologically.

The other part of Hall's poem is devoted to the process of creation of ekphrastic poetry. Now the speaker uses the personal pronoun 'we' which refers to an average person who attempts to reconstruct verbally the meaning or formal organization of Munch's painting or to express their admiration of certain painterly techniques. The quote incorporated into the poem "experience of extreme disorder" sounds unnatural in this context, as if borrowed from an art catalogue or a critical review on Edvard Munch. Thus, the emotional impact and charismatic illusion of the artwork which are present in the first part of the poem are broken here, now understanding of the arts depends on our cultural capital, and the experience and expertise based on previous contacts with visual artworks.

Hall stresses in the poem this long-term love and hate relationship between the sister arts, the visual and the verbal: "We have made our bravo / but such, of course, will never equal the painting". The idea that poetry cannot equal painting brings us back to Leonardo Da Vinci who applies the term *paragone*, an Italian word meaning "comparison", which in the context of interarts relationship also implies "competition". Leonardo supports the higher value of painting among other disciplines, posing a question whether poetry or painting was better at representing the nature. He attempts to convince us that painting possesses a greater immediacy of the effect on the viewer, it is also more universal as it "needs no interpreters of various languages as letters do. [Painting] satisfies the human species immediately, not differently than things produced by nature do" (Leonardo, Richter 2008: 187).

The poem also alludes here to another poetic work, a poem by W. B. Yeats entitled *The Fascination of What is Difficult*. Even though for Yeats creation of poetry was inspirational and fascinating, it was temporarily perceived by him as drudgery under the heavy burden of running of the Abbey Theatre and formal constraints of bardic poetry. For Hall "The fascination with what is impossible" refers to the act of creation of ekphrastic poetry, the representation of the visual by means of the verbal, and spatiality through temporality. Hall's poem, published 1957, in some mysterious way anticipates and very practically exemplifies an important aspect of W. J. T. Mitchell's theory: three stages which constitute an ekphrastic act, published by Mitchell in *Picture Theory* in 1994. The first phase "ekphrastic indifference", derives from the idea that ekphrasis is unattainable: that there is a relationship between words and images, but language, no matter how much detailed and precise 'can never bring its visual presence before us in the way pictures do' (Mitchell 1995: 152). The second is "ekphrastic hope", developing out of the writers feeling that

the visual can be captured in a verbal form and language can reconstruct an absent object, thus “the impossibility of ekphrasis is overcome in imagination or metaphor” (ibid.: 152). As a result, an “image text”, a new, hybrid form is created. The third phase is “ekphrastic fear”: “the moment of resistance or counter desire that occurs when we sense that the difference between verbal and visual might collapse and the figurative, imaginary desire of ekphrasis might be realized literally and actually” (ibid.: 154). A traditional expression of this fear may be encountered in Lessing’s *Laokoön* where the poets are warned that “they should not regard the limitations of painting as beauties of their own art” (ibid.: 68–69). Each mode of artistic expression, as Lessing argues, should know its limitations and should not attempt to cross its own boundaries. Such a transference between visual and verbal art is perceived as promiscuous and idolatrous, in Mitchell’s words, as “a magical technique that threatens to fixate the poet and the listener” (ibid.: 156). Contemporary poetry treats visual arts not as rivals but as *points of departure* for a discussion of the status of arts in postmodern times. The relationship between the visual and the verbal, especially the notion of tension may be explicated on the example of a funambulist. A tightrope walker requires a tensioned wire in order to maintain balance between two points. The tension keeps the funambulist ‘in-between’, were it removed, the laws of gravity would immediately bring the walker down. Similarly, ekphrastic poetry occupies a liminal, transient, intermedial space between two different modes of artistic expression. The representational and mimetic uncertainties together with the “ekphrastic fear” do not constitute an impediment to poetic creativity. Contrarily, they contribute to the creation of the literary form which eludes too easy classifications, yet still causes considerable stir among poets, literary critics and readers.

These three groups of people share their interest in poetry as a source of beautiful, sublime and exceptional expression of human thoughts and emotions. Poetry is commonly thought to achieve this special effect through the application of various stylistic devices, metaphor and metonymy among others. Traditional theories of metaphor, born with Aristotle, identify metaphors as pertaining to language and stylistics, functioning as literary devices employed for special rhetorical effects. Metaphorical meaning is understood to be fresh and novel and does not reflect the pre-existing conceptualizations of human mind. The notion of metaphor presented in this study is based on the definition originally formed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), a work that has revolutionized metaphor theory. The contemporary theory of metaphor offered by the cognitive scholars also in subsequent

publications, assigns a great role to metaphor as “pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action” (Lakoff, Johnson 1980: 3). Verbal metaphors do not have only an ornamental function by means of which complex poetic ideas are put forward. Instead, verbal metaphors reflect both every day and literary conceptual mappings in which we conceptualize mostly abstract domains: time, ideas, emotions etc. Lakoff and Turner suggest that “metaphor is anything but peripheral to the life of the mind. It is central to our understanding of our selves, our culture, and the world at large” (Lakoff, Turner 1989: 214). However, in order to understand poetic metaphors one should understand first how metaphorical is our everyday speech. Poetry gives insight into the most essential aspects of human life and helps us comprehend them in terms of basic metaphorical expressions which may be transformed, extended or manipulated in the minds of the poets.

The last two stanzas of “The Scream” poem employ the conceptual metaphor POET IS A CYCLOTRON. This novel metaphor is an extension of PEOPLE ARE MACHINES metaphor which expresses human characteristics in terms of mechanical constructions. In conceptual metaphor theory, the image-schematic structure of the target domain constrains which image-schematic structures from the source domain are mapped onto it. Metaphorical mappings contain the following elements: *slots* in the source domain schema (a cyclotron) which are mapped onto the target domain (a poet); *relations* – the metaphor POET IS A CYCLOTRON is a mapping of the structure of cyclotron onto the domain of POET in such a way that it establishes appropriate correspondences between ELECTRIC PARTICLES PRODUCTION and POETIC CREATION, between ELECTRONS and WORDS etc.; *properties* in the source domain get mapped onto the target domain, e.g. a cyclotron emits particles with considerable speed and force, which maps onto the idea of the poet who uses his mental creative forces to produce a poem; *knowledge* of the source domain that allows us to draw inferences about the domain which are mapped onto inferences in the target domain. The source domain contains the characteristics of a cyclotron: its ability to accelerate and emit outwards charged particles, and to bombard other atoms, and its use of magnetic force. In the target domain, we have poetic creation as it is performed, the source of inspiration (the painting), the verbalization of thoughts and feeling, and a certain creative effort:

So the poet, the talker, aims his  
words at the object, and his words go  
faster and faster, and now he is  
like a cyclotron [...]




As far as general metaphorical meanings are concerned, we need to be really cautious and observant. A cyclotron is not simply a metaphor for the mechanization of poetic production, or the amount of poetic effort or stamina involved in the creation of ekphrastic poetry, or for words which may become dangerous and kill, because a cyclotron emits radioactive material or for words which destroy the Other taking into account the fact that cyclotrons are used in cancer therapy. The poem exists on a more abstract level produced by the metaphor; it presumably may be “about” all these things through the image schemas that represent the various aspects of what it means to write an ekphrastic poem. Readers may agree or differ to some extent on the possible readings of the poem. However, all these readings must be conceptually justified. One of constraints observed by Turner is that mappings should make use of such conceptual metaphors which function also beyond the conceptualization proposed by the poem. Another constraint is the “reality check” the use of everyday knowledge which should be in accord with conventional metaphors (ibid.: 146). Thus the reading that the words of poetry may be lethal or destructive is not justifiable in the general context of *The Scream*.

Cognitive poetics makes it possible to show that different interpretations of poetry arise from the readers’ selection of different topologies and mappings to make sense of the text according to their own knowledge, experience or mental predispositions. As Ruth Webb has noted about classical ekphrasis, the product of ekphrasis is and will always remain “present in the imagination and absent from the world perceived by the senses” (Webb 2009: 169). Being a mental entity, it naturally invites various conceptualizations and interpretations. Similarly to the way in which conceptual metaphor theory reconciles sometimes divergent views on the object of conceptualization, ekphrasis attempts to bridge the gap between visual and verbal arts. Contemporary poets who respond with extreme sensitivity to the “visual turn” in culture, frequently avoid description, a traditional and well-established mode of ekphrasis. This results from their awareness of the illusory status of “the verbal representation of visual representation”. Though it is possible to find and analyze elements of intersemiotic transfer in ekphrastic poetry, we should be aware that ekphrasis is a conceptualization of the visual input, rather than one-to-one translation from visual to verbal arts. Therefore I believe that a cognitive poetics approach towards ekphrasis complemented with rigorous attention to textual details will offer an invaluable insight into ekphrastic poetry.

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## **Franciszka Themerson and the Gaberbocchus Press: Bestlookers versus Bestsellers**

If Franciszka and Stefan Themerson had stayed in Paris during World War Two,<sup>1</sup> Gaberbocchus Press would never have existed. For its founders, its creation in 1948 had the therapeutic role of immersing them in the culture they had left behind on the continent. It allowed them to publish their own works and to introduce their favorite avant-garde authors to an English speaking audience.

While running the Press for thirty-one years, the Themersons drew from their deep knowledge of avant-garde art and literature acquired in their youth in native Poland, refined and deepened in Paris. Stefan, philosopher, writer, poet, filmmaker, and Franciszka, painter, draughtswoman, illustrator, cartoonist, and graphic designer, combined their energies and talents to create one of the most innovative and original publishing houses ever. The fact that they worked in different mediums didn't mean they differed in the way they perceived art and the world. Just the contrary. As unique as each of them was, they shared a very similar type of sensibility, imagination, humor and skepticism about Ultimate Truths. Such a cohesive system of values can clearly be sensed behind the creations of Gaberbocchus Press.

151

The marriage of the love for words with the passion for images produced results that would inspire generations of publishers to come. Joining elegance with the spirit of the avant-garde, being both reader- and looker-friendly, Gaberbocchus Press remained ever astonishing in its artistic choices. Needless to say, it was never a financial success

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<sup>1</sup> In 1938, the Themersons moved from Warsaw to Paris. Upon the outbreak of the war, they both volunteered for the Polish Army in France. In 1940, Franciszka arrived in London where she continued working as a cartographer for the Polish Government-in-Exile. Stefan's regiment disintegrated in 1940. Two years later he finally managed to join Franciszka in London.

(which was not its goal), but the intellectual and artistic impact it had on writers, artists, readers, and publishers on both sides of the Ocean cannot be overestimated. Asked for a role model they had in mind, the most ambitious independent publishers would name Gaberbocchus. Today, after more than half a century, its publications still bring all sorts of pleasures: visual, intellectual, and tactile. The size of the books, so perfectly fitting into the readers hands, make modern albums and coffee table monsters seem even more arrogant.

The name of the press was a reference to Jabberwocky from Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass*, which was Franciszka's (as well as many Surrealists') favorite reading. The Themersons adopted it in its Latin translation. After having met the White Queen and White King on the other side of the looking-glass, Alice finds a book written in an unintelligible language. She guesses that it has to be held up to a mirror and thus she reads a nonsense poem of seven strophes. In his copy of the book, Stefan marked the fourth strophe:

And, as in uffish thought he stood,  
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,  
Came whiffing through the tulgey wood,  
And burred as he came!

Gaberbocchus' logo, a winged dragon immersed in reading, playing with or presenting its pen/sword dripping with ink, is a symbol of the couple's philosophy.

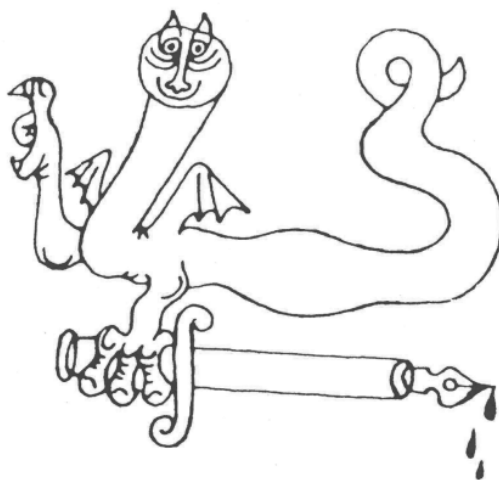


Figure 1. Franciszka Themerson, Gaberbocchus logo, drawing, c. 1955 (from an archive of Marcin Giżycki)

Like Alice in Wonderland, the Themersons believed that words were not enough: good books also need illustrations.<sup>2</sup> Like Lewis Carroll, they excelled in playing with language and used nonsense and humor (often dark humor) to convey serious messages. This was the feature of English literature they valued the most. Gaberbocchus paid tribute to nonsense, Alfred Jarry's Pataphysics and Raymond Queneau's alternative vision of the world. It aimed at simultaneously seducing the intellect and the aesthetic sensibility of its readers. It enticed them with the appetite for both literary and visual adventure. It contradicted clichés, defied categories and classifications. It remained unique.

The Themersons published over 60 titles including the first English translations of such writers as Guillaume Apollinaire, Alfred Jarry, Raymond Queneau, Kurt Schwitters, Heinrich Heine, Raoul Hausmann, Anatol Stern, Bertrand Russell and George Buchanan. They planned, but did not manage to translate and publish Douanier Rousseau, Henri Michaud, Tristan Tzara, and many others. As impressive as this list is, it does not give an idea of how innovative were the typography and the design of the books published by Gaberbocchus. Together with their choice of authors, it was design and typography which became the trademark of their press.

Franciszka was the art director and illustrator for almost all Gaberbocchus publications. Together with Stefan, they worked in the same spirit of close collaboration as they did earlier while making their experimental and animated films (first in Warsaw before the war and then in London). Stefan contributed the unique elegance and intelligence of language, as well as typographical inventions. Franciszka added revolutionary ideas about the layout and the imaginative drawings filled with poetry and warm, albeit ironic, humor. These drawings not only illustrated the content, but often became the content accompanied by the text.

Their goal was to attain a perfect balance between content and form. Franciszka had gained experience illustrating children's books, first in Poland, then in France, and finally in England. Based on this experience and on her artistic sensibility she began the long term adventure during which she would fearlessly translate words into images and images into words.

As the art director of Gaberbocchus, she simultaneously used calligraphy, handwriting and the typewriter. The use of both typewriting

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<sup>2</sup> "[...] once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, 'and what is the use of a book', thought Alice, 'without pictures or conversations?'" (Carroll 1960: 25).

and handwriting reflected her own artistic choice and was a continuation of experiments in the spirit of Dada conducted by artists from her and previous generations.

From the 1940<sup>s</sup> on, Franciszka Themerson's published drawings were less often illustrations and more and more interpretations, or visual commentaries accompanying the text. Their style ranged from narrative through sharp provocation to discreet satire. Stefan's typography and Franciszka's illustrations met in *The Eagle & the Fox & the Fox & the Eagle* by Aesop (published in 1949) where a unique effect was achieved thanks to symmetries and inversions of sense. Hand-printed on hand-made paper, it was designed as an object to be touched as well as looked at.

The Aesop book legitimized the originality of the newly founded house. The volumes that followed had one thing in common: they all derived form from content. That's why Gaberbocchus publications are so diversified. The book-as-object approach culminated in Stefan Themerson's *Kurt Schwitters in England 1940–1948*. Assembled from a variety of colored papers, this book-collage paid subtle tribute to Schwitters's art. It set a standard for imaginative book design that was unique at that time.

Asked about their press' main strengths and weaknesses, Stefan always gave the same answer: "refusal to conform". The "unclassifiability" of Gaberbocchus is its essential characteristic (Wadley 1996).

Most of the titles were first printed in one thousand copies plus a luxury edition of two hundred. The Themersons wanted their books to appeal to the readers' aesthetic sense, to convey to them the spirit of literature (which for each book meant a different thing). They claimed to be more interested in producing *bestlookers* than bestsellers (Wadley 1996).

This philosophy resulted in a unique and innovative integration of typography and image. Even though the technological means the Themersons had at their disposal were often limited (for example, they did only one color printing on basic paper), the typographic clarity always led to unpredictable solutions in which all page ingredients seemed inseparable. They treated book design as a visual metaphor, yet always respected the author and the reader. Clearly structured text combined with Franciszka's gestural drawings became the visual fingerprint of Gaberbocchus books.

Their collaboration expressed itself in a particularly eccentric way in *Semantic Divertissements* (1962, written 1949–1950), signed Themerson & Themerson.

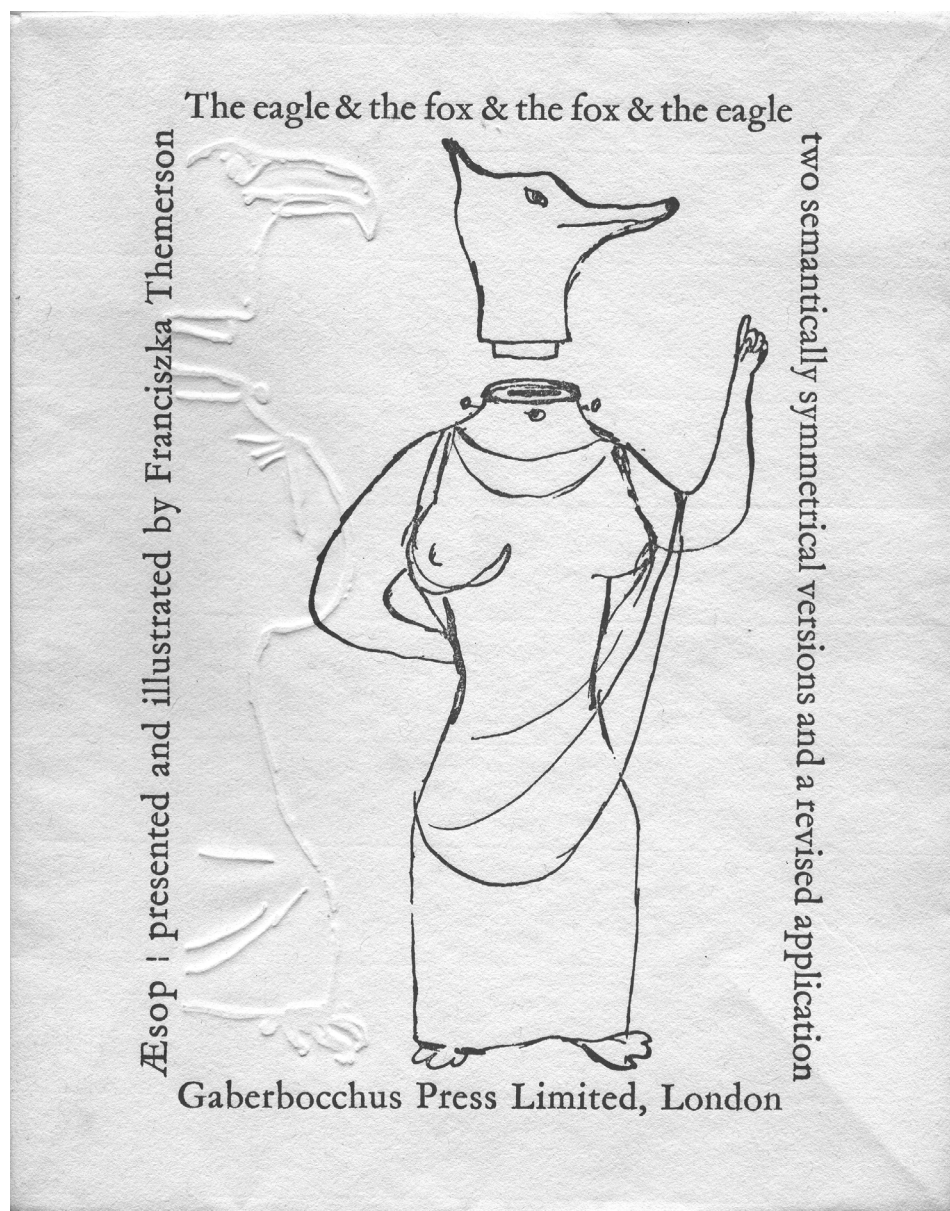


Figure 2. Franciszka & Stefan Themerson, *Aesop, The Eagle & The Fox & The Fox & The Eagle*, cover, 1949



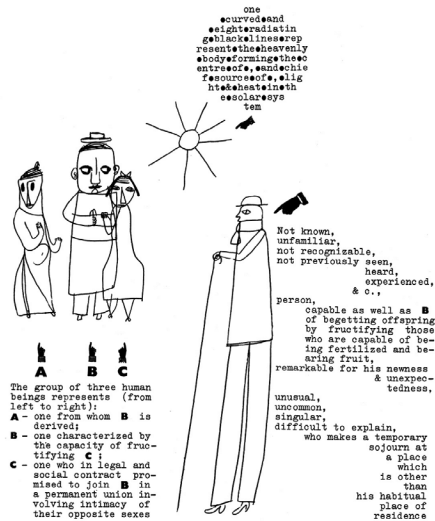


Figure 3. Franciszka & Stefan Themerson, *Semantic Divertissements*, page 5, *A Stranger*, 1946 (published 1962)

Franciszka often, too often, destroyed her works, but she did keep a series of ball-point pen drawings made in the mid-1940s. The poses and expressions of the characters in these drawings are eloquent yet difficult to interpret. Stefan accompanied them with the text which he typed and wrapped around the figures, thus making a sort of a painting. His interpretations of Franciszka's drawings bring to mind stiff and boring dictionary definitions. Stefan and Franciszka probably worked together to arrange the drawings in a sequence. The ambiguous naiveté of the characters found its echo in the text, creating a comical and disturbing effect. The simplicity of the lines refers to the transparency of the semantic language used in Stefan's text (and vice versa). Elaborate, diagrammatic drawings can be dissected and interpreted with the aid of philosophical, sometimes theological commentaries. The readers are faced with a tautological presentation that demonstrates the impossibility of translating between the visual and verbal languages. Coming from the Themersons, such a message reads as a provocation.

Publishing Barbara's Wright's brilliant translation of the "untranslatable" masterpiece by Queneau, *Exercises in style* (which is an exploration into the possibilities of language and the functioning of its style), they proved that every book can be translated. Publishing dozens of books that interpret words with lines and lines with words, they showed that it is perfectly possible to translate from visual to verbal and the other way around.



Figure 4. Stefan Themerson, *Raymond Queneau, Exercises in Style*, cover, 1958

Bertrand Russell's *The Good Citizen's Alphabet* (1953) played with the juxtaposition of typography and illustration through isolating word from image by large areas of white space. Thanks to this procedure the reader reacts to the text and the drawings separately. Franciszka's images do not illustrate the definitions by giving them a visual form. Rather, they create subtle contexts which, as Jan Kubasiewicz remarked in his essay

on Gaberbocchus Press (Kubasiewicz 1993: 27), can result in a very clever and funny visual/verbal interpretation. The “trick” worked out perfectly. Russell claimed that Franciszka’s illustrations “heightened all the points I most wanted to make” (Wadley 1991: 12; Wadley 1993: 61).

In 1951, Gaberbocchus Press published the first English translation of Alfred Jarry’s *Ubu Roi*, the infamous play premiered in 1896, which shaped the imaginations of generations to come. It turned out to be the most widely acclaimed book of the Press. Franciszka had the idea to ask the translator, Barbara Wright, to write the text directly onto printing plates and then to add the layer of numerous drawings. The result was astonishing. The vibrating text entered into play with spontaneous images, the effect highlighted by the yellow paper on which the book was printed. Both the handwriting and the drawings seem liberated from the structure of the book as object. They wonderfully capture the savage nature of the narrative: the story of the terrifying anti-hero who watches the world from the perspective of his belly (*gidouille*). The revolutionary and capricious content of the play allowed an unpredictable visual form to emerge. The demand for it was such that the book was reprinted several times.

Franciszka also made masks for a reading at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London (1952) and designed costumes and stage sets for a theatre production at Marionetteatern in Stockholm which has been touring since 1964. Her interest in Ubu, epitomizing the history of 20<sup>th</sup> century wars and holocausts, culminated in the *Ubu Comic Strip* (created 1969–1970) (Themerson 2013). “She gives such authentic form to its hilarious futility that, by the end, Père Ubu appears as much a hapless victim of the world’s madness as do those on whom he tramples”, wrote Nick Wadley (1991: 15), the best commentator of Franciszka’s oeuvre.

In her very personal book *The Way It Walks* (first published in 1954, then in 1988), she used quotes referring to the human condition written by such diverse authors as Herbert Read, Gaston Bachelard, Le Corbusier, Marcel Proust, Fenelon, Bertrand Russell, Winston S. Churchill, and others. With just a few lines, she gave them a subtle interpretation. The “wisdom-thoughts” often proved to be old clichés; “graphic elucidations” making their banality only more clear. Translating words into images helps to understand the former. The donkey on the front and back cover is unmistakably the artist’s self-portrait.

The book’s motto (Sir Walter A. Raleigh, *Wishes of an Elderly Man, Wished at a Garden Party, June 1914*) echoes Franciszka’s subversive humor and her belief in the ridiculousness of human nature:

I wish I loved the Human Race;  
I wish I loved its silly face;  
I wish I liked the way it walks;  
I wish I liked the way it talks;  
And when I'm introduced to one  
I wish I thought What Jolly Fun!  
(Themerson 1954)

Nick Wadley remembered, "Most often, her drawn images strike a profoundly pessimistic note. Looking through *The Way It Walks*, towards the end of her life, she commented to me that 'it hardly walks at all'" (Wadley 1991: 13).

\*

Stefan Themerson used to say: "My bibliography is my biography; the rest is irrelevant".<sup>3</sup> I am sure Franciszka wouldn't mind the credo: "My drawings, my paintings, and the books I designed are my biography. The rest is more than irrelevant".

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159

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<sup>3</sup> As remembered by Jasia Reichardt and Nick Wadley.



## Bacon, Friedman, Themerson or How to Translate Anything to Anything

*[...] and now the thought has changed into colour  
and the colour has changed into sound  
and the sound has changed into silence.*

Stefan Themerson, "Hobson's Island" (1988: 196)

In the 1570s Francis Bacon developed a method for concealing a message inside a different text or – as we will see in a moment – inside an image or a musical score. His cipher is a binary code (a little bit like Morse Code or the ASCII Code used in our computers) in which actual letters of the alphabet have been replaced by combinations of only two characters: "A" and "B", always in groups of five. Here is the whole system:

161

a = AAAAA, b = AAAAB, c = AAABA, d = AAABB,  
e = AABAA, f = AABAB, g = AABBA, h = AABBB,  
i/j = ABAAA, k = ABAAB, l = ABABA, m = ABABB,  
n = ABBAA, o = ABBAB, p = ABBBA, q = ABBBB,  
r = BAAAA, s = BAAAB, t = BAABA, u/v = BAABB,  
w = BABAA, x = BABAB, y = BABBA, z = BABBB.

What makes it different from other ciphers and methods of steganography<sup>1</sup> is that one can substitute these two characters with any other two signs: squares and triangles, minuses and pluses, whatever. In a printed text – any text of a right length – the letters "A" and "B" can be represented by two different typefaces, for example: regular and italic. How it works can be best shown in an example given by Bacon himself, warning a secret agent to flee:

*Do not go till I come* = aabab ababa babba = fly (qtd. by Sherman 2010: 11).

<sup>1</sup> Ancient art of concealing a text or image in another text or image.

While discussing ciphers in the first edition of his philosophical book *The Advancements of Learning*, published in 1605, Bacon stated that actually anything can signify anything (“omnia per omnia”) by virtue of, as he called it, “infoulding” it (Bacon, Blackbourne 1730: 497).

Almost three centuries after Bacon published his fully developed cipher in the second Latin edition of his *Advancements* (1623), William F. Friedman, a young genetics scientist turned cryptographer, used the principle of the Baconian cipher to arrange seventy-one officers whom he had taught the art of cryptology in Aurora, Illinois, in the winter of 1918, in such a way that to the well-trained eye they formed a ciphered message: “Knowledge is power”. Actually the last word of Bacon’s credo was incomplete, since there were not enough soldiers for the final “r”, as can be seen in a photograph of the group that Friedman kept in his office for most of his life. The two letters of the cipher were substituted with men looking either forward or sideways.

It is said that William F. Friedman, a Russian-born American expert on cryptography, developed an interest in ciphers after reading Edgar Allan Poe’s story “The Golden Bug”. He studied plant biology at Cornell University where he was recruited by George Fabyan, a shady businessman and the founder of Riverbank Laboratories, an engineering and acoustical laboratory whose secondary major goal was deciphering Shakespeare’s plays to prove that they had been written by Bacon. Originally employed in the Department of Genetics of RL, Friedman soon got involved in the above mentioned Baconian project supervised by Elizabeth Wells Gallup, a former school principal, who sincerely believed that Bacon had concealed secret messages in works attributed to Shakespeare. Gallup’s assistant at that time was Elizabeth Smith who later became Friedman’s wife. Together in the 1950s the Friedmans delivered the final blow to the authorship controversy by publishing *The Shakespearean Ciphers Examined* (Friedman, Friedman 1957) which, as Laura Massey (2011) has put it, “conclusively demolished the theory that any encoded messages are present in early editions of Shakespeare”.

During his tenure at Riverbank Laboratories, Friedman, whose main claim to fame was analyzing how the Japanese cipher machine known as PURPLE functioned at the beginning of WW II, devised a number of brilliant examples of possible uses of the Baconian cipher. One of them is a detailed botanical drawing of “the most interesting and peculiar plant”. Its roots conceal Bacon’s own name and the leaves and flower – other names of writers he secretly adopted: Marlowe, Greene, Peele, Spenser, Burton, and Shakespeare at the top. Another example takes the form of sheet music for a popular 19<sup>th</sup> century song “My Old Kentucky Home, Good Night”. This

can be decrypted as: "Enemy advancing right / We march at daybreak". At the bottom Friedman added an explanation: "An example of making anything signify anything" (qtd. after Sherman 2010: 11).

Soon the enemy – as William S. Sherman (2010: 11) has pointed out – advanced close enough to engage Friedman as an expert cryptographer in military service for the rest of his life.

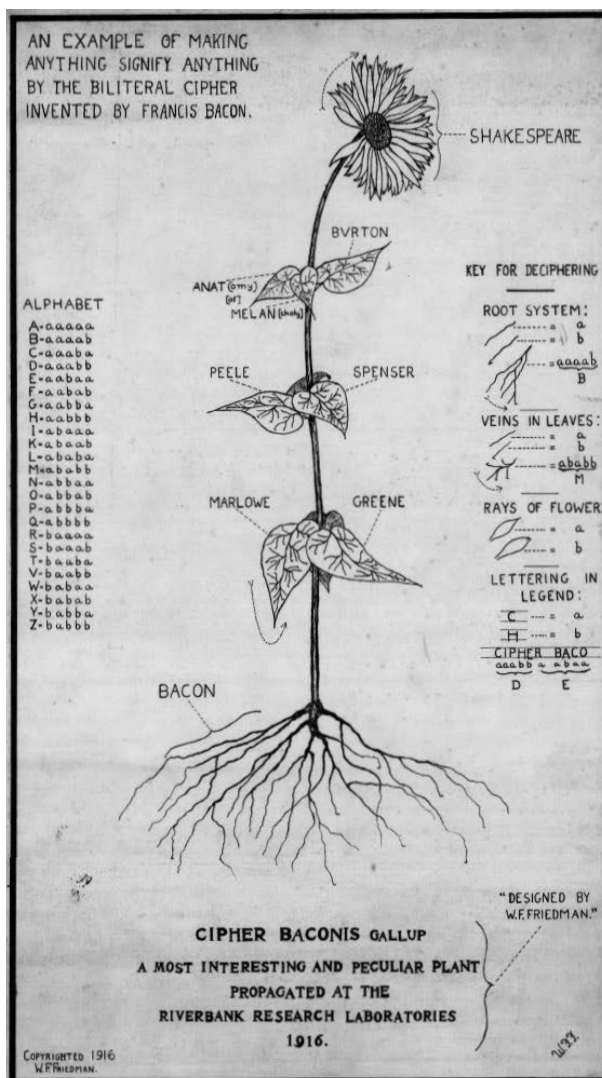


Figure 1. William F. Friedkin, drawing concealing names of Bacon, Marlowe, Greene, Peele, Spenser, Burton, and Shakespeare. Manuscript in the collection of New York Public Library



Putting the Baconian cipher aside, it is worth noticing that the idea of not really hiding but certainly uncovering secret and often unexpected messages in pre-existing texts, images, musical scores, etc. proved a fruitful one in the arts and literature of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One of the greatest practitioners of this kind of “discoveries” was Stefan Themerson (1910–1988), a Polish-born writer, publisher and avant-garde filmmaker who lived in London from 1942 to the end of his life. Being stuck for several months at the beginning of WW II in a hostel of the Polish Red Cross, the Hôtel de la Poste in Voiron, France, he developed a concept of Semantic Poetry (SP), first presented in 1949 in his short novel *Bayamus* and later developed in the book of essays *On Semantic Poetry* (1975). According to the writer, the idea was to “strip words of their associations, to cut their links with the past”.

This rebellion was anti-romantic and anti-ecstatic. It was directed both against political rhetoricians and against Joycean avant-coureurs. Against associational thickets of Eliot and the verboidal surrealisms of History. I wanted to disinfect words, scrub them right to the very bone of their dictionary definitions. That was how – somewhat ferociously and sardonically – I invented Semantic Poetry. It was meant to be funny. Both serious and funny. It became the subject of my novel *Bayamus*. (Wadley, “Reading Stephan Themerson”)

164

Technically speaking, Semantic Poetry is made by replacing the words of a text, usually a poem or lyrics, by their dictionary definitions. Let us see how it works in the case of Winifred Galbraith’s translation of a Chinese poem whose first lines go like this:

*The wine among the flowers,  
O lonely me!*

In Themerson’s translation to Semantic Poetry the same two lines become:

*The fermented  
grape-  
juce  
among the reproductive  
parts  
of  
seed plants*  
(Themerson 1965: 66, 69)

The SP version of a well-known Russian ballad *Haida Troika* looks even more spectacular. Here is just the beginning.

Heigh  
my large  
three powerful  
solid-hoofed  
domesticated mammals with

flowing mane  
coarse  
long  
and  
tail

The narrator of *Bayamus*, an alter ego of the writer, explains that in 1916 in Russia, when he was six years old, he was taken in a troika for a ride. The translation which the above fragment is part of is “a better account of that wonder which enchanted [...] the eyes of a child, than the original ballad” (Themerson 1965: 73).

The unorthodox look of this SP translation stems from Themerson’s idea that a poem can be read horizontally or vertically:

You may read horizontally the melody of [a] poem, but you may also take each of its words and score it vertically for your whole intellectual orchestra, you may give each of them the flesh of exact definition; instead of allowing them to evoke the clichés stored in your mind, you may try to find the true reality to which every word points, and that is what I call Semantic Poetry. (Themerson 1965: 66)

These examples show that although Semantic Poetry is regulated by a set of rules, it also leaves a lot of freedom for those who practice it. Nevertheless it uses an existing text as a sort of a score, or script if you will, for a totally new creation. Themerson exercised a similar approach to other media than poetry. In 1932 he and his wife Franciszka completed a film titled “Europa”, considered by critics the most important work in the history of Polish avant-garde cinema. The film was based on a Futurist poem of the same title by Anatol Stern. The filmmakers decided to take words and phrases of the poem literary rather than looking for visual equivalents of verbal metaphors. So when the poet talks about “the liberated heart of man” the Themersons show “a beating heart – white on black”, etc. The result was a string of images that were certainly derived from the poem but lived their own independent filmic life.

In their last film “The Eye and the Ear”, completed in 1945, the Themersons created four visualizations for Karol Szymanowski (music) and Julian Tuwim’s (lyrics) songs called “Śłopiewnie”. Arguably, the most interesting part of the film is the third one for which they set a very strict set of rules governing abstract shapes and their movements on screen. This is how it was done in Themerson’s own words:

*Rowan Towers.* Each instrument of the orchestra represented by a simple geometrical form which changes its shape up and down according to the pitch of the note. Shapes representing different instruments were superimposed by multi-exposure, frame by frame. Crescendo, diminuendo, staccato, pizzicato, all had their visual counterpart.

The vocal part was in 'unison' with a horizontal line in which a 'wrinkle', whose position depended on the pitch of the corresponding note, spread symmetrically to left and right. (Themerson 1983: 75–6)

This is another fine example of Themersonian interdisciplinary "translations". Once again we are dealing here with a preexisting piece that has been used as a "score" for something else. Of course "The Eye and the Ear" was not the first attempt in the history of cinema in creating an optical equivalent of music – one can recall films by Oskar Fischinger made in the 1920s and 1930s for instance – but none of these earlier works applied such precise rules and calculations in order to visually represent every component of the original music.

Another Themerson concept combining sounds with shapes is AVOTON (Audio-Visual One-To-One Normalizer). It is not quite clear when it was conceived but certainly before 1951. The goal of AVOTON was to create "a few simple rules, a simple arbitrary convention" for the audile representation of selected shapes, including symbols and letters. Themerson wrote that:

The results would be satisfactory if:

1. a blind person, listening to a series of notes, will recognize the corresponding shape and movement; [...]
2. seeing a spatial structure on the screen would help people to grasp the corresponding temporal structure in the music.

If that were so, and the correlation had reprinted been learnt and assimilated, it would become possible:

1. to draw pictorial compositions by composing a new kind of music;
2. to compose a new kind of music by drawing moving-pictures.

(Themerson)

The following chart explains the basic principles of AVOTON:

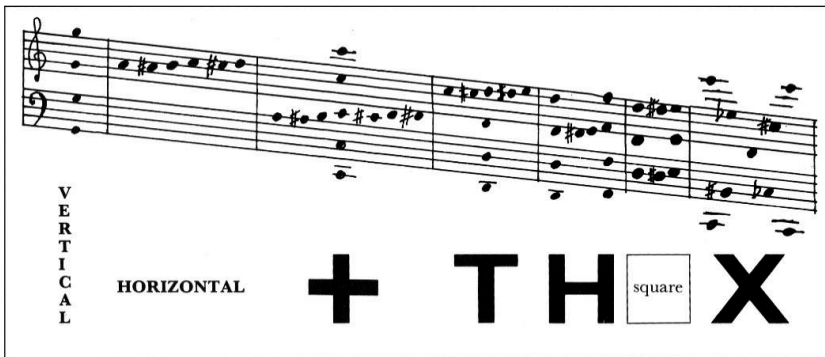


Figure 2. Basic principles of AVOTON (Themerson)

Themerson also suggested that it would be useful to rebuild the standard keyboard, so it contained seven rows: “13 (12 + 1) semitones in each row, the highest octave at the top, the lowest at the bottom” (Themerson 1983: 65). Such a keyboard could be connected to a “‘Lightboard’: a screen made of 7 horizontal rows of points of light, 13 (12 + 1) in each row”. Striking a key on a keyboard would light a corresponding point on the screen (Themerson 1983).

Since AVOTON many other artists and scientists have continued to try similar direct “translations” of different data into the realm of sound. One of the most interesting explorations of this kind is offered by Music Algorithms, a software created in 2004 by Jonathan N. Middleton, a professor of composition at the Eastern Washington University, that converts any string of numbers into music.<sup>2</sup> The program, which is free to use on the internet, does not simply “translate” given digits into sounds, it gives also controls that allow the user to choose the pitch, tempo, and other aspects of the final “composition”. One of the most devoted and inspired practitioners of composition using the software is Forest M. Mims III, a writer of popular books on science, who, among his other activities, has made music out of one-year-long measurements of solar ultraviolet radiation (Forest M. Mims III, *The Sound*) or numbers showing the growth of tree rings in a period of thirty-three years (1977–2010) (Forest M. Mims III, *Converting Tree Rings*).

But even before computers, artists investigated similar ideas. In *Memoriam to Adriano Olivetti* (1962), a classical piece of this type conceived by George Maciunas, the leader of Fluxus, used adding machine tapes as scores for a performance:

Each performer chooses any number from a used adding machine paper roll.  
Performer performs whenever his number appears in a row. Each row indicates the beat of metronome. Possible actions to perform on each appearance of the number:  
1) bowler hats lifted or lowered.  
2) mouth, lip, tongue sounds.  
3) opening, closing umbrellas etc.  
(Home 1988: 53).

At least one artist proved that it is possible to reverse the idea of making art out of a string of randomly picked up numbers and make a string of numbers out of one's life. In 1965, Roman Opałka, a well-known Polish graphic artist, started to exclusively paint numbers from one to infinity. He covered 196 x 135 cm canvases from the top left-hand corner to the bottom right-hand one with tiny consecutive numbers. He

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<sup>2</sup> <http://musicalgorithms.ewu.edu/>.

continued this task, working for twelve hours a day, until he died in 2011. The final number he managed to record was 5607249. These digits encode more than 3/5 of his life. They encompass the aging, changes of mood, and moments of weakness of the artist. And since there is no way to decode them, they will always possess this kind of ambiguity and mystery that makes the great art.

So far I have tried to show that there are many ways of ciphering, translating or transforming messages, sounds, or shapes into something else. It is now time to put some order to this catalogue. A regular cipher translates a message to a system of signs that can be converted back to the message. In this respect, it is similar to music. In most cases one can go back from the audio to the original score. In literary translation one cannot retrieve the original text from its foreign language interpretation but at least can get a communicate which is more or less close to the original. The Baconian cipher is different: having only the message, there is no way to go back to its carrier. In other words, there is a message that contains another ciphered message. The first one serves a disposable container. You can retrieve the latter but not the actual container once it is disposed of. Most of the artworks and actions described above are of a yet another kind. At the beginning there is a readymade artifact. Then there is a code, an algorithm that transforms it into something else. The final product is irreversible. It is a totally new entity. In the process of “translating”, it gains new qualities that add a totally new value to the object, or whatever it is, that has been used as a matrix, a starting point for the operation. This value cannot be measured. It does not belong to the world of science. It does not communicate anything. Maybe this is exactly the territory where art occurs.

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**PART THREE**  
**THE INTERFACES OF MUSIC**





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<https://doi.org/10.18778/8220-191-8.12>

## From Music to Language and Back<sup>1</sup>

*I grew up in a musical home [...] I learnt to  
think in music, and I still do to this day.*

Barenboim (L3)

*Music can [...] become something that is  
used not to escape from the world, but rather to understand it.*

Barenboim (L1)

173

### Introduction

This article presents a case study of an intermodal translation which goes from music to language and then back to music. The data come from five radio lectures titled “In the Beginning Was Sound” which were delivered at week intervals in 2006 by conductor and pianist Daniel Barenboim as part of the series of annual *BBC Reith Lectures*, and from discussions which followed each lecture.<sup>2</sup> In line with the tradition of the series, the lectures

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<sup>1</sup> This article is a revised and expanded version of the plenary talk titled “From Music to Language and Back” that I gave at the *Intersemiotic Translation Conference*, 25–27 September 2013, Łódź, Poland. It appeared in 2018 under the same title in *LaMiCuS [Language Mind Culture and Society]* 2: 82–100; <https://doi.org/10.32058/LAMICUS-2018-003>, and it is reprinted here with kind permission from the Journal’s Publishers – the Polish Cognitive Linguistics Association. The article also draws upon my earlier paper titled “LIFE IS MUSIC: A Case Study of a Novel Metaphor and Its Use in Discourse”, which appeared in: Barbara Dancygier, José Sanders and Lieven Vandelanotte (eds.) (2012). *Textual Choices and Discourse. A View from Cognitive Linguistics*. (137–155). Amsterdam: Benjamins. <https://doi.org/10.1075/bct.40.08gor>. The relevant parts are reprinted here with the Publisher’s kind permission granted for this edited volume.

<sup>2</sup> The series has been broadcast for over 60 years; for the *Reith Lectures* archives (which contain both the audio and transcript versions of the lectures), see URL: <http://>

had a truly international audience as they were delivered in five different countries, each related to Barenboim's musical career at some point in his life.<sup>3</sup> From the information provided during the discussions, we know also that the audience comprised people of different walks of life, including professional musicians, composers, music therapists, psychologists, architects, filmmakers, writers, philosophers, journalists, and students.

My discussion will begin with Barenboim's ideas about the place of music in society and then it will move on to his own insights on various aspects of individual, social and political life that he, as a practising musician, has gained from music (section 2). In the main part of the article, I will focus on selected aspects of his music-derived knowledge about life that Barenboim first described using the verbal mode and then translated his linguistic descriptions back onto music (section 3). My analysis will be framed in terms of the dynamic approach to metaphor developed by Müller (2008), Müller & Tag (2010) and Kolter et al. (2012) (see also Górská 2014a; 2014b; Hampe 2017) and the blending theory (Fauconnier 1997; Fauconnier & Turner 1998; 2002). It will be argued that through multimodal construction metaphors created by Barenboim have a high degree of contextual activation and, more importantly, his rhetoric achieves its persuasive objectives in a highly original and easy to comprehend manner. On the other hand, shifting of his viewpoint from that of someone who has been learning about life from music to that of the BBC lecturer will be regarded as Barenboim's rhetorical technique of establishing common ground with the audience.<sup>4</sup>

174

## Learning from Music

Having been brought up in a musical home where both of his parents taught piano, Barenboim, as he himself admits, learned to think in music and [he] still [does] to this day" (L3). For him, music has always been a teacher from whom he learnt a lot about human condition and various aspects of life. From the perspective of cognitive theories of metaphor, we can thus say that Barenboim's personal life has been guided by two metaphors:

(1) MUSIC IS A TEACHER and LIFE IS MUSIC.

[www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/features/the-reith-lectures/archive/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/features/the-reith-lectures/archive/). The total time of Barenboim's lectures was 1h. 59 min. and that of discussions – 1h. 55 min.

<sup>3</sup> See data sources below.

<sup>4</sup> For intersubjective and multimodal construal of viewpoint see Vandelanotte (2017) and the literature cited therein.

At the same time, over the years Barenboim has become very “unhappy [...] about the place of music in a society” (L1) which is much more concerned with the visual and which, through constant attacking of the ear with “muzak” has, as he puts it, “anaesthetized” (L2) this exceptionally intelligent organ of perception. Therefore, the urgent need to change our attitude to music is one of the main concerns of the whole lecture series. The excerpt in (2) illustrates this point:

(2) [C]lassical music as we know it [...] will not survive unless we make a radical effort to change our attitude to it and unless we take it away from a specialised niche that it has become, unrelated to the rest of the world, and make it something that is essential to our lives. Not something ornamental, not only something enjoyable, not only something exciting, but something essential [...]. I think we should all have the possibility to learn not only it but **to learn from it [...]** **there's so many things that you can learn from the music towards understanding the world, if you think of music as something essential.** (L3)

So what insights “towards understanding the world” has Barenboim himself gained from music? At this stage, I will briefly summarize the various kinds of music-derived knowledge that he described only verbally. One kind of Barenboim’s music-derived insights is about the very nature of life, and what he describes as the “fluidity of life” is for him “best expressed in music” (L3). Music, as he puts it, comes out of nothing, and “the present of the first note [...] is nothing but a transition” (L3). This leads him to say that “the most clearly definable [...] fact that music teaches us as human beings [is] that everything, without an exception, has a past, a present, and a future”. It is therefore from music that he has learnt to accept both “the fluidity of life” and also “the fact that nothing, absolutely nothing, is completely independent and solid, but everything that [he] think[s] and feel[s] is dependent on this fluidity of life” (L3).

Another important lesson that he has “learned from music for life” is about experiencing the unity of things. On the one hand, as he argues, “conflict, difference of opinion, is the very essence of music [...]. You see that in a Bach fugue, you see that in Mozart concertos and operas” (L2). And yet, as he explains, we have the “capacity to bring all the different elements together in a sense of proportion so that they lead to a sense of a whole” (L2).

For Barenboim, music has also revealed a lot about the relation between an individual and a group. This topic recurs on several occasions in his lectures. By way of illustration, let me refer here to an excerpt given in (3) which comes from the discussion after the first lecture. When criticizing the idea that classical music is elitist, Barenboim vigorously argued for the opposite view claiming that:

(3) [M]aking music and playing it in an orchestra [are] the best way to understand democracy [...]. The oboe plays the most wonderful tune in a slow movement of a Brahms symphony, and the whole orchestra, all ninety or ninety-five of them, and the conductor with the big ego, is following him [...]. He's the king of the world – and that lasts for eight bars! [...] And then, on the ninth bar, he [...] goes back in the society, in the collective, and he has to do what ninety-five people have been doing for him [...]. (LD1)

Not surprisingly, therefore, for Barenboim the language of music is “the language of the continuous dialogue” and, moreover, “the art of playing music is the art of simultaneous playing and listening” (L4). As he explains it, when you play music “You have to be able to express yourself, otherwise you are not contributing to the musical experience, but at the same time it is imperative that you listen to the other. You have to understand what the other is doing” (L4). These were some of the insights that led Barenboim and Edward Said, a Palestinian intellectual, to establish in the late 1990s what is now known as the West Eastern Divan orchestra in which equal number of Arab and Israeli musicians play together. For them, as Barenboim, observes:

(4) Music is the common framework, their abstract language of harmony [...] when emotion and intellect are in tune, it is easier also for human beings and for nations to look outward as well as inward. And therefore through music we can see an alternative social model, a kind of practical Utopia, from which we might learn about expressing ourselves freely and hearing one another. (L4)

To recapitulate, Barenboim makes it clear that he has gained an understanding of diverse aspects life from music. Therefore, in his personal experience, the life is music metaphor is intimately linked with the personification of music which, as he maintains, has always been his TEACHER.

## Intermodal Translation in the Lectures' Rhetoric

Relying on the guidance of music in his personal life, in his BBC lectures Barenboim uses the LIFE IS MUSIC metaphor (cf. (1)) as a recurring leitmotif and his main rhetorical device for persuading the audience that we can understand diverse aspects of individual, social, and political life through music. In terms of the blending theory, this metaphor can be described as a complex integration network in which LIFE and MUSIC function as the most salient inputs. On the level of language use, particular linguistic expressions via which Barenboim

explicitly characterizes LIFE in-terms-of MUSIC will be viewed as *metaphorical expressions* (or, in Müller's (2008) terms, *verbal metaphors*) which trigger the on-line construction of the dynamically evolving integration network.

Deliberately referring to LIFE AS MUSIC on several occasions,<sup>5</sup> Barenboim also uses a number of less schematic metaphors to shed light on a particular kind of relationship between the two domains. Of these, the metaphor having the highest degree of activation in his lectures is based on Barenboim's experientially derived novel metaphor which was phrased in (1) as MUSIC IS A TEACHER.<sup>6</sup> In terms of discourse organization, the frequent use of this metaphor serves to unite the overall lecture series at a more specific level. Arguably, this metaphor also fulfils another important discourse function. Namely, by using it, Barenboim constantly shifts his viewpoint from that of the lecturer-

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<sup>5</sup> Also Sue Lawley, the BBC Chair, frequently makes explicit reference to this metaphor when introducing individual lectures and/or closing them up, when mediating between Barenboim and the members of the audience during the discussions, and also to characterize the main objective of the lecture series as a whole.

<sup>6</sup> According to Müller's (2008) dynamic theory, metaphoricity, i.e. the process of "seeing" one thing in terms of another, is a matter of activation which can be empirically observable: it can be correlated with the amount of activation indicators such as repetition, elaboration, specification or multimodal construction (2008: 198–200). With reference to degrees of activation, the dynamic category of metaphors is characterized in terms of *sleeping* and *waking* metaphors that form two end points of the metaphoricity scale. "[A] sleeping metaphor is a metaphor whose metaphoricity is potentially available to an average speaker/listener, writer/reader [...], but there are no empirical indications of activated metaphoricity" (2008: 198). A waking metaphor, by contrast, is "surrounded by metaphoricity indicators" and "the more metaphoricity indicators surround such a metaphor, the more it is waking" (2008: 198). Both conventional and novel metaphors may exhibit different degrees of metaphoricity depending on the context of use (see Müller 2008: 198). Referring to the idea of iconic motivation and to the context of interaction, Müller argues that the more cues direct the attention of the interlocutors to the metaphoric quality of an expression, the higher the degree of cognitive activation of metaphoricity in the producer and also potentially in the addressee. As Cienki and Müller put it, "clusters of attention-getting cues produce interactive foregrounding of metaphoricity and since what is interactively foregrounded is also interpersonally foregrounded, metaphoricity should in these cases be highly activated interpersonally" (2008: 495). Note further that, in the revised model of the dynamic category of metaphors (see Tab. 1 in Kolter et al. 2012: 203), multimodal metaphors always qualify as waking, and whenever their meaning is rendered explicit by a metacommentary they reach the highest level of metaphoricity. Accordingly, since their meaning was made explicit on several occasions in the lecture series, the metaphoricity of both life is music as well as music is a teacher is highly activated. For more on activation of metaphoricity through multimodal construction see, e.g., Müller and Tag 2010; Forceville 2013; Górska 2014a; 2014b; 2017; Müller 2017; Szawerna 2017; Feyaerts, Brône and Oben 2017.

teacher to that of someone who has learnt about LIFE from MUSIC and for whom, as he would argue again and again, the latter domain is far more immediate and easier to comprehend in and of itself than that of the former. In effect, his objective is merely to show the many things he himself has learned about “real life” from MUSIC (LD1). Naturally, by putting himself on equal footing with his audience Barenboim establishes common ground with it.

Of the diverse things that we can, as Barenboim himself did, learn from music, I will now consider in a much greater detail some of Barenboim’s musical insights that he presented to the BBC audience in a multimodal manner, giving first a verbal description and then translating it back onto music.

In his first lecture Barenboim’s main aim was to draw some “connection between the inexpressible content of music and in many ways the inexpressible content of life” (L1). The excerpts in (5) and (6) illustrate his main argument:

(5) The first thing we notice about sound [...] is that **it doesn’t live in this world**. Whatever concert took place in this hall [...], the sounds have evaporated, and they are ephemeral. So although sound is a very physical phenomenon, **it has some inexplicable metaphysical hidden power**. The physical aspect that we notice first is that **sound does not exist by itself, but has a permanent constant and unavoidable relation with silence**. (L1)

(6) [S]ound reacts to silence much like the law of gravity tells us, that if you lift an object from the ground you have to use a certain amount of energy to keep it at the height to which you have brought it up to. You have to provide additional energy, otherwise the object will fall back to the law of gravitation on the ground. But this is exactly what sound does with silence. I play again the same note, I play it, I give a certain amount of energy, and if I do nothing more to it, it will die. [plays one note plus brief silence] This is the length of the duration of the life of this C sharp produced by my finger on this piano [...]. What did I say just now? The note dies. And this is the beginning of the tragic element in music, for me. (L1)

In terms of the blending theory, we can say that Barenboim achieves his rhetorical objective of establishing a “connection between the inexpressible content of music and in many ways the inexpressible content of life” by constructing the Life of a Musical Sound blend (cf. Tab. 1).

Table 1. Mental spaces in the Life of a Musical Sound blend

| Input Space 1                                                                                                                                                                                           | Input Space 2                                                                                                                                                                                            | Input Space 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Input Space 4                                                                                                                                                                                               | Blended Space                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Generic space                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Musical sound as a physical phenomenon</p> <p>a musical sound (ms)</p> <p>comes out of silence and has a characteristic duration.</p> <p>needs energy provided by a musician (<math>l_d</math>).</p> | <p>Gravity</p> <p>an object (o)</p> <p>cannot stay at a particular height on its own – it falls to the ground.</p> <p>is constantly drawn by force of gravity and needs energy to counterbalance it.</p> | <p>Life of a human being</p> <p>a human being (hb)</p> <p>is born, lives for a certain span of time, and dies.</p> <p>Living requires energy or life force.</p> <p>Since the amount of life force is limited a human being is bound to die, hence her/his life is tragic.</p> | <p>A musician</p> <p>a musician (m)</p> <p>plays a musical sound for a period of its characteristic duration.</p> <p>Provides energy which produces and sustains the physical sound (<math>l_s</math>).</p> | <p><b>Life of a Musical Sound</b></p> <p>a musical sound (ms/o/hb)</p> <p>Since it is constantly drawn by silence it is bound to die if not sustained by enough energy provided by a musician.</p> <p><i>Emergent structure:</i></p> <p>Life of a musical sound is tragic.</p> <p>Musical sound has a metaphysical power to live in another world and to be reborn in the physical world.</p> | <p>an entity</p> <p>SOURCE-PATH-GOAL schema</p> <p>ABSTRACT MOTION</p> <p>FORCE schema</p> |



Specifically, the underlined expressions in (5) and (6) trigger the process of setting up an integration network and constructing a blended space as its crucial part.<sup>7</sup> This blend involves partial structures from four input spaces: Musical Sound as a Physical Phenomenon ( $I_1$ ), Gravity ( $I_2$ ), Life of a Human Being ( $I_3$ ), and the Musician space ( $I_4$ ). In the context of the blend, the musical sound has some physical properties of sounds in  $I_1$  – it has a particular duration, and some properties of objects in  $I_2$  – it is drawn by force; it inherits a conception of life with three different stages, birth – life – span – death, from  $I_3$ , and from  $I_4$  – the idea that a musician is capable of sustaining sound as a physical phenomenon. When the structures from the four inputs are integrated, the blended concept of the tragic life of a musical sound emerges: since the force of silence acts like gravity, the lifespan of a musical sound as a physical phenomenon depends on the counterforce which is provided by a musician (from  $I_3$ ); and thus being constantly drawn by the force of silence and totally dependent on the limited amount of energy provided by a musician, the musical sound is bound to die (cf. (6)), hence its life, like that of a human being, is tragic. This blend-specific scenario of the tragic life of a musical sound is further elaborated in the following way: since the musical sound (unlike a human being) has some metaphysical hidden power, it continues to live in another world (cf. (5)), and, moreover, it will be “reborn” in the physical world whenever a musician provides to it his or her energy which will counterbalance the force of silence. Note also that in the generic space, the relevant image schemas (Johnson 1987) and abstract motion (Langacker 1987) capture common structure and organization shared by the inputs and define the main cross-space correspondences between them.

Clearly, it is the blended conception of the musical sound that allows Barenboim to convey the idea of the “inexpressible content of music”. In the context of the blend, it can be interpreted in terms of the emergent aspects of the scenario: even though the life of a musical sound is ephemeral and tragic, the sound itself has its own metaphysical hidden power of returning to reality, which is only induced by a performing musician.

As indicated in (6), the correspondence between the length of the musical sound’s duration (in  $I_1$ ) and the life-span of a human being (in  $I_3$ ) was expressed by both the verbal and the musical mode. Drawing upon

<sup>7</sup> For overviews of Conceptual Blending, also known as Conceptual Integration Theory see, e.g. Fauconnier and Turner (2002: 44–50); Libura (2007: 11–66); Dancygier and Sweetser (2014: 73–99); Oakley and Pascual (2017).

Forceville and Urios-Aparisi' characterization of multimodal metaphors (2009a: 4) as well as the dynamic approach to metaphor (Müller 2008: 95–111; Kolter et al. 2012), I will regard this correspondence as a verbo-musical metaphor, which can be phrased as:

(7) THE LENGTH OF A MUSICAL SOUND'S DURATION IS THE LIFE-SPAN OF A HUMAN BEING.

This personification of sound qualifies as a verbo-musical metaphor on account of both the distribution of the metaphorical source and target across two modalities and the crucial role of the verbal context in interpreting the duration of the sound played by Barenboim in terms of the life-span of a human being (cf. in particular the phrase "*the duration of the life of this C sharp*" in (6)). The fact that two modalities are involved conjointly, increases the degree of contextual activation of this metaphor,<sup>8</sup> and in effect renders the idea of the sound's life-span highly salient, making the blended conception of the tragic life of a musical sound more memorable. Undoubtedly, the use of the verbo-musical metaphor also contributes to the originality of Barenboim's rhetorical style.

As might be expected, this personification of sound is driven by one overarching goal of constructing blended concepts – that of "achieving human scale" (Fauconnier and Turner 2002: 322). Once the level of human scale is achieved, "it is natural for us to have the impression that we have direct, reliable, and comprehensive understanding"; and, as Fauconnier and Turner (2002: 323) argue, "[t]his is why achieving a blend at human scale will induce a feeling of global insight". No doubt, human scale and global insight are particularly relevant in any successful persuasion as they render it not only more intelligible, but also more appealing and useful to us as human beings. Referring once again to the excerpts in (5) and (6), we can conclude that this is why Barenboim has in all likelihood succeeded in persuasively conveying to the audience his idea of "inexpressible content of music".

Let us now consider an example of how, relying both on the verbal description and music, Barenboim translates to his audience his music-derived knowledge about the relation between an individual and a group.

(8) [T]he notes in music cannot be allowed to develop their natural egos, so that they hide the preceding one, but the expression in music comes from the linkage [...]. When we play five notes that are bound, each note fights against the power of silence that wants to make it die, and is therefore in relation to the preceding note and to the note that comes after that. So when you play five notes, [plays 5 notes] if each note

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<sup>8</sup> See Footnote 6.

had a big ego it would want to be louder than the note before. And therefore I learned from this very simple fact, that no matter how great an individual you are, music teaches you that the creativity only works in groups, and the expression of the group is very often larger than the sum of the parts. (L1)

The crux of this argument resides in elaborating the structure of the Musical Sound blend and portraying a musical sound as a person who, if not constrained, might develop his or her “natural ego” to a “big ego”. In the context of the blend, the musical sound’s ego corresponds to the sound’s loudness in  $I_1$ , and an increase in loudness corresponds to a “bigger ego” of a sound in the blend. This aspect of the blend is then back projected to  $I_3$  and  $I_4$  giving rise to a metaphorical correspondence which might be phrased as in (9):

(9) (GROWING OF) THE EGO IS (INCREASING) THE MUSICAL SOUND’S INHERENT LOUDNESS.

It is the emergent logic of the blend that allows Barenboim to describe in a very simple and ingenious way the precondition for and the nature of creativity – the concept which, beyond doubt, is difficult to understand. In terms of this logic, to be creative even a “great individual” – be it a musician of  $I_4$  or any human being of  $I_3$  – cannot stay on his/her own. As in the case of a musical sound in the blend, creativity is only possible in a group which, moreover, comprises individuals who have managed to constrain the development of their “natural” egos into “big” egos. Clearly, the elaboration of the blend in (8) functions as the viewpoint from which one can characterize the nature of creativity and psychological development in music and in life, and, by the same token, it provides basis for further structuring of the Musician input ( $I_4$ ) and of the Life of a Human Being input ( $I_3$ ), which are in focus in (8).

It is evident also that the musical illustration of 5 notes referred to in the transcript in (8) makes sense only with reference to the emergent logic of the blend: the notes are played with equal degree of loudness, and thereby they exemplify “natural egos” of musical notes. Directly relevant to the present topic is the fact that this example is another instance of Barenboim’s intermodal translation which relies on a verbo-musical metaphor. Specifically, the source and target of the metaphor (GROWING OF) is the EGO IS (INCREASING) THE MUSICAL SOUND’S INHERENT LOUDNESS are distributed across two modalities: the musical mode in conjunction with the verbal express its source, while the target is only expressed verbally. Note further that Barenboim presents this metaphor as his well-established pattern of thought. Undoubtedly, for members

of the audience, this metaphor is completely novel, and they have to follow his guidance to establish the relevant correspondence on-line. And so, this might be a clear case of two alternative ways of activating the same metaphor – as a kind of “cognitive routine” and as a structure created on-line.<sup>9</sup>

The next example of Barenboim’s intermodal translations and, presumably, of his routine way of thinking about life comes from his third lecture. In his argument, having recalled a question that he was confronted with as a small boy living in the Middle East – of why a single event in life may change our perception of whatever preceded it and whatever will follow – Barenboim goes on to explain that he got a clear understanding of this relationship between events from music. Referring to a musical example he later intends to play, he notes:

(10) [T]he moment where there comes a **fantastic vertical pressure on the horizontal floor of the music**, and that moment you know that the music cannot continue any more the way it was before, such as the world was not the same after the 9<sup>th</sup> November of 1938, or the 9<sup>th</sup> November of 1989, or the 11<sup>th</sup> September of 2001 – events that have changed everything both towards the future and towards the past. [...] My point is that I learned the fact that there is a vertical pressure on the horizontal floor, that there is something that shows at a certain moment that we have to accept the inevitability of something that has changed our life. (L3)

183

The specific novel metaphor that he employs can be stated as in (11):

(11) A CRITICAL EVENT (IN THE COURSE OF LIFE) IS VERTICAL PRESSURE (ON THE HORIZONTAL FLOOR OF MUSIC).

The musical example played to support the argument consisted of a few bars from the last movement of the ninth symphony by Beethoven where the text of the *Ode to Joy* is: “und der Cherub steht vor Gott, vor Gott” (‘and the cherub stands before God’). Observe that the up/down and the force image schemas (Johnson1987), which provide the structure and basic logic of the source domain of this metaphor, are evoked first through language (cf. *vertical pressure, horizontal floor* in (10)), and then by means of pitch and volume of the music played. Therefore, I will regard it as another instance of a verbo-musical metaphor in Barenboim’s discourse. Undoubtedly, depending on their musical knowledge and experience, the members of the audience are bound to differ in their understanding of this metaphor. And in particular, for those of the members who are used to

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<sup>9</sup> For a study of creative metaphors in argumentative texts which allow for differences in meaning construction between writers and readers and between different groups of readers, see Semino (2012).

attentive listening, the musical mode would provide far more specific and rich understanding of the metaphorical source than for those members who take music as a mere pastime or background noise.

The example in (10) raises two further questions to which we may now turn: why the FORCE and the UP/DOWN (or, the VERTICALITY) image schemas are employed and why music is described as *horizontal*. The use of the VERTICALITY schema in the characterization of musical pitch is, on Zbikowski's account, quite straightforward:

(12) when we make *low* sounds, our chest resonates; when we make *high* sounds, our chest no longer resonates in the same way, and the source of sound seems located nearer our head. The 'up' and 'down' of musical pitch thus correlate with the spatial 'up' and 'down' – the vertical orientation – of our bodies. (Zbikowski 2000: 6)

Moreover, the bodily sensations associated with the production of high and low pitches are, as Zbikowski claims, just one aspect of our embodied experience of musical pitch. Crucially, embodied image-schematic structure of spatial concepts can be metaphorically projected onto the acoustic domain. Specifically,

(13) [B]oth space and the frequency spectrum are continua that can be divided into discontinuous elements. In the spatial domain, division of the continuum results in points; in the acoustic domain it results in pitches. Mapping of [the spatial] UP/DOWN onto pitch allows us to import the concrete relationships through which we understand physical space into the domain of music, and thereby provide a coherent account of relationships between musical pitches. (Zbikowski 2000: 7)

In brief, for Zbikowski, there is a direct bodily motivation for the conceptual metaphor given in (14):

(14) PITCH RELATIONSHIPS ARE RELATIONSHIPS IN VERTICAL SPACE.

Importantly, the musical passage played by Barenboim involved a very abrupt *fall down* the musical scale, and thereby it functioned as – to use Zbikowski's term (2009: 363) – a sonic analog of Barenboim's verbal characterization of critical events in life in terms of *vertical (pressure)*.<sup>10</sup>

Note that the use of the expression *pressure* itself indicates that the FORCE schema has also been activated. The application of the force schema to the music domain might be said to reflect our embodied experience of a higher volume sound whose production requires more force as compared to a sound having a lower volume; in the case in point, the force schema is also motivated by our understanding of the sudden change in pitch and volume in terms of (caused) motion (cf. the metaphors

<sup>10</sup> For more on the up/down orientation in music, see Górská 2014c.

CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS and COUSES ARE FORCES, Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 179–188).

And why is (*the floor of*) *music horizontal*? This might be motivated by the idea of pitch and volume as having one particular level during the relevant musical “chunk” (with respect to our common experience of force, we could say that here a particular force vector follows a single path of motion); when affected by abrupt pressure, such a musical “chunk” can no longer continue in the same way (since the original force-vector has been diverted to a different path of motion).

Beyond doubt, the shifts between language and music in constructing one argument contribute to Barenboim’s rhetorical originality. Crucially, the fact that two modalities are involved in activating the notions of VERTICALITY and FORCE increases the degree of contextual activation of the motivating image schemas and of the metaphorical correspondence itself, and in effect renders Barenboim’s insight into critical events in life more memorable.

My final example of Barenboim’s intermodal translations illustrates his views on why a resolution of long-term peace process fails. Arguing that “we have to teach our children [...] about the connection between music and real life”, Barenboim shifts the topic again to things he has himself learnt from music. And to “demonstrate”, as he put it, one such thing, he reconstructed the way he managed to find a resolution in his debate with his friend Edward Said (a Palestinian intellectual), over the Oslo Process.<sup>11</sup> For a long time they kept having very lively arguments until one day Barenboim said to his friend:

(15) It doesn’t really matter if Oslo is right or wrong, it will never work because **the relation between content and time** is erroneous [...]. This I have learned from music [...]. **The preparation for the beginning of the Oslo discussions was practically non-existent, much too quick. And the process itself, once the discussion started, was very slow, and then it was interrupted, and then they said they would meet next Tuesday, and then it was cancelled on Monday, and then they met again a month later, and everything. It had no chance.** And I sat down at the piano and I showed to him what I meant. (LD1)

At this point, Barenboim played a few bars of a very majestic, slow introduction of the *Pathétique Sonata* of Beethoven, and then moved on to play a few bars of the main movement – *Allegro*, and recalled that he had told his friend that “Oslo, the equivalent of Oslo would be if

<sup>11</sup> The term “Oslo Process” refers to the Palestinian-Israeli political process that started in 1993 with the aim to end the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The process was supposed to have been completed by May 1999, yet due to many delays and periodic outbursts of violence it failed to produce a permanent agreement.

I would play the introduction very fast and without any preparation of anything – in other words: [he played a few bars of the introduction at an extremely fast tempo], and commented: “You would not understand anything what I am doing. And then I would get to the main allegro and I will play”: [he played only one note from the allegro], which made his audience respond with laughter; then he continued to play the allegro at an extremely slow tempo – a few more notes at a time with long pauses, to which his audience reacted with applause. Finally, he closed up his argument by saying that his discussion with his friend Said “stopped from that moment on about Oslo because we both agreed it wouldn't work, for different reasons” (LD1).

In this case, the specific verbo-musical metaphor can be stated as in (16):

(16) A SUCCESSFUL EVENT SCHEDULE IS AN APPROPRIATE RELATION BETWEEN CONTENT AND TIME IN MUSIC.

At the verbal level, this metaphor extends over the paragraph in (15), providing understanding of why the timing of the events as Barenboim has described it could not lead to a successful outcome of the Oslo process. And, here again, Barenboim's musical prompts work jointly with his verbal message (cf. the “content” is a particular fragment of the musical piece and “time” refers to the tempo at which this fragment is played). There seems to be hardly any doubt that Barenboim's communication via the verbo-musical mode was crystal clear to his audience – they reacted with laughter and applause. This reaction strongly indicates that the presently considered verbo-musical metaphor functioned as a successful means of communication which provided a clear understanding of the situation at hand. It needs to be emphasized, however, that when Barenboim used the same verbo-musical metaphor in his debate with Edward Said, it provided not only an understanding of the situation to which they both could agree (although “for different reasons”), but – more importantly – it brought about a change in their actions and behaviour – they stopped arguing.

## Conclusion

In earlier studies of intermodal shifts between music and language the focus was on what musicians call “text painting”, in which music accompanying a particular text of a vocal work is meant to suggest or

“paint” an image that is referred to in the text itself (see Zbikowski 2006; 2008; 2009). Seen in this light, Barenboim’s intermodal shifts are a unique case for a number of reasons. First, taking his lifelong experience of music as a metaphorical source domain via which he has learnt a lot about the domain of life, Barenboim uses the verbal mode either alone or in combination with the musical modality aiming to convey his main objective of convincing the *BBC Reith lectures’* audience that they can get a deeper insight into life through music – provided they do not treat music as something merely “ornamental”, “enjoyable” and “exciting”, but as something “essential” (L3). Crucially, through their multimodal construction and Barenboim’s explicit characterizations, the verbo-musical metaphors are in focal attention of the audience. The creative character of the metaphors may be considered yet another “metaphoricity indicator” contributing to their foregrounding.<sup>12</sup> In effect, having achieved a very high degree of contextual activation, they function as a valuable rhetorical means of obtaining the persuasive goal and building an intersubjective relation with the audience.

Undoubtedly, depending on their musical knowledge and experience, the members of the audience are bound to differ in their understanding of the verbo-musical metaphors. And in particular, for those of the members who are used to attentive listening, the musical mode would provide a far more specific and rich understanding of the metaphorical source than for those members who take music as a mere pastime or background noise.

Note, finally, that Barenboim presents the verbo-musical metaphors as his well-established patterns of thought. For members of the audience, however, the various metaphorical mappings to the domain of LIFE are completely novel, and they have to follow his guidance to establish the relevant correspondences on-line. And so, this might be a case of two alternative ways of activating the same metaphors – as a kind of cognitive routine and as a structures created on-line.

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<sup>12</sup> Górska (2017a) argues that, aside the observable metaphoricity indicators discussed by Müller (2008: 198; see also Footnote 6), the novelty of the mapping should also be included among the factors that may increase the metaphor’s activation level.



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**Data Sources with Abbreviations Used**

- L1/LD1 – Lecture 1 (& discussion): In the Beginning Was Sound, Delivered by Daniel Barenboim at Cadogan Hall. London: BBC Radio. *Reith Lectures 2006*. URL: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/reith2006/lecture1.shtml> [ed. June 10, 2006].
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## Vocal Intersemioticity in James Chapman's *How Is This Going to Continue?*

The aim of this article is to consider what Roman Jakobson once described as “intersemiotic translation” – a form of *transmutation* of signs from one sign system to another (Jakobson 1959: 261) – through its application to the concept of voice in fiction. In this paper, such transmutation assumes the form of a system of intersemiotic transfers which weave together two works belonging to two distinct media: Bernd Alois Zimmermann’s composition *Requiem für einen jungen Dichter* (1969) and James Chapman’s novel *How Is This Going to Continue?* (2007). Chapman’s novel draws on Zimmermann’s requiem, which is itself founded on a sophisticated network of musical and literary sources. My analysis relies to a great extent on the concepts of intertextuality and intermediality. Since Chapman’s novel makes ample use of quotes from vocal performances, I wish to demonstrate that intersemioticity here is closely linked to the treatment of the voice as an intermedial and intertextual collage of fragments and scraps of vocal performances and literary works. Therefore, allusions to performances represent traces of voices, thus an intersemiotic sign of vocal absence. The fragmentary nature of such intersemiotic translation is inscribed within the fundamental aspect of the novel – the text is at once a funeral tribute and a meditation on death. In other words, within the context of the intersemiotic transmutation, Zimmermann’s requiem for a poet becomes a tribute to the late singer Kathleen Ferrier and an intermedial inquiry into the nature of death.

191

The first part of this article focuses on the specificity of the intermedial context for Chapman’s text. The second part goes on to investigate the notion of voice by concentrating on its specific intertextuality, which leads to a clash of discourses and exposes a multiple intersemiotic and intertextual construct.

## The Voice of the Dead and the Living: The Intermedial Nature of the Text

The intersemiotic character of Chapman's novel is immediately obvious. The book presents the reader with a musical system of signs from the very start, owing to its cover showing a musical score, but it also engages with the visual. By being shaped as an A-4 book in horizontal layout, *in-plano*, with a spiral-binding, instead of being stitched or sewn, it incites us to look at it as a crafted object, like an artisan's hand-made artifact, an amateur's notebook, and a multimedia booklet. With its yellowish cover, it aspires to stand for a unique, precious and quasi-archeological find. Moreover, the novel is supposed to have come out in a limited, signed edition, mine being 26<sup>th</sup> out of 50. Hence, the notion of curiosity lies at the heart of the novel.



Figure 1. Cover of Chapman's *How Is This Going to Continue?*

The idiosyncratic nature of the text derives from its generic – intersemiotic – specificity as well. The genre of the work is stated at the title-page, which suggests we are reading “[t]he memoir of Eckhard Unruh’s final year as a musician, composed by him for narrators, prerecorded tapes, contralto and baritone soloists, two choirs, chamber orchestra, percussion orchestra, electronic and concrete sounds, electric ukulele, and pipe organ” (Chapman 2007: 3). However, in the back-cover blurb one finds a reference which makes it clear that the text is a novel. Therefore, a multiplicity of genres as well as an interplay of intermedial hybrids are clearly at stake here.

Furthermore, the intersemiotic hybridity is closely linked to the text's displaying a multi-layered narrative structure. Chapman's novel can be divided into four parts: (a) the first part outlines the book's project – it is a simple one-page introductory notice, stating that what follows is a compact edition of an oratorio – its libretto; (b) the second part is a slightly longer text, i.e. a fictional quote from *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, presenting the composer's biography, and giving some details as to the circumstances under which the work was composed; (c) the third part, the text proper, which spans over fifty pages, is divided into two sections, or two movements ("First the Wife", "Then the Husband"); (d) finally, the ultimate pages of the text provide the sources and the references of which the text is made.

In stark contrast to its structure, the novel's story is extremely simple. A fictitious, eccentric composer, Unruh Eckhard Rabindranath, who has spent his life composing "exuberant" and "undesirable" works of art (Chapman 2007: 10), characterized as much by minimalism as by gigantism or plagiarism, decides to compose an oratorio following his wife's demise. While his spouse died of breast cancer, Unruh himself suffers from a series of strokes. The text proper of the novel is this oratorio, which constitutes at once a requiem and a tribute to the deceased wife.

Indeed, Chapman's text is founded on the exploration of the theme of death, especially suicide, and the way in which it is articulated with the living. This motif is brought to prominence from the very beginning: the score-like cover of the novel has, in fact, two other layers of glassine-like semitransparent sheets. One gives the title in red characters, *How Is This Going to Continue?*; the other provides readers with a quote from Montaigne: "But thou diest not because thou art sicke: thou diest because thou art living. Death is able to kill thee without the helpe of any sickness" (Chapman 2007: 1). The cover thus announces the novel's main theme as a playful aporia within the articulation of life and death through the ironic echo between Montaigne's citation and the title, as if one notion literally erased the other. It is also already suggestive of multiple aesthetics, making the act of reading not merely the sheer turning of the pages or simple linear deciphering, but the gesture of peeling back layers and disentangling multiple intertextual and intersemiotic threads. The page that has been turned over does not simply disappear from view, but remains in one's hands and is grafted to all the other references that come into play. Like this cover, with its multiple palimpsest-like semi-transparency, the text is predicated on multifarious intermedial references.

While the text engages in a meditation on death, emphasis is placed on the condition of the human body, which is bound to disappear, which

raises the question of the physical concreteness of the voice. The body is shown to vanish through illness. Many of the fragments are steeped in stark depictions of the dying body: “one iron rod swished through the air and smashed into the skull, cracking it to bits. The legs twitched, one small hand abruptly clutched the air as if she were still alive” (Chapman 2007: 34). The text unrestrainedly exposes decay and physical harm of that “flesh [was] too filthy for the dogs to eat” (Chapman 2007: 27).

By doing so, the novel highlights the question of the individual’s trying to come to terms with pain or the loss of bodily faculties. This is clearly the case in the excerpt from an interview with the Czech composer, Bedřich Smetana, who suffered from deafness and mental disorders, and, in considering pain as a bodily function which issues a warning, raises this question: “Did my poor tiny wife really need to be *warned* for seven months?” (Chapman 2007: 42). Pain is also pondered in a philosophical meditation which refutes the idea of pain as evil and deems it to be “what is necessary to the production of happiness” (Chapman 2007: 35). Finally, André Malraux’s *Lazarus*, written during the writer’s stay in hospital, undergoing treatment for neural sickness, lies at the center of the questions of suffering and death, so that the intersemiotic voice also partakes of those ultimate stages of utterance delivered by an agonizing body which is about to yield to the inexpressible.

The vision of the dying body is on a par with the issue of time. Chapman’s text depicts transitions, exposing death at the very moment when it overwhelms the individual. Death is considered at the point of its occurrence, as it is just about to happen. It is death in the middle of its advent, the unthinkable moment of ultimate transition. The voice is the voice of the dying or the condemned to die, like in Josef Suk’s or Frederick Delius’ “deathbed interview [s]” (Chapman 2007: 29) or Archimedes’ words reported just “as soldiers were killing him” (Chapman 2007: 39). There is, then, a *kairos* to death as is evidenced by a fictional quote from Tolstoy: “She was going to experience dying. She did not want to miss it” (Chapman 2007: 34). And this *kairos* is precisely what is unthinkable – the aporetic moment of transition, within which the body loses its grip on the world, and which is underlined by the quote from Delius: “This same mouth that makes these words now, is going to be dead in a matter of days” (Chapman 2007: 46).

Two forms of illness are placed at the forefront: cancer and stroke/heart failure. Chapman’s text pits the feminine against the masculine not only by the bipartite division of the novel, but also within the very question of illness, since the feminine is mostly associated with cancer – especially through the figure of the female singer Kathleen Ferrier, while

the masculine translates into strokes or heart failures, attuned to the figure of the composer, the musician or the conductor. Ray Roberts comments on the Canadian pianist's Glenn Gould's stroke, and his death in 1982; Alexander Ivashkin speaks of the Soviet composer, Alfred Schnittke, who suffered several strokes before dying in 1998; Humphrey Burton focuses on the American conductor Leonard Bernstein, who died of a heart attack in 1990; the German philosopher Herbert Marcuse, who died of a stroke himself in 1979, is quoted in the text; so is the American musician John Hurt, who suffered a heart attack and passed away in 1966. Edward Elgar is quoted as saying "[T]he problem is, my wife predeceased me" (Chapman 2007: 39). The prefix "pre-", here, undermines the pure subjectivity of the act of dying and intimates a meditation on death by means of the Self's relationship with the Other, so that the book explores death within the dynamics of relationships.

Indeed, myriads of artist-characters within the novel may be arranged into groups, picturing the specific relationships between the dead and the living: Kathleen Ferrier and her interaction with Winifred Ferrier, John Barbirolli or Maurice Leonard; Virginia and Leonard Woolf; Gustav and Alma Mahler; Bedřich Smetana and his wife Bettina; Alfred Schnittke and his wife Irina. Thus, the notion of death arises out of the confrontation with the dying Other, creating meaning through externality and reciprocal mirroring. Josef Suk's fictional quotation deals with the death of the composer's wife – and Dvořák's daughter, Otilie – at the very moment when he is dying himself: "While my wife, dying, listened to Bach, I heard her seconds being destroyed" (Chapman 2007: 29). It would seem that the trace of the Other's death guides the subject through dying, recalling the mythical Charon, as though there was no conceiving of death beyond the present-absent relationship between the Self and the Other, and as though there was a need to get a grasp of death through otherness.

This is precisely the rationale behind the question of memory as trace. It comes to light either as loss of memory, as in Ivashkin's commentary on Schnittke who, following his illness, had forgotten his *Cello Concerto* n°1, or through the question of forgetfulness as a self-erasing trace of the Self within the Other. In an obituary of Gustav Mahler, one reads: "We cannot see how any of his music can long survive him" (Chapman 2007: 44). This is the trace of the voice that chimes with the question of the persistence of the Self. "Will there be nothing left of me, absolutely nothing?" (Chapman 2007: 33), a voice asks in a poem by Rabindranath Tagore.

But then, it is the intermedial context that largely contributes to the book's theme. The novel's references are predominantly clues to musical compositions, and they, too, point to death – Schubert's *Die Winterreise*,



Mahler's "Der Abschied" from *Das Lied von der Erde*, or Schönberg's cantata, *Gurrelieder*, for instance. If the intersemiotic references are closely related to the novel's thematic background, it is above all thanks to their being vocal works – readable as texts and not scores, so that they create evocations not only owing to their musical potential, but also by a *loop-like* dynamics of intermediality, whereby the literary text comes into contact with the musical composition on the cusp of the very literariness of music, i.e. the text, the lyrics, the libretto. This brings to light a *ricochet*, a scalar system of intermediality, as if by a *knock-on* effect, by which a work's reference leads to yet another work or idea, at one with the multiplicity of a rhizome. For instance, the reference to the performance of Shostakovich's *Viola Sonata* (Chapman 2007: 56) is symbolic in itself, as his last work, while the mention of his *Symphony* n°14 (Chapman 2007: 32) refers to a cycle of songs, all of which, in their turn, deal with death, mirroring the very effect of rhizome-like, loop-like, scalar intersemioticity on which Chapman's novel is founded. Hence, the intermedial reference to music is not fortuitous; the intersemiotic translation acquires meaning as a fully signifying element pertaining to a network of intersemiotic references revolving around a single theme that keeps multiplying and forking out.

196 One example of such complex *ricochet* intersemiotic structure resides in the mentioning of mythology and myth-inspired opera. The theme of death is exposed as a cultural discourse, handed down to us as with the myths of Orpheus or Echo. It seems unavoidable not to relate their cultural implications – the voice of the dead as spectre (Orpheus) or the fragmentary voice (Echo) – to a tradition of intersemioticity that has shaped Western musical culture, as in the two central references in the text: Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* and Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*.<sup>1</sup>

Consequently, the theme of death finds verification in questions of pain, time, memory, and the body. Intersemioticity brings us face to face with the logic of contiguity, of metonymy which reflects the necessary act of falling back on an ever-expanding otherness and absence. Intermediality seems as inconceivable as death itself and as puzzling as the very question of absent – yet to be sounded – voices. How is one to read a text that pretends to be a musical score? This is the paradoxical logic of the voice as a trace of (potential) performance and that of intersemioticity, both of which are tainted by this impossible, rhizome-like otherness of metonymy.

<sup>1</sup> Orpheus is one of the founding myths related to the voice that, according to Marie-France Castarède, has been perpetuated well into Western Christianity and its iconography (2004: 39). Interestingly, while the myth of Echo annihilates the fullness of the voice, with Orpheus the subject is atomized and scattered since the figure of Eurydice turns into a spectre that can be contemplated as stars in the sky.

## The Intersemiotic Clash of Discourses

Chapman's novel undoubtedly hints at the funeral homage, elements of which can be found – both in music and literature – in numerous poetic forms such as epicedium, threnody, requiem, lament, eulogy, tombeau, and so forth. The novel's ambiguity when it comes to its genre – novel, oratorio, and memoir – provides the essential foundation for questions relating to the generic nature of the text itself, with reference to funeral discourse as lamentation, commemoration, or tribute. Some excerpts recall genres, which revolve around memoirs and biographies,<sup>2</sup> while other fragments clearly underline the primacy of funeral homage.<sup>3</sup> The voice appears here through the multitude of origins and leads to a clash of discourses.

By and large, the generic instability is due to the novel's highly intertextual nature. If intertextuality may be said to be at its highest, here, it is because the text is almost exclusively made of references and quotations. Dozens of citations are presented on the page in a specific and highly organized way, creating the illusion that they function as a musical score. There is certainly room for references that are accompanied by short excerpts. But, notably, there is also a zero degree of citation, in which the reference remains sheer reference, so that the textual quote becomes no more than a bibliographical entry, as in the listing of sources at the end of the book. However, a reference appearing within the text differs from those to be found at the end of the book, insofar as it is granted vocal specificity by its very position within the *score* – the way in which it is supposed, however virtually,<sup>4</sup> to be voiced and sounded. Hence, it is the (absent) voice – the trace of the voice – that is meant to give the text its intersemiotic status.

There is a form of coarseness or austerity to that isolated reference devoid of its context and the short citation isolated by the blank of the page.<sup>5</sup> What shows through, is the gesture of cutting and pasting, that of the scissors,

<sup>2</sup> Alma Mahler's *Memories and Letters*, Virginia Woolf's *Diary*, Glenn Gould's *Notebook*, Maurice Leonard's *Kathleen*, or Winifred Ferrier's *The Life of Kathleen Ferrier*.

<sup>3</sup> Bernstein's quotes dealing with Mahler, or the obituary of Gould hinting at the Requiem Mass: "At any rate, rest in peace Glenn Gould" (Chapman 2007: 45).

<sup>4</sup> The text intimates its very transcendence through possible executions. The score being reduced, condensed, the mere reference acts in the same way as the scoreless mention of instrumental parts, implying that there exists some form of exteriority bound to complete the text. This is part of the intersemiotic delusion – *trompe-l'œil*, as it were – with which the text toys.

<sup>5</sup> Antoine Compagnon insists that an isolated citation is devoid of meaning as such and needs its surrounding context (1979: 38).

following Antoine Compagnon's words.<sup>6</sup> The text seems to offer just a foretaste of the larger whole, like the 19<sup>th</sup> century thematic catalogues of music, which provided the beginnings of compositions (Escal 1988: 100). Therefore, there is a *mirage* of continuation; the impression of a call for resumption. From this angle, the structural metaphor is that of the list or the catalogue, but also that of the compilation, the compendium, the anthology, and all forms of entry-texts that are inimical to exhaustiveness and founded on condensation and abbreviation. The text becomes a compiler's work, like in ancient chrestomathies and commonplace books (Miola 2004: 18), acting as a mirror of the 20<sup>th</sup> century criticism of intertextuality itself, reminiscent of concepts such as Mikhail Bakhtin's *heteroglossia* or Roland Barthes' *feuilleton du discours*. It is as though the text's structure were the mirror of that very critique aiming to place it in exposure or to *literalize* it, as though to achieve a parodic distortion of heteroglossia itself.

But perhaps the best metaphorical template for Chapman's novel would be that of the extreme or *absolute* intertextuality represented by the cento. Originally, from Latin word *cento*, meaning a "quilt, blanket, or curtain made of old garments stitched together" (Okáčová 2009: 1), the term suggests a patchwork structure, a "collage of different voices".<sup>7</sup> As a poetic mode, it is a peculiar genre, which highlights pure heteroglossia. When Marie Okáčová states that "the uniqueness of the cento consists in its absolute derivativeness" (2009: 1), she shows that it is a wholly derived and derivative piece, like Chapman's novel.

The cento is illustrative of the multiplicity of voices and origins that, even though they are made to form one single piece, are irreducible one to the other and may well contradict each other, its elements appearing in contrasts and oppositions. The multifarious origins are, somewhat paradoxically, brought together without the possibility of coalescing: "[t]he cento variously pays homage to, parodies, and/or perverts its source text" (McCutcheon 2012: 79). This is equally the logic of the *quodlibet* in music.<sup>8</sup> These structural templates lay the foundation for envisaging the voice

<sup>6</sup> Compagnon emphasizes the physical gesture of cutting and pasting as a fundamental literary experience (1979: 16). He asks whether the pleasure derived from reading is actually that of an interactive *bricolage*, a game, or a *do-it-yourself* activity (1979: 17).

<sup>7</sup> Mark McCutcheon insists on this tradition of collage, remixes and mash-ups (2012: 79). The French *Trésor de la Langue Française* states the term dates back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century and defines it as a composition made up of fragments ("pièce composée de vers ou de fragments de vers d'origines diverses").

<sup>8</sup> Defined as "a piece made up of different songs or fragments of songs thrown together often with the apparent aim of making an incongruous and absurd mixture of texts" (Grout and Palisca 1988: 253).

here as a non autonomous construct, but a set of fragmentary presences related to absent sources, a network of vocal traces that contribute to the intersemiotic transmutation.

At the kernel of Chapman's mixture of voices lies hybridity. There are multiple forms of discourse, some being aphorisms, such as Emily Dickinson's "Those-dying then" (Chapman 2007: 40), others interviews or medical statements. Schönberg's celebration of death starkly contrasts with the lightness of dying in Hurt's "Let the Mermaids Flirt with Me", or with the crude and objective "Report on a mastectomy" (Chapman 2007: 17). "The Boys in the Back Room", sung by Marlene Dietrich, precedes a quote from Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. The pathetic and the lachrymose cohabit with the lighthearted. The Christian beliefs of transcendence and resurrection are sapped by nihilist opinions, like in the quote from Malraux's *Lazarus* which questions the "lunatic metempsychosis of the West" by reminding readers that "[t]he dread of extinction is as meaningless as the dread of non birth" (Chapman 2007: 43). Some quotes are witty, others may leave one in bewilderment, as this elevation of cancer to a life principle: "Philosophy does not retain the notion that nature is self-destructive [...] we cannot hold the view that cancer has accidentally or purposely come into existence to destroy the body [...] Cancer is not a blunder, but one of the wonders in nature" (Chapman 2007: 19). Hence, the polyphonic nature of the text appears as a hybrid association of discourses.

But then, the text does not attempt to suggest a dialectic synthesis of opinions or any holistic assimilation of voices. It does not lend itself to a synthesis of conflicting subjectivities. What is sought is a collision of voices. This is why the structural metaphor of the cento/quodlibet is operative as an extreme instance of – and thus, almost a caricature of – heteroglossia. Okáčová suggests that the cento embodies the Derridean paradox of deconstruction.<sup>9</sup> The emphasis on the clash of discourses, through the form of the cento helps us get a better grasp of the nature of voice traces in Chapman, for it lays bare an intersemiotic agonistics. However, yet another formal metaphor is brought to bear on the novel – that of the funeral composition underlying Zimmerman's *Requiem for a Young Poet*.

<sup>9</sup> This is all the more obvious, as the cento – traditionally understood as a frivolous, playful, minor genre – naturally undermines the themes of death and mourning. The cento, in other words, is at odds with the Requiem Mass. The text thus contains a harbinger of its own deconstruction within the very use of genre, which is not out of keeping with the polygeneric genesis of Zimmermann's work and the ludic, avowed polygenericity Chapman's composer avails himself of.

Indeed, by building on the tradition of the funeral genre of the requiem,<sup>10</sup> the two works come to be closely entwined. The requiem tradition casts a new light on the trace of the voice by suggesting that through lamentation the voice becomes a shriek and that it is partly an act, insofar as it stems from a vow, that of a peaceful rest. Nevertheless, Zimmermann's requiem does not entirely follow the traditional genre. Calling his requiem a *lingual*, Zimmermann toys with the notion of language and the tradition of commemoration. The figure of the poet, represented in the *Requiem* by the three writers who committed suicide – Vladimir Mayakovsky, Sergei Esenin and Konrad Bayer to whom Chapman alludes – transforms the work into a universal tribute to any poet.<sup>11</sup>

In fact, the structure of Chapman's text is based on the programme established for the performance of Zimmermann's *Requiem* at Carnegie Hall on 20 April 1999. The programme presented an English translation as well as a graphic approximation of Zimmermann's *Requiem*, reliant on a form of condensation of the original work.<sup>12</sup> Chapman's text follows suit and states: "[w]e have therefore introduced some simplifying features into the apparatus of this version" (Chapman 2007: 7). Hence, since the musical sign has been partly evacuated from the Carnegie Hall programme and from Chapman's novel, they both constitute an intersemiotic transmutation of the original score – an *over-score* of sorts. There only remains a trace of the initial intersemioticity, namely time indications related to musical time and the part-layout indicating voice entries (left and right margins of the page). Chapman does not borrow Zimmermann's divisions. The composer's *Requiem* is divided into *Prologue*, *Requiem I*, *Requiem II* (with five subsections) and *Dona Nobis Pacem*, while Chapman's is a two-part work. However,

<sup>10</sup> It should be remembered that a requiem is but a template – the text of the Mass for the Dead, upon which composers build their own music. The requiem, then, bears a specific intertextual and intersemiotic potential. The name derives from the first words of the Introit: *requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine* ("Grant them Eternal rest, O Lord"). A mass habitually comprises variable parts (*Proper*: Introit, Gradual, Alleluia, Offertory, Communion) and invariable parts (*Ordinary*: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei). In a requiem, Gloria or Credo are omitted, but the Tract and Dies Irae are added. For more details, see Grout (1988: 47–50), Michels (1988: 127), and Chase (2003: 2).

<sup>11</sup> It follows that the requiem lies in the context of the already long-standing tradition of tribute and non liturgical requiem, initiated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and pursued by many 20<sup>th</sup> century composers. Chapman's text alludes not only to Mayakovsky (Chapman 2007: 59) and Esenin (Chapman 2007: 58), but also to Zimmermann's own suicide (Chapman 2007: 59).

<sup>12</sup> The musical score was replaced by the text, so that its very intersemioticity was reduced. This gives the reader/audience the possibility of following the voices by identifying the sources and reading quotations in their entirety, whereas, in performance, they can appear as only partly audible conflicting fragments.

Chapman does reproduce the essential elements from the part-distribution in Zimmermann, as is visible in the chart illustrating the analogy between the two works (Fig. 2).

Though partly eliminated, the voice remains on the page as a trace, inasmuch as its presence remains visible in the use of tracks, as in the original musical score. Both works make use of performing groups (choirs, soloists, speakers, instrumental parts and 4-track audio-tapes), so that the suggested intersemioticity resides in intermingling (a) live sung or spoken voices and (b) recorded sung or spoken voices.<sup>13</sup> Although Chapman does not resort to polyglotism, he follows in Zimmermann's footsteps by intimating that the original composition included passages in several languages.<sup>14</sup> The soprano voice is replaced by a contralto.<sup>15</sup> Both works make use of intertextuality by resorting to a high degree of sampling and collage,<sup>16</sup> and their intertextual patterns offer telling comparisons (see Fig. 3 and 4).

While some of the sources are used in both works, the overall structure, as far as the distribution of sound sources and voices is concerned, displays similar patterns. A network of correspondences and connections is thus created.

If Chapman's novel brings to light multiple intermedial relationships, through its numerous references to music as well as its obvious link to Zimmermann's *Requiem* and the 1999 Carnegie Hall performance, it also reveals a polymorphic intertextual dimension, owing to the networks of references it draws on and its allusions to the sources in Zimmermann's composition.

<sup>13</sup> This mixture is reminiscent of earlier forms of spoken voice used in music, such as Schönberg's *Sprechgesang* and *Sprechstimme*.

<sup>14</sup> Zimmermann uses excerpts in Latin, German, Czech, English, Greek, Old Greek, Russian, Hungarian. Chapman's novel suggests that the initial score incorporated excerpts in German, Greek, Czech, Hungarian, Mandarin Chinese, French, Italian, Bengali, Sindhi, Hindi, Kannada, Sanskrit, Sumerian, Hebrew, Arabic, Russian, Portuguese, and English.

<sup>15</sup> Owing to the central role played by the English contralto Kathleen Ferrier.

<sup>16</sup> While Zimmermann literally resorts to sampling, Chapman's text only evokes the technique. The very act of carving up the voice and reusing scraps seems to bridge the gap between the tradition of the cento and the contemporary remix culture. Both are subversive and deconstructing practices. McCutcheon states that the cento "constitutes a kind of meta-genre that simultaneously, paradoxically subverts the principle of genre [...] blurring the boundaries between primary and secondary cultural forms" (2012: 86). For Navas the remix culture "developed in a social context that demanded for a term that encapsulated the act of taking not from the world but an archive of representations of the world. In this sense, sampling can only be conceived culturally as a meta-activity [...]" (2012: 12).

Zimmermann, *Requiem For a Young Poet*

| Prologue<br>Requiem I                          | Choir<br>III                  | Track I             | Tape 1               |           | Track IV           | Speaker<br>I & II                                 |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
|                                                | Choirs<br>I, II, III          | Track II            | Tape 1               |           | Track III          |                                                   |
| Requiem II                                     | Choirs<br>I, II, III          | Track I             | Track II             | Track III | Track IV           | Track III<br>Speakers<br>I & II                   |
|                                                | Choirs<br>I, II, III          | Soloists<br>soprano | baritone             | Track I   | Track II           |                                                   |
| Dona<br>Pacem                                  | Nobis<br>Choirs<br>I, II, III | Soloists<br>soprano | baritone             | Track I   | Track II           | Track III<br>Track IV                             |
|                                                |                               | Soloists<br>soprano | baritone             | Track I   | Track II           |                                                   |
| Chapman, <i>How Is This Going to Continue?</i> |                               |                     |                      |           |                    |                                                   |
|                                                | Track I                       | Track II            | Tape<br>Track<br>III |           | Chorus<br>I & II   | Soloists<br>instrumental<br>contralto<br>baritone |
|                                                |                               |                     |                      |           | Speaker<br>I<br>II |                                                   |

Chapman, *How Is This Going to Continue?*

|          |                  |                 |                                   |
|----------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Track I  | Tape             |                 | Soloists                          |
|          | Track II         | Track III       |                                   |
| Track I  | Track II         | Track III       | Soloists<br>contralto<br>baritone |
| Track IV | Chorus<br>I & II | Speaker<br>I II |                                   |

Figure 2. Comparison of part-distribution in Zimmermann and Chapman

|                  |                                                         |                                                                                                    |                                                                    |                                                                                         |                                           |                                                                                     |                                     |                               |                               |                                          |              |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Prologue         | Choir III<br>historical recordings<br>Mass for the Dead | Track I<br>Wittgenstein                                                                            | Track II<br>John XXIII                                             | Track III<br>Joyce                                                                      | Track IV<br>Dubček                        | Tape II                                                                             |                                     |                               |                               | Speakers                                 |              |
|                  |                                                         |                                                                                                    |                                                                    |                                                                                         |                                           | Track I                                                                             | Track II                            | Track III                     | Track IV                      | I                                        | II           |
| Requiem I        | Choirs I, II, III<br>Mass for the Dead                  | Track I<br>Weöres<br>Aeschylus<br>Schwitters<br>German proclamation<br>Cumus<br>Constitutional Law | Track II<br><i>Ecclesiastes</i><br>Joyce<br>Hitler<br>Mao Tse-Tung | Track III<br>Weöres<br>Aeschylus<br>Electronic sounds<br>Chamberlain<br>Pound<br>Dubček | Track IV<br>Milhaud<br>Wagner<br>Messiaen | Track I<br>Papandrou<br>Mayakovsky<br>Mayakovsky<br>Electronic sounds<br>Zimmermann | Track II<br>Aeschylus<br>Mayakovsky | Track III<br>Nagy<br>Messiaen | Track IV<br>Aeschylus<br>Nagy | Constitutional Law<br>Constitutional Law | Mao Tse-Tung |
| Requiem II       | Choirs I, II, III<br>Mass for the Dead                  |                                                                                                    |                                                                    |                                                                                         |                                           | Track I<br>Dubček                                                                   | Track II                            | Track III                     | Track IV                      | Speakers                                 |              |
| Ricercar         |                                                         |                                                                                                    |                                                                    |                                                                                         |                                           | Soloists                                                                            | Baritone                            |                               |                               | Speakers                                 |              |
| Rappresentazione | Mass for the Dead                                       |                                                                                                    |                                                                    |                                                                                         |                                           | Pound                                                                               |                                     |                               |                               | Speakers                                 |              |
| Elegia           | Mass for the Dead                                       |                                                                                                    |                                                                    |                                                                                         |                                           | Weöres                                                                              |                                     |                               |                               | Speakers                                 |              |
| Tratto           | orchestral interlude<br>interspersed texts              |                                                                                                    |                                                                    |                                                                                         |                                           |                                                                                     |                                     |                               |                               | Speakers                                 |              |
| Lamento          | Mass for the Dead<br>Schiller                           |                                                                                                    |                                                                    |                                                                                         |                                           | Mayakovsky<br>Mayakovsky<br>Mass for the Dead                                       |                                     |                               |                               | Speakers                                 |              |
| Dona Nobis Pacem | orchestra<br>Mass for the Dead                          |                                                                                                    |                                                                    |                                                                                         |                                           | Mass for the Dead<br>Mass demonstrations                                            |                                     |                               |                               | Speakers                                 |              |

Figure 3. Intertextual structure in Zimmermann



[illegible]

Figure 4. Intertextual structure in Chapman

## Conclusion

The analogies between Chapman's novel and Zimmermann's *Requiem* allow us to define intersemiotic translation here as a sophisticated network which: (a) constitutes a cento-like compilation of quotations, a collage of sources, excerpts, references and samplings; (b) is formed as a reply to a musical composition, thus an intermedial transmutation and source-imitation; (c) evinces a multiple intertextual construct, based on a ricochet-like system of intertextual layers – a form of *intertextuality of intertextuality*; (d) displays a multiple intersemiotic construct, related to Zimmermann's and Chapman's references to musical compositions. Consequently, intersemioticity involves at once intertextual network-building and intermedial cross-reference. The work of the eccentric composer, Unruh, is made up of "musical quotes, speeches, songs, poetry, a trash-heap" (Chapman 2007: 11). The composer states that "all music can only be about previous music" (Chapman 2007: 52), so that it becomes "non-music" (Chapman 2007: 11). This idea of *non-music* characterizes the paradox of high intertextuality and intersemiotic translation here – Chapman's novel is music without ever being able to become a musical composition unless the reader recreates it from its palimpsest-like fragments. It is this *trash-heap* of intersemiotic references that confronts us with fragments of meaning and traces of absent voices. Since those voices are clues to performances, the references appear not merely as a list of compositions to be read, but they seem to constitute a call for an intersemiotic interactivity, so that it seems possible to reassemble the fragments, bringing this peculiar literary object to yet another level of *transmutation* in order to give it its due performance.

205

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## Mixed Signals: How German *Lieder*, as Multimodal Texts, Present Particular Challenges for Translators

The *Lied* (art song) is a fusion of poetry and music and according to some, this fusion is impossible to translate: can a song composed of the rhythms, sounds, rhymes and meaning of one language ever be represented satisfactorily in another? Here, however, I will provide a more optimistic picture by addressing the following questions: how does a translator manage the inter-relationship between the acoustic codes of music and the verbal codes of poetry and does the overriding *Skopos* of creating a singable translation necessarily jeopardize the poetical qualities of a song?

207

*Lieder* are songs based on poems, composed mainly in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and usually written for a single voice with piano accompaniment. The poems were usually independent works before being set to music. Of the many composers of German *Lieder*, Franz Schubert, is often credited with having made the *Lied* the art form we know today (Dahlhaus 1991: 96). What distinguishes Schubert's compositions is his use of modulation<sup>1</sup> and chromatics<sup>2</sup> to introduce drama and psychological tension and his deviance from the standard four-bar period to variable phrasing, which creates closer connections between the poem and the music.

To discuss how the inter-relationship between the acoustic codes of music and the verbal codes of poetry influence the translation of vocal music, I shall draw on translations of Schubert's 1815<sup>3</sup> strophic song *Erlkönig*<sup>4</sup> D328<sup>5</sup>, based on a poem of the same name by Goethe (1782: 89)

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<sup>1</sup> Modulation is the process of changing from one key note to another.

<sup>2</sup> Chromaticism is an alteration of or deviation from the basic diatonic organization. It is used expressively and structurally to modulate to a different key.

<sup>3</sup> Composed 1815 first published 1821.

<sup>4</sup> Usually translated as Erlking, but sometimes also as Elf King or Alder King.

<sup>5</sup> To view a score visit IMSLP: [http://imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/b/b2/IMSLP15038-SchubertD328\\_Erlk%C3%B6nig\\_1st\\_version.pdf](http://imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/b/b2/IMSLP15038-SchubertD328_Erlk%C3%B6nig_1st_version.pdf) [accessed Jan. 15, 2014].

written in 1782. The poem is in ballad form comprising eight stanzas, each of four lines. The rhyme scheme is aabb and the poem is written in iambic tetrameter, with frequent use of anapaests, which are generally taken as representing the sound of a horse galloping. The poem is a horror story of sorts: a narrator begins by describing a father's frantic ride home on horseback, through the woods, holding his child. The frightened child, who appears to be hallucinating, tells his father that he sees a supernatural spirit, the Erlking. The father tries to allay the child's fears by giving rational explanations for the uncanny visions and events, which the child relates to him. The Erlking attempts to lure the child away to his kingdom with promises of good things that await him there and despite the child's call to his father for protection, the Erlking prevails and takes him by force. At the end of the poem, the father arrives home with his son dead in his arms.

There are just three published singable translations of *Erlkönig*, published over a period of some one hundred years from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the 1980s. The earliest is by the American translator Theodore Baker, whose translation *The Erlking* was published in 1895 (Schubert 1895: 214–221). The second is by Sir Robert Garran, an Australian who published his translation *Erl-King* in 1946 (Garran 1946: 133). The third is by Leslie Minchin (d.1999), whose translation *The Erl-king* was published in 1982 (Minchin 1982: 40).

The translation of *Lieder* may be considered in the wider context of multimodal translation in which careful consideration is given to the integration and interaction of a number of modes of communication or semiotic systems. To define this integration, pioneers of research into multimodality (Kress and van Leeuwen; O'Toole) drew on Halliday's social semiotic approach to language, which models the meaning potential of words, sounds and images as sets of inter-related systems and structures (*Language*). In translation studies, Reiss similarly drew attention to the importance of the "'additional information' supplied by a sign system other than that of language" to supplement the translation of a multimodal text (Reiss 1981: 125) and Snell-Hornby's "integrated approach" to translation drew on *Gestalt* theory (Snell-Hornby 2006: 445), suggesting that since the whole is always more than the sum of the parts, translation of multimodal texts requires consideration of the "web of relationships" of its constituent parts (ibid.: 450). Translation of a multimodal text requires of the translator the ability to process all the sign systems in the text, especially the interplay between them, which impose on the translator's choices and strategies (Mayoral et al. 1988: 362).

The *Lied* combines two sign systems or modes: music and poetry. The musical mode is, in Jakobson's terms, already an act of intersemiotic translation (Jakobson 1960: 139); an interpretation of a poem by the composer. The *Lied* presents the two modes to the same sense, the ear. Cognitively the listener must process two inputs at once: poetry and music. The inputs may effectively duplicate meaning and create cognitive overload unless the combination is a blend, sharing elements to avoid competing for signification. The composer has the task of creating this blend and is able to do so because the two modes of meaning, poetry and music, with which he works, share a number of attributes that enable them to form an interrelationship; what they especially share is the paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationship that constitutes the poetic, as described by Jakobson (1960: 356). In other words, that which makes words into poetry, notes into music and their combination into song is their arrangement, relationship, connection or interplay, which the composer chooses to create, semantically, phonetically and rhythmically.

The complex nature of the *Lied* as an object of translation is highlighted by Gorrée (see for example, *Intercode Translation*) when she describes in Peircean terms how the verbal meaning of the poem is potentially changed by the composer's intersemiotic transfer of it into music. Peirce's triadic approach to the sign helps to explain this change (Peirce: 2.302). The object of the sign is some meaning or idea that the poet has conceived and wishes to communicate; the sign or representamen is the poem and the song composition is the interpretant sign. For the translator, it is important to understand that the "relationship between poetry and music is based upon the manner in which the poetic representamen determines a *lyrical interpretant* that exhibits the same relation to the [...] object as does the poetic representamen" (Mosley 1994: 415). This interpretant sign is an "equivalent yet more developed sign" (ibid.: 414) and one which in turn will go on to be further developed by the singer and ultimately the audience. Of course, the music and the poem have meaning within their own paradigms but the song is the combination and the object of translation. This would suggest that the goal of a translation must be to exchange the linguistic elements without creating any disjunction in the triadic relationship. In other words, the singer's interpretation should be able to remain the same, the audience should ideally experience the effect of the song (emotional and intellectual) in the same way as an audience hearing the original song.

However, all too often in vocal music translations, the complex intersemiosis of words and music cedes precedence to the undeniably exigent factors of fitting new words to the rhythm of the existing music,

retaining rhymes, and ensuring that the singer can produce the sounds of the new words on the notes on which they are placed. This is highly understandable for when new words do not fit the musical rhythms and stresses, a song effectively becomes difficult, if not impossible, to sing, regardless of all other factors. It is, therefore, not surprising that most scholars in the field agree that rhythmic fit is a fundamental and non-negotiable norm.

In translation terms, poetic metre can be flexible and the translator is “relatively free” to do with it as he pleases (Nida 1964: 177) but music fixes poetic metre in a rigid system and the “assertiveness” of music’s “fixed elements” are “psychologically greater” than any exerted by the poem (Stein 1971: 12). Metrical or rhythmic fit between words and music may be thought of in terms of syllabic quantity, stress and length. Translations that match the original syllabic quantity are, as Low points out, the most desirable (Low 2005: 197). Achieving this, however, is extremely challenging. The demands of comprehension and the grammar of a language often entail additions or subtractions. Additional syllables can be discreetly accommodated when a note is split or another added or when tied notes are untied. Fewer syllables can be dealt with by combining or deleting notes or creating a melisma.<sup>6</sup> Modest adjustments may have an imperceptible effect on the music, but some changes may compromise or even alter the musical meaning. For example, *Lieder* are characterised by a tendency to avoid melismas with composers generally setting one syllable to one note (Stein and Spillman 1996: 59) and where a melisma occurs it often plays a particularly expressive role. Baker’s translation in bars 67 to 70 has only one extra syllable compared to the source text, but his translation has a different stress pattern that can only be made to fit the notes by adding and removing melismas. Where Schubert set the word “Mutter” to two notes, Baker sets his translation “mother” over four notes by tying notes together for each of the two syllables. Baker then accommodates five syllables in the third bar, where Schubert had only three, by untying the minim and the following two semi-quavers, thus removing the melisma, and creating a more articulated phrase with a syllable to each note. The way in which “mother” is set affects the singer’s vocal production but not the meaning. However, in bar 69 Schubert’s semantic intentions are potentially compromised. The melisma contributes to meaning by emphasising “gülden” (golden) as part of the Erlking’s cajoling enticements in his initial attempt to lure away the child. The melisma also enhances the lyricism of the music, sweetly masking the

<sup>6</sup> A group of notes sung on one syllable.

Erlking's evil desires. In Baker's translation, the corroborative meaning provided by the music is lost when the melisma is removed and the notes married to the perfunctory words "many a robe".



Figure 1. Franz Schubert, "Erlkönig" (D328), bars 67–70. Trans. Theodore Baker (Schubert 1895: 214–221)

Perhaps what is more important than syllabic quantity is syllabic stress. In music, the strongest stress is on downbeats such as the first beat of a bar. The composer will usually compose so that the natural stress of a word falls on a downbeat. Failure to match the stressed syllables in the translation to the stresses in the music usually renders it difficult, if not impossible to sing. One of the biggest challenges to achieving correct syllabic stress when translating from German to English is German's greater abundance of polysyllabic words that often forces the use of additional incidental words in the translation. Another challenge is German's frequent light syllabic "e" or "en" at the end of a word. An example of the latter can be seen in bars 23 to 27. In English, most equivalents for "Knaben" (boy) have only one syllable and so must either be moved elsewhere in the phrase and another word with two syllables (Minchin) set in its place, or it may be kept but followed by another one-syllable word which is unstressed (Baker and Garran):

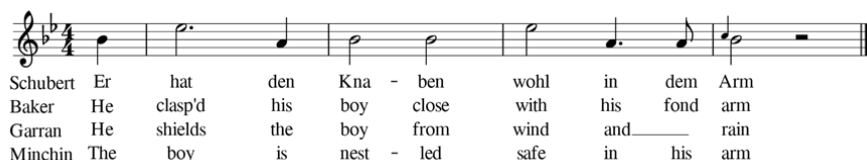


Figure 2. Franz Schubert, "Erlkönig" (D328), bars 23–27. Trans. Theodore Baker (Schubert 1895: 214–221), Garran (1946: 133), Minchin (1982: 40)

Baker's use of "close" is problematic because in speech, we expect it to be stressed and here it is set on the less stressed of the two notes. This is exacerbated by Baker setting "with" on a minim downbeat and diminished seventh chord. In the original song this chord serves to undermine the meaning of "wohl" (surely), now its irony is lost on a mere function word.



Syllables can be short or long, usually determined by the vowel length. When a short syllable is set on a long note or vice versa, the line will be awkward to sing and sound unnatural. In bars 35 to 39, Baker translates “Mein Sohn, was birgst du so bang dein Gesicht?” as “Dear son, what makes thy sweet face grow so white?” There is a problem with the choice of the word “sweet” for its long vowel exacerbated by the combination of an assonant “s” and “w” must be sung on a short, unstressed quaver. It is difficult to sing and to hear and so the semantic potential of this phrase is compromised.



Figure 3. Franz Schubert, “Erlkönig” (D328), bars 35–39. Trans. Theodore Baker (Schubert 1895: 214–221)

The priority given to matching syllable count, stress and length inevitably means that translators compromise in other ways. In the translations of *Erlkönig*, these compromises are inverted word order, archaic language (early modern English) and unusual grammar. Garran’s archaic English gave him permission to produce phrases such as “And faintly was moaning the boy [...]”. This ignores the modern English placement of subject, verb and adverb. The archaic second person singular verb forms were extremely useful to him when translating from highly inflected German as they offer more syllables with which to work and provide a solution when translating the many lightly stressed verb or noun endings, for example, “My son why hidest thy face as in fear?” (Garran 1946). In archaic English, the periphrastic “do” can be abandoned, especially in questions, by using verb-subject inversion instead: for example, “[...] seest thou not then / the Erlking’s daughter [...]?” (Garran 1946). Alternatively, the deliberate use of the auxiliary verb “do” can provide an additional syllable when needed: “Where my beauteous daughter doth wait for thee” (Schubert 1895). Archaic language also permits omissions of the pronoun, which we would otherwise expect in modern English: “Thou dearest boy, wilt come with me?” and “Wilt come, proud boy [...]” (Schubert 1895). The use of archaic contraction is also useful for reducing syllable count such as Baker’s “Mong (contraction of among) wither’d leaves [...]” and the use of “’tis”. Despite the modern English of Minchin’s translation, he

uses this three times. The use of unusual grammar can also reduce syllable quantity where this is desired as Garran demonstrates with “whispering soft in my ear”, where he dispenses with the usual adverbial ending.

Such “tweaking” is often unavoidable (Low 2005: 197) when translating a song to be sung but whilst rhythmic fit is considered an essential requirement, so also is consideration of vocal production. Translations that pay little attention to vowels and consonants in relation to tempo and pitch may be difficult to sing and hard to understand.

There are two parts to the voice in singing: the expressive, musical element, which requires accurate, sustained vowels and the communication of speech, which needs well-defined consonants. The issue with vowels stems from the fact that certain vowels inhibit resonance because they prevent the shape and size of the oral cavity from being at its optimum for good tone. This becomes particularly problematic when singing in the very high or low range as the raising of the soft palate to sing certain notes makes it impossible to create certain vowel sounds easily. Singers, therefore, prefer “open vowels” on high and low notes when the tongue can remain flat and the vocal cavity has the right shape for perfect resonance. Vowel sounds that can cause problems on high or low notes are closed vowels such as “u” (as in “soon”) and “i” (as in “see”). Of course, it is not always possible to avoid closed vowels and make sense and singers are used to modifying vowel sounds to save the voice and avoid harsh sounds. The drawback is that the word may not be clear. If it is a repeated word, there is no problem, but should the meaning of the phrase rely on hearing the word, the translator may want to consider finding a word with a more open vowel.

Consonants can be a threat to the beauty of sound. They close the mouth, tense the tongue and prevent airflow, all essential for tone quality. Singers prefer consonants that do not require the jaw to close as this changes the shape and size of the oral cavity and restricts good tone. For the same reason, consonant clusters are to be avoided especially in fast passages where they can create tongue twisters. Such clusters often result from the use of compound nouns, polysyllabic words, and words that start with the same consonant as that with which the previous word ended. Care must also be taken in the choice of consonants or consonant clusters set on very high notes. In such cases, the singer will make the consonant as short as possible and move quickly to the vowel, thus reducing audibility of the word. Composers who write for the voice tend to avoid placing an important word in such a position, unless it

has been heard before at a lower pitch and the high pitch repetition is to show off the voice.

In the translations of *Erlkönig* there are very few challenges for the singer in terms of vowels or consonants with perhaps the exception of some setting of short vowels on long notes and long vowels on short notes as discussed above and consonant clusters such as “child closer clasp” (Baker) and “reaching to clutch” (Minchin). Other consonantal difficulties arise from the use of the archaic language forms “wilt come”, “dids’t”, “can’st”, “thou’rt” (Baker and Garran). The reason there are few vocalisation issues, is that in *Erlkönig*, as in many *Lieder*, the vocal range is narrow, there are no virtuosic wide set interval leaps and very high or low notes repeated numerous times.

Whilst a concern for vocal production and rhythmic fit are essential requirements that make a song singable or not, this cannot so easily be said for rhyme. Yet much ink has been dedicated to rhyme in the translation of vocal music. The desire to produce a rhyming song translation has often been blamed for strange lexical choices and incomprehensible language engendered by inverted word order and tortured syntax. Nearly everyone who has written on the matter seems inclined to agree that rhyme is a luxury that should be sacrificed in favour of sense and naturalness. Although rhyme gives structure to poems and joins thoughts phonetically and although it is often incorporated in the poem’s musical interpretation, where it can be made more prominent, it has been said that music often makes rhymes “enfeebled and imperceptible” (Peyser 1922: 360). The auditory effect of rhyme in song is much weaker than in poetry because of the extended time between rhymes; the cadential function of rhyme is also replaced by musical cadence. Whilst in poetry, rhyme is an organisational element, in a song the music gives overall shape and structure. On the question of whether to rhyme or not, Low (2008: 6) suggests a translator ask questions about the frequency and importance of rhymes since a variable rhyme scheme combined with the musical space that is between them may mean that it is possible to avoid rhymes completely. I suggest, however, that it is also necessary to consider whether the musical structure or any musical features are closely connected to the rhymes, because musical rhymes (recurrent phrases, for example) may contribute to the significance of the words and, therefore, require that the translated words also rhyme. It is also worth remembering that rhyme is particularly helpful for the singer who often sings from memory!

The three translators of *Erlkönig* adhere to the source text rhyme scheme of aabb for good reason: the rhymes are regular and frequent and are often evident in the musical structure. Sometimes rhymes have been set on musical recurrences related to pitch and duration:

"Du lie - bes Kind, komm, geh mit mir! gar schön - ne Spei - le  
My dar - ling child, come go with me! such pret - ty games—

7  
spiel' ich mit dir;  
play I with thee

Figure 4. Franz Schubert, "Erlkönig" (D328), bars 55–63. Gloss translation

Sometimes these musical recurrences make the original rhyme stronger than in the poem. The words "gehen" (go) and "schön" (patiently) form an imperfect rhyme, sharing only the final consonant; the music strengthens their connection through the repeated musical intervals of a sixth (first major then minor):

"Willst, fei - ner Kna - be, du mit mir geh'n? mei - ne  
Will fine boy you with me go? My—

3  
Töch - ter sol - len dich war ten schön;  
daugh - ters must for you be waiting already,

Figure 5. Franz Schubert, "Erlkönig" (D328), bars 83–87. Gloss translation

Rhyme's overriding importance in *Erlkönig* seems to have forced the translators to accept word order inversions, ellipsis, archaic syntax, unusual lexis, strange grammar and the use of paraphrase in order to reproduce it. The translations of the first line of the poem provide good examples of word order inversion in the service of rhyme:

“Wer reitet so spät durch Nacht und Wind? / Es ist der Vater mit seinem Kind”

(Gloss: Who rides so late through night and wind? / It is the father with his child).

The word “Kind” (child) is of utmost importance given the subject matter of the poem, all the possible translations in English other than “child”, such as “boy”, “lad”, “infant” or “baby” have problems in terms of register, cohesion or syllabic count. Whilst “son” is possible, its use by the father character in the direct speech sections of the poem makes it a less desirable option here. The translator is therefore forced to use the word “child” and must find a word that rhymes with it. The three translators chose “wild”, which in each case modifies the noun “night” and communicates that it was windy. In modern English, the adjective would come before the noun, but in order to create a rhyming couplet it is placed after it:

Who rides there so late through night so wild?  
A loving father with his young child (Baker)

Who rides out so late this midnight wild?  
It is a father who holds his child (Garran)

Who gallops so fast through night so wild?  
It is a father who clasps his child (Minchin)

Baker’s archaic English style gave him permission to freely resort to inverted word order in order to create a rhyming text. Consider “Dear son, dear son, the form you there see / Is only the hollow grey willow tree” and “Oh father! My father! thy child closer clasp / Erlking hath seiz’d me with icy grasp!” In modern English, the placement of adverbs of place and manner is usually after the verb. Minchin, for the sake of rhyme, is content with the use of unusual grammar. In the line “My father, my father, he’s reaching to clutch / Now I am feeling his icy touch”, he ignores the usual transitivity of the verb “to clutch”. Garran also bends grammatical rules for rhyme as in “My son, my son, I see very clear / The old willow gleaming grey by the mere”, which ignores the normal ending for adverbs.

However, the most interesting rhyme choices in *Erlkönig* occur in the following bars when the translators attempt to reproduce the “Gestalt/Gewalt” (form/force) rhyme:



Figure 6. Franz Schubert, "Erlkönig" (D328), bars 113–124

There is an imperative that whatever replaces "Gewalt" (force) also translates the violence in the music, which sees the Erlking move from his cajoling major keys to the father and son's world of D minor. Baker and Minchin decided in favour of "force" which led them to the rhyming word "course", albeit with different meanings:

I love thee well, with me thou shalt ride on my course,  
And if thou'rt unwilling, I seize thee by force! (Baker)

I love thee child and now there is no other course  
For if you're not willing, I'll take you by force (Minchin)

Both translations convey the sense of impending doom, which is coherent with the rest of the poem. However, for the sake of rhyme they both fail to translate part of the first line: "mich reizt deine schöne Gestalt" (Gloss: your beautiful form excites/stirs me), which is the only place in the poem that a reason of any kind is given for the Erlking's desire for the boy. Garran, however, who retains the meaning through "thy beauty enraptures my sight", struggles to find a translation for "Gewalt" that rhymes with "sight". His solution is linguistically odd though perhaps not completely incomprehensible: "I love thee child thy beauty enraptures my sight/And if thou'rt unwilling, I'll take thee despite!" (Garran).

Rhyme, rhythm, and a concern for vocal production are important when creating a singable translation, but may not be enough to guarantee a "performable" translation that can be performed as authentically as the

original song. The fusion of music and words requires the translator to think about how and what the music communicates. What is required is to try to discern how the composer interpreted the words as music. Understanding musical language is, therefore, another part of the hermeneutic endeavour necessary to understand the source text before attempting to translate it into another language.

When music is joined with words, it might iterate, corroborate, emphasise or contradict them, it might introduce irony or ambiguity, add information or expound on an idea, direct thoughts, give order to ideas, ask the listener to question or doubt the words, change perspective or mood, recall an earlier idea or associate a present thought with an earlier one. Music can do all this with musical codes that are based on cultural agreement, developed over hundreds of years, some of it available to everyone, some only to those who have learned the code in more depth and detail. There are two possible ways that music manages this communication: through a literal setting of the text also known as word painting and a dramatic setting of the text (Brown 1948: 71). In word painting, music tries to imitate the emotion, action, or natural sounds as described in the text. It seeks to illustrate the text. At its most basic, sad words and ideas might be set in a minor key and happy ones in a major key. The dramatic setting, however, whilst not devoid of literal interpretations, tends to use the resources of musical language to create in the combination of words and notes the drama of situation, context and mood.

Imitation can be both tonal and rhythmic and a good example of a rhythmic pattern that imitates movement described in the words can be found in bars 90 and 91. In the poem, Goethe breaks from the main metre and introduces an amphibrachic line with three internal rhymes: "Und wiegen und tanzen und singen dich ein" (Gloss: rock you and dance you and sing you to sleep). This rocking rhythm, a rhythmic anomaly in the poem, marks the end of the Erlking's cajoling phase and the start of a more sinister and threatening one. Schubert, recognising its importance, imitates the rocking gesture in musical terms, breaking from the main rhythm of the composition by having the left hand of the piano accompaniment change to reinforce the "rocking motion". Goethe's three internal rhymes and Schubert's lilting melody create an image of a rocking cradle and sound of a lullaby, increasing the irony of the "cradling" words that belie what the Erlking has in store for the child, death not sleep. When the symmetry of the line changes in the translation, the effect is lost. Of the three translations, only Garran's maintains the interplay between sound and words. Baker and Minchin evidently did not consider it essential, the lullaby effect is lost and so too the irony:

Schubert und wie - gen und tan - zen und sin - gen dich ein,  
 Garran They'll dance for thee, sing for thee, lull thee to sleep,  
 Baker And lull thee with sweet songs to give thee de - light,  
 Minchin They'll sing and they'll lull you to sleep in de - light,

Figure 7. Franz Schubert, “Erlkönig” (D328), bars 89–91. Translations: Garran (1946: 133), Baker (Schubert 1895: 214–221), Minchin (1982: 40)

The use by the composer of different tonalities or keys and the way he modulates between them is an important part of word painting and dramatic composition. A change of key can denote a change of place, mood, atmosphere, action and so on. Different keys can be used to characterise different characters, psychologies, thoughts and behaviour. In *Erlkönig*, Schubert uses keys for character and psychology. The narrator opens and closes the story in G Minor. The father speaks mainly in major keys giving reassuring responses to allay the fear of the child although here and there he is dragged, as it were, into a minor modality. The frightened child always speaks in a minor tonality. The Erlking begins in major keys (B-flat, C and E-flat) as he attempts playfully to lure away the child, but eventually at the climax of the song, he chromatically modulates to D minor as he reveals his sinister intentions. Schubert, so to speak, physically demonstrates the Erlking taking hold of the child as the music of the Erlking’s words merges with the minor tonality of those of the child.

Temporary changes of tonality can be equally if not more significant than a change of key, and chromaticism is frequently used by Schubert to underline yearning, to question or cast doubt on the words, or to bring about a sudden change in perspective. When a chromatic note or chord appears, the translator will be aware of some poignancy of emotion, perhaps some dissonance of feeling or meaning, possibly irony. In bars 116 to 120, for example, the Erlking shows his true colours and in a crescendo leaves his pleasant, cajoling major key of B-flat, in which he tried to cajole the boy away from the father, and turns instead to a straightforward threat in the D minor key of the child’s tonal world. The chord on which “bist” (are) has been set is a diminished seventh chord that creates a distinctively tense and dramatic sound. The first syllable of “willig” (willing) has been set to another diminished seventh a semitone higher. After this there follows a perfect cadence in D minor for the words “so brauch’ ich Gewalt” (then I’ll use force):





Figure 8. Franz Schubert, "Erlkönig" (D328), bars 113–124

Goethe's words "bist" (are), "willig" (willing), "brauch" (use) and "Gewalt" (force) collocate closely with each other and are fused with the musical meaning in Schubert's emphatic and threatening diminished seventh chords and the D minor cadence. The translations in English, do not re-produce the same verbal collocations and nor consequently the same relationship to the music. This is because in modern English if-conditionals are preferred to inverted conditional clauses. Even though Baker and Garran use archaic English throughout, in which the inverted conditional would have sounded quite at home, they chose to place the hypothetical conditional "if" on the first diminished seventh chord, rather than a verb that would collocate with the other three words as in the German. Of course, the listener can understand the relationship of the threatening sound of the chord and the coercion behind "if" and the translations (see below) and music work together well enough, yet the emphasis and threat of the first diminished seventh, its repetition and the connection between the words loses its impact.

|           |     |      |         |       |       |       |      |         |      |      |        |
|-----------|-----|------|---------|-------|-------|-------|------|---------|------|------|--------|
|           |     |      |         |       |       |       |      |         |      |      |        |
| Schubert  | und | bist | du      | nicht | wil - | lig   | so   | brauch' | ich  | Ge - | walt.  |
| Baker     | and | if   | thou'rt | un -  | wil - | ling  | I    | seize   | thee | by   | force. |
| Garran    | and | if   | thou'rt | un -  | wil - | ling  | I'll | take    | thee | de - | spite. |
| Minchin   | for | if   | you're  | not   | wil - | ling, | I'll | take    | you  | by   | force. |
| Suggested | and | be   | you     | not   | wil - | ling, | I'll | take    | you  | by   | force. |

Figure 9. Franz Schubert, "Erlkönig" (D328), bars 113–124. Translations: Baker (Schubert 1895: 214–221), Garran (1946: 133), Minchin (1982: 40)

Another prominent musical element that the translator may need to consider is the nature of cadences in relation to words: is there a feeling of incompleteness, which needs to be reflected in the words or is there an interrupted cadence that deceives the listener's expectations and leaves him or her wondering "what next"? For example, the boy twice asks the father if he can see or hear the Erlking. He does this on a chromatically rising line ending in an interrupted cadence, one that sounds like a question. The music is marked by dissonance and key modulation from major to minor, which re-creates in music the child's fear and desperate hope that his father is aware of the Erlking's threat. Therefore, when the question is translated as a statement, as Minchin does for the second question in bars 94–101, the fusion of words with music is lost and with it the multi-layered semantics of text and music:

Mein Va - ter, mein Va - ter, und siehst du nicht  
My fa - ther, my fa - ther, you sure - ly can

4  
dort Erl - kö - nigs Töcht - ter am dü - stern Ort?  
see the Erl - king's daugh - ters that wait for me.

221

Figure 10. Franz Schubert, "Erlkönig" (D328), bars 94–101

The triadic nature of the song-sign is apparent in the match between verbal collocations in the poem and their musical setting. Goethe puts into the mouth of the Erlking words associated with glittering light, colour and fantasy that reflect the world to which he is attempting to lure the child, one that contrasts with the real world of the father, which is grey, dark, and drear. Schubert's music reflects this opposition in that the Erlking's music is initially deceptively playful and sweet and in major keys, whilst the father's music vacillates between major and minor tonalities and is measured and solemn. The signposts are there for the translator to reproduce the same effect in the translation but these are not always followed. For the line "Es scheinen die alten Weiden so grau. –", two of the translators effectively interpret the word "scheinen" with its cognate "shine" and produce "The old willow **gleaming** grey by the mere" (Garran) and "This **moonlight** upon the grey willow tree" (Minchin). They have allowed the glittering language of the Erlking to cross over into the grey language of the father, thus ignoring the demarcation both

verbally and musically between the two. It is not, however, necessary to translate “scheinen” with the obvious cognate or a synonym. “Scheinen” can also mean, “seem” or “appear” and Baker demonstrates that it is possible to avoid the crossover of realms: “[...] the form you see there/Is only the hollow grey willow tree”

Another similar example can be found in bars 63 to 70 where the otherworldly kingdom of the Erlking is given by Goethe in the line: “Manch’ bunte Blumen sind an dem Strand” (Gloss: Many a colourful flower is on the seashore). Schubert has the Erlking sing this in a playful, seductive major melody contrasting the real-world surroundings predominantly presented in the preceding frantic rhythms of the galloping hooves motif and the minor tonalities and dissonances that represent the boy’s experience of that world. The non-ordinary and non-expected language (Beaugrande 1978: 92) juxtaposed with Schubert’s lyrical melody, which could easily lull one into a false sense of well-being, together contribute to the aural and semantic seduction by the Erlking. However, the otherworldliness found in Schubert is lost when Baker, Garrahan and Minchin translate the colourful flowers on the seashore as ordinary “varied blossoms” (Baker), “purple flowers” (Garrahan) or “gorgeous flowers” (Minchin) that grow on the “wold”, an area of woodland on high ground, where one might normally expect bright flowers rather than on a beach. Something is lost when one of the parts of this intermodal fusion is altered without heed to the interaction between the modes.

Word-tone intersemiosis in a translation is perhaps more challenging than prosodic match or meeting the needs of the human voice and yet a translated song that has lost the poetic effect due to a lack of attention to the interplay of poetry and music, may never be sung. The singer may not find in it what s/he needs to interpret the song successfully for a performance. It seems to me, therefore, important that the interplay between verbal and musical meaning must be given serious consideration.<sup>7</sup> Even when the translator, for linguistic reasons, is unable to replicate the original intersemiosis in every word and sound combination, his understanding of this can mean the difference between a translation that at least remains coherent with the original and cohesive within itself and one that does not.

<sup>7</sup> For an in-depth study of this approach to vocal music translation see Wilson-deRoze 2017.

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## Love Old Sweet Song: How Joyce Narrativizes with Music?<sup>1</sup>

The literary output of really few writers' boasts such extensive criticism focused on musical context as that by James Joyce. Almost immediately after *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* were published, they prompted a number of critical texts written about their musical contexts. These analyses covered the way music is thematized, enumerated references to particular musical compositions as well as pointed to the elements of the literary work's structure that are inspired by music. This is hardly surprising when to consider the fact that not only did Joyce himself not deny such interpretations, but also provided his critics with more detailed guidelines (cf. Gilbert 1963: 88; Budgen 1963: 130). This is particularly true of *Ulysses*. The novel's protagonists are characterised by highly developed musical awareness: they are well-versed in popular songs as well as opera and operetta arias, they hum tunes, organise concerts, play the piano, enjoy themselves, discuss the performance and the performers, try to determine whether the church bell chimes in tune or identify the metre of the printing press.

225

Deeply inspired by music, such an approach to literature was nothing extraordinary in Joyce's times. The problem of the musical involvement of literature and writing, and of how music is discussed, is associated with a certain aspect of aesthetic awareness, exhibited by both the authors and their works' recipients (cf. Wiegandt 2002: 63–64). James Joyce, but also Édouard Dujardin, Thomas Mann, Aldous Huxley, and numerous other writers who have been associated in literary criticism with attempts at transgressing the boundaries of "classical" prose, have talked of their musical inspiration, particularly with Wagnerian leitmotifs. It ought to be remembered that music, with its vagueness, so-called sensibility, and

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<sup>1</sup> This research project has been funded by the National Science Centre in Poland, according to the decision no. DEC-2013/11/N/HS2/03302.

autoreferentiality, was the ideal to be strived for, particularly in the case of symbolism, which set a goal for every art form: to become like music (Schopenhauer). With his concepts of a total work of art and leitmotif, Wagner was particularly venerated in that respect.

In his Trieste home, Joyce had quite a little collection of books about Wagner, which included both critical works and sheet music with librettos (cf. Martin 2009: 276), even though apart from *The Master-Singers of Nuremberg* he did not care for the German composer's music. Being an opera lover and an amateur tenor singer, the Irish writer was coaxed by his teachers to make it his professional career. He would perform the quintet from *The Master-Singers* on stage, quite a challenging feat for an amateur; and was even once awarded the third prize in Feis Ceoil (cf. Martin 2009: 277), a Dublin music festival. Some of his acquaintances claimed Joyce's dedicated support of John Sullivan during his stay in Paris stemmed from his perception of the Irish tenor's career as an outlet for his own unfulfilled ambitions (cf. Hodgart, Bauerle 1997: 75–92; Beach 1959: 44). Having been raised in a family with vivid musical traditions, in cities rich in cultural traditions, allowed Joyce to mould his tastes and fancies, which were focused on operas and religious songs, particularly the Irish ones. Interestingly, Joyce was not fond of modern music and remained faithful to *bel canto*, Rossini, Meyerbeer, and Verdi (Martin 2009: 277; Potts 1979: 168).

In the works of the Irish author, music is a particular intertextual reference point.<sup>2</sup> Although all Joyce's works prior to *Ulysses* (such as *Chamber Music*, *Dubliners*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*) refer to music, nowhere before had these references been implemented in the way they functioned in *Ulysses*. Not only do they constitute an illustration for the novel, but also influence its style, spirit, structure, and themes. Zach Bowen enumerates 700 allusions to various musical pieces, at the same time claiming that the list is by no means complete (1995: 46). We must be aware of the fact that the referenced titles and lyrics (of operas, popular Irish folk and religious songs, as well as musicals) were commonly familiar to

<sup>2</sup> Musical sensibilities and taste for opera are manifested in Joyce's works, among others, in their rhythmical and tonal outline. The author is sensitive to rhythm; reading *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* aloud can open them up to new interpretations. The critics point to another constructive level of musical inspiration: *Ulysses* is supposedly constructed like a sonata form, whereas alternating prose and poetry in "Cyclops" can be read as the literary equivalent of arias and recitatives, although Joyce himself explicitly speaks about the musical form only in reference to "Sirens". I elaborate on this aspect of Joyce's prose, that is his inspiration with musical forms, textures, and means of articulation, in another article of mine (cf. Barska 2012: 7–33).

Joyce's contemporaries, particularly the Irish.<sup>3</sup> In this way, *Ulysses* creates a network of intertextual references to musical compositions in the same way it does to the Bible, titles of literary works, and myths. Because of that the reception of the novel is not that easy for modern readers, particularly those reading translations, since the quoted lyrics of Irish songs do not automatically evoke the associations implied by Joyce. Without further ado, let us look at the example of "Circe", in whose episode the titles of musical pieces refer us to once well-known characters. "The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo", "The Bowld Sojer Boy", "The Collen Bawn", "The Lily of Killarney" increase the number of characters in the episode, thereby intensifying its hallucinatory qualities. Joyce also eagerly employs music to underscore certain parts of the narrative and the significance of the protagonists' words, who refer to musical allusion in their thoughts and conversations (cf. Bowen 1995: 46).

I do not wish to make this paper one of the works that attempt to quote as many passages and other references present in *Ulysses*, as it would perforce make them a type of a glossary devoid of any developed interpretative concepts. Instead, I will rather focus on the way Joyce "employs" musical compositions present in the "Sirens" episode, which in my opinion are essential for our understanding of *Ulysses*. The episode is a tale of Leopold Bloom, an advertising agent, who correctly suspects his wife Molly, an opera singer, of having an affair with Blazes Boylan, her impresario. The meeting of two lovers' is set for 4 p.m. and Bloom, who is aware of it, spends his day pacing the streets of Dublin, attending to his various errands, and finally, upon seeing Boylan's carriage in front of the Ormond bar, choses it as a place to have his lunch. Bloom could easily prevent the tryst by coming home earlier, before Boylan's arrival, but instead decides to do nothing. Sitting in the restaurant, he can overhear everything that is happening in the adjacent barroom and so he listens to the conversations of his acquaintances, who talk, among other things, about his wife. He eats his lunch, writes a reply to a letter he received from Martha, whom he engaged in an epistolary flirtation, and ponders on his situation.

The arias and songs most frequently appearing in the barroom scene, either performed by regular customers on the bar's piano, referenced in conversations, or recollected by Bloom, introduce the theme of loneliness and the loss of a loved one; they evoke specific emotions. I particularly

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<sup>3</sup> Modern readers must resort to works by the scholars who have dedicated entire volumes to the musical intertextuality of Joyce's works, e.g. Hodgart and Bauerle 1997; Bowen 1995; Hodgart and Worthington 1959.



mean: “Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye”, “All Is Lost Now”, and “When first I Saw That Form Endearing”. The first song is sung when Boylan enters the Ormond bar. His acquaintances welcome him with the words: “See the conquering hero comes”, referring directly to Handel’s *Judas Maccabaeus*,<sup>4</sup> although the metaphorical “confrontation” between him and Bloom has not happened yet. “Between the car and window, warily walking, went Bloom, unconquered hero”. The fact that Bloom is thus described may also be associated with the fact he has already reconciled himself to his wife’s infidelity. In “Sirens” the composition “ascribed” to him is a calm, sentimental ballad, “The Bloom Is on the Rye”. It functions exactly in the same way as a Wagnerian leitmotif. Joyce introduces characteristic “leitmotifs” which announce the arrival of a particular character, e.g. “The bag of Goulding, Collis, Ward led Bloom by reybloom flowered tables” (266.910),<sup>5</sup> which reminisces the aforementioned ballad and announces the change of the narrative’s perspective to Bloom’s stream of consciousness. The juxtaposition of what we might call “Bloom’s theme” and the pompous and triumphant quote from Handel ascribed to Boylan gives us a certain idea about the characters and attitudes of each of the protagonists.

228 One of the bar’s patrons performs an aria from the second act of Vincenzo Bellini’s *The Sleepwalker*, with the libretto by Felice Romani. The aria, “Tutto è Sciolto”, is translated as “All Is Lost Now”:

All is lost now,  
By all hope and joy am I forsaken.  
Nevermore can love awaken.  
Past enchantment, no, nevermore. (qtd. in Bowen 1995: 41)

This poignant piece reflects the hopeless situation in which Bloom had found himself, and it is he who cites the context of the opera the aria comes from.

The first act of *The Sleepwalker* begins with preparations for a wedding between Amina and Elvino, unexpectedly interrupted by the appearance of Rudolfo, a young nobleman and the son of a local landlord. The compliments he pays to Amina make her fiancé jealous, but the couple reconciles, and Rudolfo remains at their home for the night as a guest. At night, he witnesses Amina sleepwalking, an affliction she suffers from. She walks into the guest’s room and lies down on the sofa; to

<sup>4</sup> I quote both the allusions to the given musical works as well the references from Bowen 1995: 25–76.

<sup>5</sup> All references to *Ulysses* in this article come from James Joyce, *Ulysses: The Corrected Text*. The citations refer to an episode and line number.

protect her honour, the count leaves the room. The scene is however witnessed by Lisa, who is in love with Elvino and wishes to break up his relationship with Amina. Lisa fetches Elvino and the wedding guests. Jumping to conclusions, Elvino entirely ignores his fiancée's protestations of innocence. In act two, Elvino breaks up their engagement. The count explains the nature of somnambulism and his lecture is interrupted by Amina sleepwalking into the room. The woman tells of her love for Elvino and her despair, and when she wakes up, her beloved offers the engagement ring back to her.

"All Is Lost Now", sung by Elvino, is full of despair and an expression of how he sees his situation as hopeless, having been seemingly betrayed by his fiancée. Although Bloom's own situation is not literally reflected in *The Sleepwalker's* libretto, the protagonist himself draws a parallel between the plot of the opera and his own situation:

Bloom bent leopold ear, turning a fringe of doyley down under the vase. Order. Yes, I remember. Lovely air. In sleep she went to him. Innocence in the moon. Still hold her back. Brave, don't know their danger. Call name. Touch water. Jingle jaunty. Too late. She longed to go. That's why. Woman. As easy stop the sea. Yes: all is lost. (272.41273.4)

The protagonist is focused on the libretto until he comes to think of Boylan ("Jingle jaunty" refers to the sound made by the impresario's carriage). From that moment on, the story of Amina is combined with Molly's betrayal. For Bloom-Elvino "all is lost". When he again focuses his attention on the piano, he hears another soulful aria, "M'appari" from Friedrich von Flotow's *Martha, or The Market at Richmond*, with the libretto by Friedrich Wilhelm Riese.

Lionel's aria begins with "M'appari, tutt' amor, il mios guardo l'incontro" ("All [perfect] love appeared to me, that encounter filled my eyes [completely won me]"). Joyce employs a more liberal translation by Charles Jeffreys:

When first I saw that form endearing;  
Sorrow from me seem'd to depart:  
Each graceful look, each word so cheering  
Charm'd my eye and won my heart.  
Full of hope, and all delighted,  
None could feel more blest than I;  
All on Earth I then could wish for  
Was near her to live and die:  
But alas! 'twas idle dreaming,  
And the dream too soon hath flown;  
Not one ray of hope is gleaming;

I am lost, yes I am lost for she is gone.  
 When first I saw that form endearing  
 Sorrow from me seem'd to depart:  
 Each graceful look, each word so cheering  
 Charm'd my eye and won my heart.  
 Martha, Martha, I am sighing  
 I am weeping still; for thee;  
 Come thou lost one,  
 Come thou dear one,  
 Thou alone can'st comfort me:  
 Ah Martha return! Come to me! (qtd. in Bowen 1995: 45)

Lady Harriet Durham, maid of honour to Queen Anne, dresses up as a servant, adopts the name of "Martha", and together with her maid Nancy goes to the Richmond market to escape the boredom of courtly life. At the market "Martha" and Nancy encounter Lionel and Plunkett, two rich farmers who came to the market fair for the purpose of finding servants. "Martha" and Nancy unwittingly sign contracts. Their presence causes a lot of confusion, both in the working and love lives of all parties concerned. "Martha" reports her feelings for Lionel in "This the Last Rose of Summer" aria. When the women flee back to the court, the grieving Lionel ("M'appari" being the expression of said grief) loses his senses; he is indifferent to inheriting the title of the Count of Derby or to visits paid by Lady Harriet. Nancy and Plunkett arrange a scene meant to remind him of the Richmond market. When Lionel encounters his "Martha", his sanity is restored. The opera ends in a wedding.

The moment in which Lionel's aria is performed is significant: the tryst between Boylan and Molly is just about to take place. Bloom is still eating his lunch, accompanied by his friend, Richie Goulding, who recognises the voice of his brother-in-law, Simon Dedalus, who is performing the aria in the adjacent room. Joyce combines the passages from the aria and Bloom's thoughts in a peculiar fashion:

*When first I saw that form endearing.*  
 Richie turned.  
 Si Dedalus' voice, he said.  
 Brain tipped, cheek touched with flame, they listened feeling that flow endearing  
 flow over skin limbs human heart soul spine. (273.3035)  
 [...]  
*Sorrow from me seemed to depart.*  
 Through the hush of air a voice sang to them, low, not rain, not leaves in murmur, like  
 no voice of strings of reeds or what do you call them dulcimers, touching their still  
 ears with words, still hearts of their each his remembered lives. Good, good to hear:  
 sorrow from them each seemed to from both depart when first they heard. When first

they saw, lost Richie, Poldy, mercy of beauty, heard from a person wouldn't expect it in the least, her first merciful love soft, oft loved word. (273.39274.5)

The music evokes the melancholy caused by the loss of a loved person, a situation the protagonist considers hopeless. It is underscored in the narrative plan by the use of epithets such as "lost Leopold", "lost Poldy" (224, 225), or contaminations, such as "Lionelleopold" (236). "A beautiful air, said Bloom lost Leopold. I know it well" (224).

The aria is in a way counterpointed with "Love's Old Sweet Song," a song introducing a theme of nostalgia caused by Bloom reminiscing of the once existing love between him and his wife. As Molly included it in her repertoire, it not only refers to the beginnings of her relationship with Bloom, but also to her current relationship with Boylan. In an earlier episode, "Lotus Eaters", Bloom associates his wife's infidelity with this particular piece. Therefore its title, which is worked into his meditations brought about by "M'appari", couples "Love's Old Sweet Song" with Lionel's lamentation.

Bloom, however, is unable to focus on the aria's lyrics; stealing into his thoughts are Boylan ("Full of hope and all delighted [...] Jingle all delighted" [274.1119]) and the intercourse that is about to take place. The protagonist's agitation increases together with the aria's dynamism. The associations formed by Bloom's mind also concern Martha and her letter he intends to respond to. Bloom suddenly realises his friend bears the same name as the heroine of Flotow's opera:

[...] *Martha* it is. Coincidence. Just going to write. Lionel's song. Lovely name you have. Can't write. Accept my little pres. Play on her heart strings purse strings too. She's a. I called you naughty boy. Still the name: Martha. How strange! Today. (274.41275.6)

But the protagonist quickly turns his thoughts back to Molly, when the aria's lyrics evoke the memory of their first meeting:

*Each graceful look...*

First night when first I saw her at Matt Dillon's in Terenure. Yellow, black lace she wore. Musical chairs.

We two the last. Fate [...]. Lips laughing. Yellow knees.

*Charmed my eye...*

Singing. *Waiting* she sang. I turned her music. Full voice of perfume of what perfume does your lilac trees.

Bosom I saw, both full, throat warbling.

First I saw. She thanked me. Why did she me? Fate [...] Under a pear tree alone patio this hour in old Madrid one side in shadow Dolores she dolores. At me. Luring. Ah, alluring. (275.1628)

"Waiting" is a song of a maid waiting by the window for her beloved, who is supposed to come and take her away. Bloom suddenly imagines that it is him whom Molly is supposed to meet that day. The music intensifies and Leopold, identifying himself with Lionel, cries out:

*Martha! Ah, Martha!*

Quitting all languor Lionel cried in grief, in cry of passion dominant to love to return with deepening yet with rising chords of harmony. In cry of Lionel loneliness that she should know, must Martha feel. For only her he waited. Where? Here there try there here all try where. Somewhere. (275.2934)

As Zack Bowen points out, the cry of tormented Lionel expresses Bloom's relationship with both Molly and with Martha: although Molly is "the lost one", the complaint is directed at Martha. Joyce uses these ambiguities. The exclamation "Co-me, thou lost one! / Co-me thou dear one!" (275.3536) also has a double meaning, as it underscores Bloom's sense of isolation, separation from his wife, and at the same time it excites his feelings for Martha: "Alone. One love. One hope. One comfort me. Martha, chest note, return" (275.3738; cf. Bowen 1995: 52). But unlike "Lionel-Simon", whose singing is met with general acclaim, Bloom's grief is not heard ("Bloom sang dumb" [276.35]). Bloom leaves the bar, and in his imagination the town crier is calling the hour of Molly and Boylan's meeting: "Four o'clock's all's well! Sleep! All is lost now. Drum? Pompedy" (289.3639). Bloom thinks the lovers' tryst is underway; the aria from *The Sleepwalker* returns, accompanied by drums.

In "Sirens", Joyce tells a story of infidelity and introduces opera songs into the plot using either allusions or easily identified quotes. Thereby, he creates symbolic relationships between his protagonists: Bloom, his pen friend Martha, his wife Molly, and finally his wife's lover, Boylan. Using musical pieces, the events signalled in the book are intensified and (re) defined, while Lionel's and Elvino's arias serve as a base for re-evaluating the main protagonist's situation.

Iwona Puchalska calls such an artistic device a „bricolage", which she describes in Polish as "tinkering". But she uses the term by analogy with fine arts and independently of how Claude Lévi-Strauss and Ryszard Nycz define the term. She writes: "The idea of such a work consists in using different, often even contradicting elements, and moulding them into a new, coherent whole, which possesses its own meaning, but at the same time specifically updating the meaning of 'matter' from which the new work has been created. [...] Its openness is an expression of a highly sophisticated and truly original approach to literary works" (Puchalska 2007: 79). Thus an opera's libretto becomes not only an interpretative

context, but also a point of reference necessary for understanding Joyce's idea of a musical intertext, which is crucial for the reception of the literary text. A musical piece can be therefore now perceived as a tool for the construction of a literary experience and for structuring the reception of the text.

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## **The Verbalization of Music in Fiction**

### **Introduction**

The tendency towards the integration of study units and development of interdisciplinary research in literature manifests itself in the fact that intercontextuality, interdiscursiveness, multimodality are becoming the leading principles of the conceptual and aesthetic phenomena analysis. This approach enables scientists to look into the invariant mechanisms of information functioning and general regularities of its production in the text. The text in this case is understood broadly as a cultural phenomenon, regardless of its material character, that is, it can be a literary, a musical, or a visual artwork. 235

Attempting intersemiotic research of the time-based forms of art, such as fiction or cinematography, it may be useful to start with the musical text as sample model, because many mechanisms of the production of conceptual and aesthetic information are more transparent there than in a verbal text. This is preconditioned, firstly, by the relative semiotic homogeneity of the musical text as a result of its material substrate being non-sign and, secondly, by the absolute evidence of such universal semiotic categories as creativity, syncretism and regularity which are “strong” for the musical text and will be discussed further. Thus, the processes of conceptual and aesthetic information production in music are more transparent are universal and, though less obviously, take place in fiction as well.

The musical text in this research is understood as a generalized model of classical pieces of music which is built on the basis of theoretical musicological works and analysis of musical verbalizations (musical episodes in fiction). The model is then compared with the literary works which are regarded as so-called musical prose – by Thomas Mann,



Herman Hesse, Hans Henny Jahn, Heimito von Doderer, Wolfgang Hildesheimer and other writers. The musical character of their works has been pointed out either by the authors themselves or their researchers.

The aim of the present study is to analyze the ways in which musical aesthetic information is transported into fiction, inducing such peculiarity of literary works as their “musicality”.

The transposition of semantic and aesthetic information from music into fiction and vice versa presents considerable challenges because of the profound differences between the two semiotic systems – music and literature. Within Roman Jakobson’s classification of the types of translation, this kind can be referred to as intersemiotic translation, that is interpretation of verbal signs by means of non-verbal sign systems (Jakobson 1978: 16–24), but in this research the verbal semiotic system is considered as a target component of the intersemiotic process, not as a source one.

## **Typological Peculiarities of Music and Fiction Texts**

236

Different attempts at typological description of various forms of art, literature and music in particular, reveal fundamental differences on the lower levels (sign level of the natural language in fiction and pre-sign level in music), whereas many similar semiotic processes are witnessed on the level of the work of art as a whole.

The fact that the secondary sign system in fiction uses the natural language as the first level is the reason why there exist at least two sign levels in the literary text – first, the level of symbolic language signs and second, the level of aesthetic signs of a certain literary work or a certain author’s corpus of works, or of an art movement. Musical works lack the first sign level similar to the sign system of natural language.

Although some musicologists consider onomatopoeia, intonation patterns of a question or exclamation, or slowing down before the end of the musical work to be iconic musical signs, these signs are sporadic and are not of systematic character. In our research we believe it to be more appropriate to look upon musical signs on the level of musical speech, not musical language. This will enable us to consider music theme or music intonation as aesthetic signs, the main criteria for distinguishing the musical sign being recurrence combined with variability and theme recognizability in the process of listening as it is these elements that should bear the formative function.

The fundamental peculiarities of the inner structure of the texts belonging to different semiotic systems are also determined by the way universal semiotic categories are functioning in the text, such as discursive creativeness, syncretism and regularity. Universal semiotic categories mainly reflect the particular quality of text at an upper level of semiotic organization and while the upper semiotic levels are universal, material characteristics of sub-sign levels are specific.

In music the category of discursive creativeness is realized in its unlimited capacity to produce the units of the individual code and the existence of multidimensional links among them. The following production sequence is characteristic of musical creativity: discourse (of the music movement or composer's imagination) – the text of the music work – the language (the work's individual code or aesthetic signs).

In our opinion, this sequence of aesthetic information production is universal for all time-based literary texts, but in fiction, in contrast to music, its potential is limited by the presence of the first level – the natural language. As Yuri Lotman observes, the process of verbal text production is going in two directions – from the word sign towards the text and from the text towards the sign (Lotman 1981: 3–17). What is common for aesthetic information production in the process of artistic communication is the primary character of the discourse and the secondary character of aesthetic signs, which do not exist before the discourse, but appear as a result of an artistic communication event.

The category of syncretism has two aspects: the simultaneity of the signifiers and the interpenetration of signifiers and signified, that is the appliance of the material substance to transfer the information. The result can be seen in the existence of the immediate connection of the material and sense-bearing moments, the interdependence and convergence of different levels of the musical image. Hence that very integrity of the musical message which was mentioned by Thomas Mann's character in *Doctor Faustus*: "In der Tat sei sie (Musik) die geistigste aller Künste, was sich schon daran erweise, dass Form und Inhalt in ihr, wie in keiner anderen, ineinander verschlungen und schlechthin ein und dasselbe seien" (Mann 1975a: 85). In fiction syncretism is realized in the signification of the material qualities of linguistic signs on the phonetic, morphological, word-formation and syntactic levels – i.e. essential information is rendered through matter.

The high level of regularity of a musical text is explained by the predominance of the syntactic dimension of its semiotic system in comparison with the semantic orientation being dominant in fiction.

Moreover, it is determined by the conditions of perception, the necessity to realize the mnemonic-oriented function.

The semantic dimension in music is “degenerated” (Orlov 1992: 462). As observed by Boris Gasparov, musical signs are not determined, but determining, they are primary in relation to denotation (Gasparov 1973: 33–44). The musical text aims at the sense, not the content, which explains the impossibility of exact nomination; attempts to convey the sense of the musical sign with exact denotations are unproductive. This point can be illustrated by the example from the text by Andrei Upit “Music”, where the listeners’ impressions from the same musical work are described and the denotations constructed by them are absolutely different.

The difference in the realization of semiotic categories of regularity and syncretism in fiction and music lies in the fact that while in music they form both upper and lower levels of the text, from separate sounds to the whole text, in fiction they are seen only on the relatively high levels. For instance, the rhythm in fiction shows itself on the level of the sentence and above.

Another important peculiarity of music as a form of art is its processual character, its ability to convey a person’s inner life in its development and fluidity. According to Aleksei Losev, “It is the process of generation which is the cornerstone of music [...]. It is impossible to explain that particularly exciting character which distinguishes a work of music” (Losev 1990: 73). The continuity of development and the processuality in music corresponds to the continuity of the emotional state of the person that is actually the main subject of the iconic representation. One of the most “musical” writers, Aldous Huxley, claims that music says several things simultaneously in the way they merge (Huxley 2004: 8).

## **The Application of Methods of Music Composition in Fiction**

The intensification of the syntactic orientation of semiosis at the expense of the semantic dimension leads to the complication and higher regularity of the text, the recurrence of elements and their redundancy, the predominance of coordination over subordination, overt diagonal connections (partial similarity between distant elements), the formation of the work according to a definite scheme (analogy building, compositional symmetry, partial text modelling) including musical form – sonata allegro, fugue, variations, rondo, etc.

The extrapolation of musical form onto fiction can be found more often than one might have supposed. There have been many attempts of deliberate application of musical form in literary works; this is reflected either in the title (*Sieben Variationen über ein Thema von Johann Peter Hebel* Heimito von Doderer, *Death Fugue* Paul Celan, *Symphonies* Andrei Bely) or in the author's remarks, for example, Herman Hesse dwelling upon *Der Steppenwolf*, Hans Henny Jahnn upon his trilogy *Fluß ohne Ufer* or Thomas Mann upon *Tonio Kröger*. But more frequently musical form in fiction appears unconsciously. For example, the author of the academic study of the sonata form in Pushkin's poetry, Samuil Feinberg writes that the sonata form "might have entered Pushkin's poetry only as a result of intuition of a genius" (Feinberg 1973: 282).

There exist a number of music and literary studies both general (Petri, Klein), and devoted to a particular writer's creative work, whose authors trace the parallels between the composition of literary and musical works. Most frequently, similarity can be seen in poetry (Etkind, Feinberg) and in Thomas Mann's prose (Jung, Petri) to the sonata form, in Dostoevsky's (Alshvang), Thomas Mann's (Jung) and Jeane-Paul's (Dürr) creations with the symphony, in some of Thomas Mann's works (Jung) with the overture and fugue, in H. H. Jahnn's prose (Emrich) with the adagio, etc.

239

There are also cases in which it is difficult to identify the exact type of musical form in fiction in spite of the general similarity with the principles of musical composition. This concerns H.H. Jahnn's trilogy *Fluß ohne Ufer* (Boetlus), Herman Hesse's novel *Der Steppenwolf* (Dürr), some works of Dostoevsky (Asrieva), the eleventh chapter of Joyce's novel *Ulysses* (Petri), etc.

Suzanne Langer points out that musical form reflects dynamic models of inner experience, hence the significance of the principle of universality in music. Claude Levi-Strauss stresses the fundamental role of music along with myth as a projection of fundamental laws, reflecting the unconscious structure of the mind, onto the level of consciousness (Левин-Стросс 1972: 71). While musical works are influenced by the abstract semantics of musical form, one must note that this creates a problematic situation in the addressee's mind, and its resolution, that is awareness, is possible only because of the tension between this situation and similar situations the recipient has already experienced. More than that, the perception of musical texts as well as literary works built in accordance with musical forms presupposes the addressee's creative activity in meaning perception. Semantic ambiguity in this case is compensated by the explicit pragmatic dimension of the text.

Following Viktor Bobrovski, musical form is studied in this paper in two aspects: as a principle and as a fact (Bobrovski 1975: 3–9). Musical form as a principle is a relatively fixed model of cognitive organization, while its concrete representation is a collection of musical works. In relation to our paper, in fiction musical form as a principle results in common analogies with the corresponding musical realization, which might have been non-deliberate and thus reflecting some of the universal laws of literary communication. The musical form as a fact is seen as a writer's striving for a detailed reconstruction of the corresponding musical form.

Our research shows that musical form in fiction is quite often employed as a principle, and the most frequent such principles are the ones of sonata, fugue and variations. This article is too short to give a detailed analysis of literary works built on musical form. So, we will limit ourselves to some comments on the semantics of the best-known types of musical form in fiction.

Among the types of musical form, sonata-allegro is of a particular interest because of its recurrence (sonata devices are typical of antique rhetoric and found in many poetic and prose works), as well as its universal character (the sonata principle has one-to-one correspondence with Hegel law of contradiction). The peculiarities of fiction in the form of sonata are ternary form; parallel plot or formal elements in the first and third reprise parts; theme development as a result of opposed themes confrontation followed by convergence that is expressed by key words and leading-motives, etc. The deep semantics of a sonata form can be interpreted as the internalization of outer contradiction and its partial resolution or psychological compensation, as in Thomas Mann's novel *Tonio Kröger* or Chekhov's *The Black Monk*.

The form of a fugue is also widespread in fiction and among its characteristics we'd like to mention the polyphonism of the plot, the analytic structure realized in the fractioning of the theme elements, the counterpoint, which is realized in combination of several temporal or other planes in a short piece of text. The syntactic organization of the fugue-like text is characterized by the predominance of a horizontal type over a vertical one. It can be illustrated by the novels of Franz Fühmann and Wald Hildesheimer's *Legende vom großen Bett*.

The last musical form we would like to distinguish here is the variation, marked by invariant propositional functions, through-composed plot details, recurrent semantic attributes connecting different variations, tendency towards synonymy, polysemy and homonymy, analogous text building. Thus the integral content of the literary work is realized in the elements' varying recurrence on different text levels. Examples can

be found in *Sieben Variationen über ein Thema von Johann Peter Hebbel* by Heimito von Doderer and the philosophical parable by Yurii Mamleev *Sleeping in the forest*.

The results of the comparison of literary and musical texts enables us to transfer some musicological terms and categories to text linguistics, for example the fugue presentation, sonata principles, variability, etc. On the other hand, many linguistic terms, such as syntax, actual division, distribution, are widely used while analyzing the musical text. It thus seems possible to work out a model language comprising a set of universal notions, which might be used to describe texts belonging to processual forms of art, though we should note that some musical terms (counterpoint, polyphony, etc.) used in philology have a different meaning.

## The Transposition of Musical Information into Fiction

To study the ways in which musical semantics can be verbalized, we have analyzed some musical episodes in fiction, which we call musical verbalizations, where the author explicates the impressions of people listening to music or performing music. The material for the analysis was taken from the novels by English and German writers in whose works classical music plays a very important role (Thomas Mann, Aldous Huxley and others).

While classifying musical verbalizations in fiction we take into account the following criteria:

1. Is the performed music real or fictional? For example, descriptions of Adrian Leverkyn's fictional works in Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus*.
2. Is the music described from the listener's or performer/composer's point of view?
3. To what extent is the processual aspect realized?

Taking into account the extent to which the processual aspect of the musical text is considered in the process of verbalization, musical verbalizations are divided into retelling and description. The retelling transfers the impressions from a musical work gained in the process of its development at a definite moment, while the description is musical and critical research and appeals to the reader's reason. The first type includes musical episodes connected with Hanno Buddenbrook from Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks*, and the second one includes descriptions of Adrian Leverkyn's fictional works in Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus*.

Retellings are found when the author describes the characters who are professional musicians, employ musical terms and mark the moments of their musical development. One example can be an episode of Hanno's improvisation scene in Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus*. The author manages to show the evolution of the musical work written in the sonata allegro form. The development and opposition of the two themes, which finish with the defeat of the main one, fill the plot-composite and have a symbolic function on the level of macrotext, predicting Hanno's death and the Buddenbrooks' demise.

Another example of the retelling can be found in *Amsterdam*, where the successive development of the symphony which exists in the composer's imagination is shown:

The ancient stone steps had been climbed, the wisps of sound had melted away like mist, his new melody, darkly scored in its first lonely manifestation for a muted trombone, had gathered around itself rich orchestral textures of sinuous harmony, then dissonance and whirling variations that spun away into space, never to reappear, and had now drawn itself up in a process of consolidation, like an explosion seen in reverse, funneling inward to a geometrical point of stillness; then the muted trombone again, and then, with a hushed crescendo, like a giant drawing breath, the final and colossal restatement of the melody (with one intriguing and as yet unsolved difference), which gathered pace and erupted into a wave, a racing tsunami of sound reaching an impossible velocity, then rearing up, higher, and when it seemed beyond human capability, higher yet, and at last toppling, breaking and crashing vertiginously down to shatter on the hard safe ground of the home key of C minor. What remained were the pedal notes promising resolution and peace in infinite space. Then a diminuendo spanning forty-five seconds, dissolving into four bars of scored silence. The end. (McEwan 1999: 42)

The processual character is expressed with the help of time adverbs and conjunctions (*never, then, now, at last*), dynamic verbs with the semantics of undulating deployment (*climb, melt, spin away, funnel inward, erupt, race, rear up, break, crash* and others), usage of gradation method.

However, the processual character of retellings is rather weak due to the discreet character of verbal messages. The impossibility of continual multi-level development in musical verbalizations leads to the outlining of only the most important moments, knots, and concentrations of sense. The author has to skip some parts, which leads to text compression and as a result, musical verbalizations are rather short and fragmentary.

Another criterion we applied in our research is the type of musical information rendered. We classify verbalizations into three types: verbalizations expressing the peculiarities of the musical sound substance, that is ones where the information on the elements of the plane of expression is dominant; verbalizations in which associative and figurative

content is transmitted; and verbalizations in which the main attention is given to the transmission of the semantic content of the musical work.

Verbalizations of the first type belong to the sphere of imitative semantics. In the process of the sound substance transmission the lexical material is assimilated to the music. Material features of the substance matter of the verbal signs are used to more extent than it is typical for the verbal text. The peculiar rhythm organization of the text such as tone-painting, semantics of the sound symbolism, alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, intonation, timbre, sound intensity, and other imitative and dynamic and figurative potency of the sound matter allows to gain the stylistic similarity with different music effects. One of the examples of the masterly rhythm usage is found in Hoffmann's *Kreislers musikalisch-poetischer Klub*, where the author gives characteristics to different music keys. While describing the E-flat major key Hoffmann uses short, abrupt, snappy phrases with multiple sound, lexical and syntactical repetitions, making the Kreisler's improvisation energetic and determinate.

Es dur (forte)

Zieh' ihm nach! – zieh' ihm nach! Grün ist sein Kleid wie der dunkle Wald – süßer Hornerklang sein sehnendes Wort! Hörst du es rauschen hinter den Büschen? Hörst du es tönen? – Hörnerton, voll Lust und Wehmut! – Er ist's – auf! Ihnentgegen!  
(Hoffmann 1958: 424)

243

Another example of imitative way of transmission of the music information can be found in Th. Mann's *Doctor Faustus*, where Professor Kretzschmar is talking about the Beethoven's 32 sonata. Metrical organization of the verbal material duplicates the rhythmic pattern of the arietta from the described music piece: "Dim-Dada, Himmelsblau, Leb' mir wohl, Wie-sengrund, Lie-beslied, Der-maleinst, O-du Himmelsblau, Grüner Wiesengrund, Leb – mir wohl, Nun ver-giß der Qual, Groß war – Gott in uns. Alles – war nur Traum, Bleib mir – hold ge-sinnt" (Mann 1975a: 76).

The substantial nature comes to the fore here, not the lexical meaning, the evidence of which can be seen in the usage of the empty word *Dim-Dada*, as well as repetition of lexical material in correlating expressions (*Himmelsblau – O du Himmelsblau; Wie-sengrund – Grüner Wiesengrund*, etc.) imitating the peculiarities of music variations. Lexical meaning of the words arise indefinite associations which are united by the context though, so that they may be interpreted as the expression of the farewell theme.

The second type, that is transposition of associative and figurative content, is the most frequent and natural way of music verbalization, which render impressions from the music rather than the music content.



As an example we shall cite the musical episode from *Doctor Faustus*, where the imitation of the music material is supported with metaphorical descriptions, causing tactile, kinetic and emotional reactions: "[...] dieses hinzukommendecisistdierührendste, tröstlichste, wehmütigversöhnlichste Handlung von der Welt. Es ist wie ein schmerzlich liebevolles Streichen über das Haar, über die Wange, ein stiller, tiefer Blick ins Auge zum letzten Mal" (Mann 1975a: 748).

It is typical for this type to use vivid synaesthesias, metaphorical comparisons, descriptions, which may evoke a particular emotional and aesthetic response, set the mood similar to the one people get from listening to the music itself. The advantage of the type consists in emotional sensitivity, expressiveness, as well as in the possibility to expose the images which allow to increase the verbalizations acquiring a relative processual and holistic character.

Another characteristic feature of this verbalization type is subjectivity of associations. The dominant role of visual information in comparison with the sound one in the person's life leads to the prevailing of visual-spatial associations in musical verbalizations. Thus Irene's play in *The Forsyte Saga* is followed by Old Jolyon's impressions from Gluck's *Orfeo*.

244 'Would you like some Gluck?...'  
'Ah! yes. Let's have 'Orfeo'. Round about him now were fields of gold and silver flowers, white forms swaying in the sunlight, bright birds flying to and fro. All was summer. Lingering waves of sweetness and regret flooded his soul. (Galsworthy 2001: 533)

The third type of verbalizations in our classification is presented by episodes where the music content is transmitted on the conceptual level. In this way the listener doesn't get the ready-made senses, but is let to experience them. The invariant content characteristic for all musical episodes like this is insight connected with supreme values and with the necessity to change the life.

The extract from *Point Counter Point* illustrates this type:

In the opening largo John Sebastian had, with the help of Pongileoni's snout and the air column, made a statement: There are grand things in the world, noble things; there are men born kingly; there are real conquerors, intrinsic lords of the earth. But of an earth that is, oh! complex and multitudinous, he had gone on to reflect in the fugal allegro. You seem to have found the truth; clear, definite, unmistakable, it is announced by the violins; you have it, you triumphantly hold it. But it slips out of your grasp to present itself in a new aspect among the 'cellos and yet again in terms of Pongileoni's vibrating air column [...].

It is a beauty, a goodness, a unity that no intellectual research can discover, that analysis dispels, but of whose reality the spirit is from time to time suddenly and overwhelmingly convinced. (Huxley 2004: 35)

Besides these three types of verbalization we can distinguish one more, which expresses not individual characteristics of particular music work, nor common music feelings, but rather special perception of attainment of truth, induced by music. Such verbalizations might be called meditative. In spite of some stylistic and world-view differences various authors have, all these verbalizations share some specific traits, such as: 1) attainment of high inner concentration and 2) impossibility to express this knowledge verbally to anybody else.

Here is an example from *Kreutzer Sonata* by Leo Tolstoy:

Music makes me forget my real situation. It transports me into a state which is not my own. Under the influence of music I really seem to feel what I do not feel, to understand what I do not understand, to have powers which I cannot have [...]. What was this new thing that I thus learned? That I did not realize, but the consciousness of this indefinite state filled me with joy. (Толстой 2013: 275)

In verbalizations of this type most distinctive is seen the reflective character of a music work contributing the attainment of altered state of consciousness and new ego level rather than just enlarging listener's thesaurus.

245

## Conclusion

The study of musical verbalizations allows us to make some conclusions concerning the peculiarities of music and aesthetic information transference into verbal form.

1. The complications in transmission of music information into verbal language are connected with such features of musical text as a low sign level, secondary character of denotations in reference to music signs, syntactic sign domination, continuity and multidimensionality of explication.

2. The relative correspondence of intersemiotic translation can be reached only on the level of the whole text or its inner form. The inner form here is understood as a compressed text, simultaneous image of the work, reflecting inner laws of the text structure and defining its sense and artistic integrity.

3. The fact that music uses features of the sound material in more extent than fiction compels the writer to sacrifice some of the semantic meanings and concentrate more on some aspects, such as emotions, expressivity, figurative components, etc. In most cases several features on different levels are used.

4. We consider the most successful examples of musical verbalizations to be the ones which use verbal musical metalanguage, such as music terminology, where the main attention is paid to the description of syntactic structure explication, and at the same time emotional slant is expressed. Such peculiarities are characteristic of musical descriptions in the musicological literature – text books for musical institutions and of critical reviews. Such peculiarities are as well characteristic of musical verbalizations in fiction when it is important for the plot and the meaning of the work.

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# **PART FOUR**

## **PERFORMANCE**



## On the Analogies between Translation and Film Adaptations of Literary Classics

The term “intersemiotic translation”, introduced to translation studies by Roman Jakobson (2000: 114) to form a famous triad along with interlingual and intralingual translation, is nowadays quite widely applied to screen/multimedia/audiovisual translation, which in fact should rather be considered as interlingual translation performed in the context of polysemiotic (or multimodal) texts, i.e. texts combining the use of the linguistic code with the use of images and other non-verbal means of communication (Tomaszkiewicz 2006: 97–100). This paper, however, will explore another possible understanding of Jakobson’s notion of intersemiotic translation, derived directly from his definition, which reads “an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of non-verbal sign systems” (2000: 114) and is exemplified by cases such as transposition “from verbal art into music, dance, **cinema**, or painting” (2000: 118, emphasis added). Thus, film adaptations of literary classics will be considered here as cases of intersemiotic translation; it will be assumed that in such adaptations we deal with a source text expressed in a code consisting in using language in a certain literary convention and a target text expressed in a polisemiotic cinematic code, in which language use is combined with narration through motion pictures and the use of non-verbal auditory channels of communication (a code including visual, verbal and aural signifiers; McFarlane 1996: 26). In polisemiotic texts, interpretation depends on complex interrelations between visual and auditory information (Tomaszkiewicz 2006: 55–63).

251

The reflection and analysis to be presented here concerns parallelisms between interlingual translation and film adaptations of classical novels viewed as intersemiotic translation. In particular, it will be argued that some phenomena witnessed in film adaptations can be described by theoretical notions worked out in the field of translation studies and



actually provide a much more conspicuous illustration of those notions than interlingual translation.

My approach to these parallelisms is generally inspired by approaches to translation studies jointly labelled as “the cultural turn” (Bassnett 2007: 13–19), which postulate considering the process of translation and its outcome in the broad socio-cultural and historical perspective with special focus on the requirements of the target polysystem that condition the acceptance of a translated text and its functioning in the target culture. One of theoretical notions highly relevant in this respect is André Lefevere’s concept of translation as rewriting and manipulation. In short, Lefevere (1992: 1–40) argues that translation always involves a degree of manipulation, that is departures from the source text induced by the aesthetic and stylistic preferences of the target culture at a given time and by the impact of the current ideology (moral values, political agenda, etc.). One of the crucial manipulation-inducing factors identified by Lefevere is “patronage”, that is the commissioners of translations and the professional system translators work within.

It should be pointed out that the term “manipulation”, despite its rather negative connotations in general usage, is meant to be a neutral descriptive label, serving to explain certain phenomena in their cultural context rather than judge them unfavourably. But it should also be noted that although all the cultural-turn approaches claim that their primary interest is the target text’s functioning in the target culture and not the judgement of its “fidelity” or “infidelity” to the source text, the very notion of manipulation is crucially linked with comparing the target text with its source and identifying “departures”, otherwise it would be impossible to interpret their reasons. This obviously indicates that a very-well entrenched prototypical idea of a translation is a text very similar to its source, even if this prototype can rarely be realised in practice (cf. Szymańska 2011: 37–39). In this respect it is interesting to note that, as McFarlane points out (1996: 7–11), similar expectations surface in approaches to film adaptations: average audiences as well as some analysts tend to consider film adaptations of literary works in terms of “fidelity”. The approach taken here is descriptive and explanatory, therefore the notion of manipulation will be applied to film adaptations without implying any evaluation, as a tool for investigating and explaining the relationship between a film and its “source” literary text.

Another notion that will be useful in the analysis is that of a “cultural capital” (Bassnett 2007: 19) of text recipients, that is a whole complex body of cultural heritage shared by members of a certain group, which is needed to interpret texts. The role of the translators’ assumptions about their

prospective audience's knowledge and culturally-determined decoding skills has long been acknowledged both in translation studies (e.g. Nida 2000: 128; Gutt 2000: 26–28) and in film studies (McFarlane 1996: 29) and will be shown to be vital in the case of film adaptations.

The third idea that will figure importantly in the following analysis is that of a translation series. The concept of translation series, developed by Edward Balcerzan (1997: 17–19) and Anna Legeżyńska (1999: 188–215), points to the fact that multiple renditions of a single literary work in a given language is a normal, expected way of literary translations functioning in the target culture. Retranslations of famous literary works reveal changes in the interpretation of a given text, the aesthetic conventions and norms of translation practice, as well as translators' and publishers' views on the readers' expectations. The notion of series also highlights that multiple translations of the same text are interrelated, as translators often react to their predecessors decisions, either contesting them, which results in polemical translations, or drawing inspiration and "borrowing" from them (see a wider discussion of this issue in Szymańska (2009).

Let us now trace those phenomena known from translation studies in film adaptations. Starting with the last issue mentioned above, my reflection was in fact primarily inspired by the existence of adaptation series, parallel to translation series. Let us note that the powerful Anglo-American film and television industry constantly produces re-adaptations of literary classics, especially of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century English novels. Among the best examples of such inspirations are the novels by Jane Austen, all of which have been many times adapted: practically every several years the English-speaking and then international audience is presented with a new adaptation of one of them, produced either for the screen or for television. Much more conspicuously than in literary retranslations adaptation series show rapid changes in the stylistic and aesthetic conventions of the target (i.e. cinematic) code: they reflect changing styles of acting and even enouncing, changes in film-making techniques and editing conventions, in the tempo of action and dialogue, in the proportion of information conveyed by dialogue and picture, in the attention to the quality of the setting and costumes, etc.

All this is obviously connected with the rapid technological advances and the financial power of the film industry, which is parallel to Lefevere's "patronage". Film-making teams, which in the case of adaptations are parallel to translators, work within the conditions set by the producers, including the budget and the length of the film planned, which have a direct impact on how they tailor their adaptations, i.e. what sort of manipulation is applied in the intersemiotic translation process.

The influence of producers on script-writers and directors is much more overt than the impact of publishers on translators. One of the interesting sources for studying those influences, and generally the decision-making process of adaptors, is producers', directors' and scriptwriters' commentaries, which are nowadays so often included in DVD releases of films and television miniseries.

Commentaries of that sort also point to the vital and increasing role ascribed by adaptors to the viewer's "cultural capital", especially that in the case of adaptations of literary classics there is usually a considerable temporal gap between the time of the action and the contemporary film audience. Furthermore, film-makers usually assess the film audience as much more varied in terms of education and cultural background than the reading audience, which implies that in the process of adaptation certain manipulations are considered necessary to make the film understandable and enjoyable and thus achieve a commercial success. The expectations of the audience projected by the adaptors also surface in more or less overt ideological manipulations, e.g. reinterpreting or adding certain values and messages.

Due to all those factors, combined with the very basic fact that the polisemiotic code of the film is different in nature from the code of the original, unlike in the case of interlingual translation, in adaptations we can expect massive and very well-motivated manipulation in Lefevere's sense. To follow the idea of tracing parallelisms with established translation-theory notions, we could say that in interlingual translation manipulation is realized through techniques such as omissions, additions, condensation, explication, modernising the language, etc., that is by choosing elements of the target code in such a way that the **intended** message (which does not have to overlap fully with the original message) is decodable for the recipients without unnecessary processing effort.<sup>1</sup> Adaptors in fact do what translators also do, but as they operate with a different type of code than the original and are under more overt pressures of their patronage and their prospective audience, they need to apply their "translation" techniques on a much larger scale.

The above parallelisms will be demonstrated with several examples from two television miniseries and one feature film based on Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*, focusing on how an adaptation series,

<sup>1</sup> The notion of "processing effort" is drawn from Relevance Theory (Gutt 2000: 31–35). It can be assumed that the conditions of relevance, spelling out the balance between processing effort and communicative gain as basis for successful communication, are very much applicable to the analysis of communication through the polisemiotic cinematic code.

parallel to a translation series, allows us to trace the systematic nature of certain manipulations, their similarity to translation techniques and their conditioning. The basic data about the adaptations considered are given below:

Adaptation 1

BBC 1981, 7 episodes, total time: 174 minutes

Dramatised by Alexander Baron, directed by Rodney Bennet

Starring: Irene Richard (Elinor Dashwood), Tracey Childs (Marianne Dashwood), Robert Swann (Colonel Brandon), Bosco Hogan (Edward Ferrars), Peter Woodward (John Willoughby)

Adaptation 2

Columbia Pictures 1995, total time: 136 minutes

Screenplay by Emma Thompson, directed by Ang Lee

Starring: Emma Thompson (Elinor Dashwood), Kate Winslet (Marianne Dashwood), Alan Rickman (Colonel Brandon), Hugh Grant (Edward Ferrars), Greg Wise (John Willoughby)

Oscar for the best adapted screenplay

Adaptation 3

BBC/WGHB Boston 2008, 3 episodes, total time: 180 minutes

Screenplay by Andrew Davies, directed by John Alexander

Starring: Hattie Morahan (Elinor Dashwood), Charity Wakefield (Marianne Dashwood), David Morrissey (Colonel Brandon), Dan Stevens (Edward Ferrars), Dominic Cooper (John Willoughby)

255

The first aspect of adaptation worth a comment in this respect is how dialogues progressively “shrink” and the text transferred from the book is condensed and modernized. To demonstrate this fully it would be necessary to quote large portions of dialogue, but let us just look at a short example of a scene that is derived directly from the book and is present in all the three adaptations. It is a highly dramatic and emotional scene when Marianne receives a letter from Willoughby, trying to terminate their acquaintance. In the book the letter is long and elaborate, its coldly formal style cruelly contrasting with the couple’s previous closeness:

MY DEAR MADAM,

I have just had the honour of receiving your letter, for which I beg to return my sincere acknowledgments. I am much concerned to find there was anything in my behaviour last night that did not meet your approbation; and though I am quite at a loss to discover in what point I could be so unfortunate as to offend you, I entreat your forgiveness of what I can assure you to have been perfectly unintentional. I shall never reflect on my former acquaintance with your family in Devonshire without the most grateful pleasure, and flatter myself it will not be broken by any mistake or misapprehension of my actions. My esteem for your whole family is very sincere; but if I have been so unfortunate as to give rise to a belief of more than I felt, or meant to

express, I shall reproach myself for not having been more guarded in my professions of that esteem. That I should ever have meant more you will allow to be impossible, when you understand that my affections have been long engaged elsewhere, and it will not be many weeks, I believe, before this engagement is fulfilled. It is with great regret that I obey your commands in returning the letters with which I have been honoured from you, and the lock of hair, which you so obligingly bestowed on me.

I am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient humble servant,

JOHN WILLOUGHBY (Austen 2000 [1811]: 120)

The letter is followed with a long fragment of narration, and then a crucial dialogue between the sisters, which highlights the difference in their character.

Elinor could no longer witness this torrent of unresisted grief in silence.

"Exert yourself, dear Marianne", she cried, "if you would not kill yourself and all who love you. Think of your mother; think of her misery while you suffer: for her sake you must exert yourself".

"I cannot, I cannot", cried Marianne; "leave me, leave me, if I distress you; leave me, hate me, forget me! but do not torture me so. Oh! how easy for those, who have no sorrow of their own to talk of exertion! Happy, happy Elinor, you cannot have an idea of what I suffer".

"Do you call me happy, Marianne? Ah! if you knew! And can you believe me to be so, while I see you so wretched!"

"Forgive me, forgive me", throwing her arms round her sister's neck; "I know you feel for me; I know what a heart you have; but yet you are – you must be happy; Edward loves you – what, oh what, can do away such happiness as that?"

"Many, many circumstances", said Elinor, solemnly.

"No, no, no", cried Marianne wildly, "he loves you, and only you. You can have no grief".

"I can have no pleasure while I see you in this state".

"And you will never see me otherwise. Mine is a misery which nothing can do away".

"You must not talk so, Marianne. Have you no comforts? no friends? Is your loss such as leaves no opening for consolation? Much as you suffer now, think of what you would have suffered if the discovery of his character had been delayed to a later period; – if your engagement had been carried on for months and months, as it might have been, before he chose to put an end to it. Every additional day of unhappy confidence, on your side, would have made the blow more dreadful".

"Engagement!" cried Marianne, "there has been no engagement".

"No engagement!"

"No, he is not so unworthy as you believe him. He has broken no faith with me".

"But he told you that he loved you".

"Yes – no – never absolutely. It was every day implied, but never professedly declared. Sometimes I thought it had been – but it never was".

"Yet you wrote to him?"

"Yes: could that be wrong after all that had passed? But I cannot talk".

Elinor said no more. (Austen 2000 [1811]: 122–123)

Below are the transcripts of the corresponding scene from the three adaptations (with M and E standing for Marianne and Elinor, respectively):

1. [M sobbing]

E [reading Willoughby's letter, giving an impression she is only quoting the most shocking fragments]: *Dear Madam, I am much concerned to find there was anything in my behaviour last night that did not meet your approbation... He is at a loss to know how he could have offended you...begs forgiveness...perfectly unintentional... If my esteem for your whole family has given rise to a belief of more than I felt, I reproach myself for not having been more guarded in my conduct... That I should ever have meant more you will allow to be impossible, when you understand that my affections have been long engaged elsewhere...a pledge for life...*

[M throws her letters sent back by Willoughby into fire and cries with despair]

E: *You will recover, my love. I'd rather you did before mother saw you.*

M: *Recover!! You don't know how I suffer!! You have no idea of suffering!!*

E: *If you only knew...*

M: *You must be happy! Edward loves you! What can do away with that?!*

E: *Many things.*

M: *No! As long as he loves you can have no grief. My misery will never end.*

E: *You must muster your feelings, you must not talk so.*

M: *Leave me then, leave me if I distress you!! Hate me, forget me, but don't you tell me to muster my feelings!!*

E: *Very well.* [leaves the room]

2. M [paralyzed by shock, reading Willoughby's letter to E]:

*My dear Madam, I am quite at a loss to discover at what point I could be so unfortunate as to offend you. My esteem for your family is very sincere but if I have given rise to a belief of more than I felt or meant to express I shall reproach myself for not having been more guarded. My affections have long been engaged elsewhere and it is with great regret that I return your letters and the lock of hair which you so obligingly bestowed upon me. I am, etc. John Willoughby*

E: *Oh, Marianne... dearest... It is best to know what his intentions are at once. Think what you would have felt if your engagement had carried on for months and months before he chose to put an end to it.*

M: *We were not engaged.*

E: *But you wrote to him; I thought that he must have left you with some sort of understanding.*

M: *No. He is not so unworthy as you think him.*

E: *Not so unworthy?! Did he tell you that he loved you?!*

M: *Yes! No! Never absolutely. It was everyday implied but never declared. Sometimes I thought it'd happen but it never was! He's broken no vow.*

E: *He's broken faith with all of us! He's made us all believe he's loved you!!*

M [bursting into tears]: *He did!!! He did!!! He loved me as I loved him!!!*

3. M [very softly, crushed with pain]:

*Oh, Elinor, it's the worst... worse than I ever imagined... as if I never knew him...*

E: [reading Willoughby's letter]: *Dear Madam, I am very much concerned to find there was anything in my behaviour last night that did not meet your approbation. If I have been as unfortunate as to give rise to a belief of more than I felt, I entreat your forgiveness. My*

*affections have long been engaged elsewhere. I return your letters as you request, together with the lock of hair which you so obligingly bestowed on me. I am, Dear Madam...*

M: *I can't understand it, Elinor. We were like two halves of the same soul.*

E: *It's contemptible... Marianne, if this is what he is truly like, you are well rid of him. Just think, if your engagement had been carried on for months before he chose to put an end on it...*

M: *There was no engagement.*

E: *What?*

M: *He is not so unworthy as you believe him...*

E: *But he told you he loved you?*

M: *Yes... No... Never in so many words, but everything he said... and did... He knew I loved him and he made me think he loved me... You do believe me, Elinor?*

E: *Of course I do, I saw you together, no one could have doubted that you were in love.*

The treatment of the letter is a perfect illustration of the techniques of omission and condensation as well as the progressive simplification and modernization of the text that remains in the film. As for the dialogue, it is well visible here how only parts of the lengthy dialogues from the novel are chosen and then rewritten by film adaptors, focusing on different aspects of relations between the characters; this is of course interrelated with the style of acting chosen for the given exchange. In adaptation 1, for instance, Marianne is weeping throughout the scene, while Elinor is almost unnaturally cold and composed. The scene emphasizes the emotional difference between the sisters and Marianne's self-centeredness, unlike in adaptations 2 and 3, where Elinor is much more supportive and the focus is clearly on the emotional bond between the sisters. Interestingly, in adaptation 1 no attempt is made at this stage of the action to defend Willoughby and the fragment explaining that there was no engagement is omitted. In each case the language of the dialogue is modernized, and thus the contrast between the cold formal tone of the letter and the highly emotional dialogue is intensified.

Manipulations of that kind, regarding dialogues and scenes (e.g. the dramatic scene of Willoughby's confession to Elinor in Cleveland, when Marianne is ill, disappears from adaptation 2), are similar to local omissions and condensations that are sometimes found in interlingual translation. Adaptors, due to the nature of the cinematic code, also apply very interesting large-scale global omissions and condensations, unavailable to literary translators within the usual norms of translation practice. Examples of that are omitting certain characters or merging the functions of two characters in one. Of the three adaptations concerned it is especially the second one that applies this technique (obviously a major reason is the expected duration of a feature film). Of the important background characters it omits lady Middleton, making sir John Middleton a widower and transferring some of her functions to her mother, the

delightfully comic Mrs Jennings. Ann Steele disappears completely while Mrs Ferrars, the mother of Edward Ferrars and Fanny Dashwood, is often mentioned but never actually shown; some of their functions in the plot are transferred to, respectively, Lucy Steele and Fanny Dashwood. An interesting case is Margaret, the youngest of the Dashwood sisters, who in the novel is a curiously underdeveloped character, mentioned but not really acting. In adaptation 1 Margaret is omitted altogether. Adaptation 2, in contrast, develops Margaret into a fully-fledged personality, a particularly charming girl of exploratory nature. In her very absorbing commentary available on the DVD release of the film, the scriptwriter Emma Thompson explains that she made Margaret the “voice of the audience”, using the spontaneous and open twelve-year-old to ask questions that contemporary viewers would probably want to ask, and which the adult characters do not ask, as they know the conventions and customs of their time. The idea of developing the third sister was borrowed into the third adaptation and, some might say, pushed to extremes: here Margaret is an assertive girl anachronistically reminiscent of 21<sup>st</sup> century children, making overt and sulky remarks, probably intended to help the contemporary audience in interpreting the film (e.g. “It is not fair!”, “Girls do nothing, they only wait!”). Whenever her sisters and mother are having an important conversation, Margaret is certain to appear like the Cheshire Cat in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*: under a bed, behind a hedgerow or up on a tree, to offer her comments and news, making an impression that she is always eavesdropping. Margaret’s case is just one of the many examples of adaptation 3 borrowing ideas from adaptation 2,<sup>2</sup> which is parallel to what translation series sometimes reveal about translators’ ideas. It is also a good example of a technique parallel to addition and explication in translation.

259

Manipulating characters obviously induces a need to rewrite whole subplots and relocate information between scenes. It may also reflect ideological influences, which are so prominent in Lefevere’s idea of manipulation and rewriting. A very good example of progressive manipulation of that sort, affecting the interpretation of the whole film, is how the three adaptations deal with Colonel Brandon and his relation to Marianne. In the book Brandon is a taciturn man, reliable, honourable and helpful but rather dull. His final engagement to Marianne, a “reward” for his patience and constancy, promises her security and perhaps even

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<sup>2</sup> Even though the scriptwriter Andrew Davis claimed that he had intended his adaptation to be very different and to make viewers forget the 1995 film (Thorpe 2007). The very conscious objective of proposing a new interpretation and a new aesthetics is again parallel to what often happens in translation series, resulting in polemical translations.



affection, but not passion or romance. At the end of the novel Marianne is “cured” of her excessive exaltations and contempt for conventions, and she learns to appreciate reason and balance, which in fact is a rather sad compromise for contemporary audience, which seems to appreciate Austen’s social comedy turned to romantic comedy more than her sharp and sometimes bitter social irony. Understandably then, filmmakers manipulate this subplot a lot. In the first adaptation, Brandon is plain and quiet in comparison with the very handsome, sociable and charming Willoughby, who discusses poetry and novels with Marianne as well as sings duets with her. Brandon only wins by his character when Willoughby’s dishonesty is revealed. However, Brandon is also endowed with taste for books, which at the end of the miniseries changes Marianne’s attitude and promises a lot in terms of shared literary interests. It is worth mentioning here that in adaptation 1 Marianne is fascinated with gothic novels, Cowper’s poetry and Walter Scott, while at the end Brandon starts to introduce her to Milton, Shakespeare and Edward Gibbon, so she is shown as inferior to a man in literary taste and perhaps even in intellectual capacities conditioned by women’s education and social role at the time of the action. In adaptation 2 Brandon and Willoughby are from the start created as potentially equally interesting: both are handsome, elegant and very masculine: for instance, both are shown riding but Willoughby is endowed with a white horse, which evokes an obvious romantic stereotype, very useful at the beginning of the story. Brandon shares Marianne’s passion for music and he even sends her a piano, which she does not have in the small cottage (a motif borrowed by the adaptors from Austen’s *Emma*). Willoughby, on the other hand, discusses “Shakespeare, Scott and all forms of poetry” with her, and brings her wild flowers. Adaptation 3 goes even further in promoting Brandon: Willoughby, styled after a portrait of Lord Byron, is talkative and sentimental, full of himself and constantly showing off. He brings Marianne wild strawberries and discusses Byron’s poetry and Pope’s essays with her, but on the whole he makes an impression of a shallow dandy, while Brandon is so attractive in his reserve, so manly (it is him who rides here, and it is him who has a white horse<sup>3</sup>), so interested in music and literature and in fact so romantic (at the end of the film Marianne calls him “a true romantic”) that the heroine’s initial dislike for the Colonel can only be interpreted as youthful contrariness provoked by the elders trying to suggest Brandon

<sup>3</sup> The scriptwriter Andrew Davis reveals that the symbolism of horse-riding, physical effort and exercise is used very consciously by makers of period dramas to suggest certain interpretations to modern viewers (Thorpe 2007).

as an eligible match for her, while her initial fascination with Willoughby becomes an inexplicable mistake in judgement. The ending of the third adaptation suggests, through images and music, without dialogue, that Marianne's developing relation with Brandon is not a compromise, but a modern and model partnership based on honesty and trust as well as fascination, tenderness, passion and common interests (on top of financial stability, of course). Two modern ideological trends are revealed by the adaptation series, both feminist in spirit: firstly, Marianne is increasingly independent and intellectually refined, in adaptations 2 and 3 being an equal partner for men in discussing literature or music. Secondly, the vision of marriage is evolving to match the expectations of the modern audience, modifying the interpretation of the whole story, which in adaptations 2 and 3 no longer ends with an emotional compromise for Marianne.

Finally, let us look at the very filmic type of manipulating image, induced by the need to convey in picture huge portions of information which in novels are conveyed by dialogue and narration. In *Sense and Sensibility* it is crucial to grasp the financial situation behind the story and one of the ways to achieve it instantly in films is to show the characters' houses. Therefore, Norland Park, the house the Dashwood sisters have to leave because the estate is entailed to their half-brother, grows in grandiosity: in adaptation 1 it is a large but unimpressive country manor with unpretentious interiors,<sup>4</sup> in 2 it has a more imposing and elegant exterior and very elaborate refined interiors, while in 3 it becomes a huge palace. As may be expected, Barton Cottage, where the Dashwood ladies move from Norland Park, evolves in the opposite direction: in adaptation 1 it is a very neat and comfortable stone cottage with two parlours, situated next to the road, as in the novel. In adaptation 2 it is rather small and austere, and situated further from the road, but still quite decent. The scriptwriter in her commentary points to Vermeer's paintings of women confined in austere rooms as inspiration for set design in this case. In adaptation 3 the cottage becomes a crooked farm house badly in need of new roofing, situated in the middle of a deserted wind-lashed valley close to the sea, whose sound is constantly audible. This location, and also many amazingly beautiful landscape shots, show how much adaptation 3 romanticizes the story (as well as how film aesthetics and conventions change). Emma Thompson in her commentary to adaptation 2 says

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<sup>4</sup> This was certainly partly conditioned by the budget, as well as the technologies available at the time, which resulted in shooting large portions of period dramas in modest studio sets, a practice prevailing in British television productions in the 1960s–1980s.

overtly in connection with Norland Park: “we made them richer than in the book”, explaining that for the needs of the contemporary – especially American – audience, the idea that the ladies find themselves in reduced circumstances had to be conveyed very explicitly with images, therefore the gap between Norland Park and Barton Cottage was widened. It seems that the makers of the third film thought that for their audience, thirteen years later, the gap had to be made even more obvious.

To conclude, film adaptation series reveal rapid changes in film-makers’ assumptions about the audience’s expectations and cultural capital within relatively short periods. Manipulation in film adaptations is much more radical and overt than in translation, and its reasons are easier to trace in the nature of the film code as well as in mechanisms of contemporary culture. Thus, applying the manipulation approach and the idea of translation series to this kind of intersemiotic translation may lead to comparative research on changing norms of film adaptation, parallel to research on translation norms in literary polysystems postulated by Gideon Toury within the framework of Descriptive Translation Studies.

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## The Ending of *Great Expectations* According to *South Park*: A Science- Fictional Revisitation

### Introduction

The *South Park* episode dedicated to *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens – aired in the United States on TV-MA on November 29, 2000 – is the nineteenth adaptation of this literary classic if we take into consideration only cinematographic, televised, and animated versions (see Bolton 1987; Glavin 2003; McFarlane 2008; Hammond 2015).

265

The consistent attention of adaptors and rewriters in the last century undoubtedly testifies to the novel's immortality and its constant actuality, further confirmed by the continuous publication in the last ten years of fanfictions, crossovers, and the experimental *Twitterature* retelling by Aciman and Rensin.<sup>1</sup> What these works have in common, according to a postmodern trend, is often the aim to rewrite the destiny of some characters or add new episodes absent in the original plot, or – varying the setting and the original characters – to emphasize a main theme and modernize the hypotext, the characters, and the value-system, showing the vitality of the original story transposed into a new context and in the contemporary era (see Doležel 1999: 201–227).

The link between these works and the *South Park* episode is clear not only because of the ironic and parodic tones which characterize them, but also because of the intention to modernize the Dickensian novel and, as we will see, to highlight a theme with the aim of refunctionalizing it.

Referring to *South Park* it is important to remember that, in keeping with the most recurrent themes of the animated series – known to be inclined to the most pressing and controversial aspects of contemporary

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<sup>1</sup> For an overview on literary and digital rewritings see Cao "The Fortune of *Great Expectations* from the Nineties to Today" and *Le riscritture di Great Expectations*.

society and particularly attentive to minorities – Pip had already been featured in a number of episodes of *South Park*, embodying the stereotype of the unfortunate orphan abused by adults and peers, just as in the original text. Having reached the fourth season of the series, the producers decided to interrupt the regular transmission of the episodes to show the “true story” of this character.

The decision to suspend the regular flow of a popular animated series in order to devote a whole episode to a literary work could not be accidental. The term “break” is indeed used by the actor Malcolm McDowell, the storyteller who introduces the episode: the declared intention of the episode, as he says, is «to take a break from their regular show» to tell the complete story of this book from the beginning to the end as his young and ignorant audience learn more about this masterpiece of English literature. As Sconce underlines in his article on two adaptations of Dickens novels, the use of the term “break” is particularly interesting because

series television is structured by what various critics have described as a tension between repetition and difference. All popular series in any medium, indeed, must balance repetition of successful (i.e. commercial) story elements with a search for forms of difference that will provide novel variation and interest. Such balance, crucial in all popular genres, is especially important in television where a series may run for hundreds of episodes and depends on predictable, cyclical consumption. (Sconce 2003: 184)

Therefore, pleasing the audience requires striking the proper balance between tried-and-true foundational formulas and moments of improvisation: in this case the element of “improvisation” is the choice of an episode that deviates from the conventional setting and characters of *South Park*, but at the same time we can also recognize important elements of continuity between the Dickensian poetics and that of the animated series. There are indeed two interesting aspects that link Dickens to the “poetics” of this series: first of all, the penchant for class satire, and second, the incredible variety of colliding and conflicting discourses woven together to create his prose (the “heteroglossia” so celebrated in Dickens by Bakhtin).

Starting from the predominant role of the *heteroglossia*, both in Dickens and in the *South Park* episode, the following analysis aims to demonstrate how the science-fictional rereading of this Dickensian novel modernizes the story through the use of multiple languages, and takes to the extreme a focal point, mostly neglected by other transpositions and rewritings of this classic: the theme of doubles and alienation, in particular with regard to Estella and Miss Havisham.

## The Transposition

As an intersemiotic translation, the adaptation implies a relationship with the source text on two different levels: primarily in terms of semiotic code switching – with all the various solutions that the difference between the two semiotic systems implies (in this case the use of cuts, condensations, displacements and voice over) (see Corrigan 1999; Cortellazzo and Tommasi 1988; Eco 2010; Kozloff 1988; McCabe et al. 2011) – and, to a lesser extent, in terms of systems of signification.<sup>2</sup>

In regard to this second point, it should be noted that each translation is first and foremost an act of interpretation, a dialogue between the target text and the source text: as Lotman emphasizes, in order the text to be an active device, it needs to be inserted in a chain of communication “so that it begins to operate as a generator of new texts and messages” (Lotman 1982: 8).

Moreover, these two levels of analysis are strictly related and they cannot be considered separately: every artistic text, like a “musical score” (Barthes 1973: 28) offers interpretative paths that the target text thus transforms “according to the strategies and translation techniques one choses to adopt, and more so when translating from single-medium texts to syncretic texts, which are inevitably different from the source text even in the construction of meaning effects” (Dusi 2010: 90).

A comparative analysis of the *South Park* episode, therefore, allows us to illustrate the translation strategies adopted by the target text in relation to the source text, and also to show how the adaptation, as a “form of active reworking” (Doležel 1999: 216), “opens up and multiplies the source text [and], can “re-semanticize” it, making us rediscover it through its new interpretation” (Dusi 2010: 92).

Since every transposition is firstly an interpretative act, it should be examined not only as a *product* readable exclusively in relation to the intention of the source text, but also as a *process* that adopts a number of translation strategies to “carry a *communicative intention* that can be identified through textual analysis” (Dusi 2010: 89). At the same time, considering adaptation as an act during which something remains invariant in the transformation of the source text in another semiotic system, a comparative analysis should also explicate the rules of similarity (or equivalence) relevant in the examination of the translation strategies. To this regard, as we will see, the interpretation of *Great Expectations* conveyed by the *South Park* episode emerges from the cooperation of the

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<sup>2</sup> See Dusi 2010. Where the text adopted is in Italian, the translation is mine – C.C.



different languages used by the transposition: first of all the role of the narrator (as a voice over); the use of cuts and condensations; the dialectic between parodic and faithful parts; and the shift of genre in the last part.

## Double and Alienation in *Great Expectations*

Due to the complexity of the plot, rich in characters with their respective stories and subplots, I am only going to take account of the macrostructure of the novel in order to illustrate, subsequently, the themes of the double and the alienation in *Great Expectations*.

It should be remembered that the Dickensian novel is divided into three parts. The first one is about Pip's childhood, when he meets the convict Magwitch at the graveyard and then Miss Havisham and Estella at Satis House; in the second part he leaves his sister's house to go to London, where he is educated as a gentleman as decided for him by his anonymous benefactor; finally, in the third part, Pip discovers that his putative father is the convict met years before at the graveyard, so he loses his fortune and, at the same time, even his beloved Estella, who marries a rude man named Bentley Drummle. As is known, *Great Expectations* does not have a univocal ending, because of the author's choice to erase the first unhappy conclusion to meet the expectations of the greatest part of his readers.<sup>3</sup> However, what is important about both endings is the death of Drummle, the reconciliation between Estella and Pip and, in the definitive published version, the ambiguous allusion to the possibility of a marriage between them.

Even if this brief summary cannot demonstrate the richness of themes and issues of this novel, *Great Expectations* is an unconventional Bildungsroman that creates at least two thematic levels. At the first level we find the theme of the power of money and the rise and the fall of a poor orphan: at this level, as Peter Brooks has observed, we can also recognize the motives of the repetition (in terms of return and regression of the main character), the passivity of this anti-hero under Magwitch and Miss Havisham's will, and the social regression of Pip and Estella as a consequence of their passivity. At the second semantic level, but strictly related to the first one, we find the theme of doubles: first, since his childhood the relationship between Pip and his family is characterized by the obligation of the orphan to repeat his brother-in-law's destiny. Pip is

<sup>3</sup> See Dickens 1996: 440–441. The edition by Carlisle is the same used for the quotations.

destined to become a forger just like Joe and he has no alternatives for his future because he lacks a “true family” (see Sadrin 2010: 95–111). Second, his love for Estella brings him to a desire for change in a socioeconomic sense, as he wants to follow the model of the perfect gentleman to acquire Estella’s love. Third, his relationship with the putative father is based on Magwitch’s desire to transform Pip into a gentleman out of a sense of revenge against the English bourgeoisie that has excluded him from society, condemning him to deportation in Australia. Last, Pip’s story is doubled in Estella’s life: her relationship with Miss Havisham is marked by the desire of the old lady to transform her stepdaughter into an instrument of revenge against the male sex.<sup>4</sup>

It is this strict relationship between these two thematic levels that I intend to examine in order to highlight the intertextual dynamics put in place by the *South Park* episode in comparison with the Dickensian novel. In *Great Expectations* the passivity of the two main characters – passivity, as we will see, soon turned into alienation – is strictly related to the role of the two step-parents – respectively Magwitch and Miss Havisham – who transform the two young characters into their “creatures”, into their doubles, as a means of revenge. However, whereas the greatest part of the transpositions and the rewritings have emphasized the sentimental relationship between Pip and Estella and Pip’s social ascent, this animated series, even if in a parodic form, for the first time focuses on Estella’s story, on the role of Miss Havisham’s room as the driving force behind the alienation of Estella and on the evolution of the young lady, confirmed by the two versions of the Dickensian ending.

269

Effectively, despite the chronological limits of the episode (only twenty-one minutes) all three parts of the original work are recognizable and what is noticeable at first sight is the secondariness of Pip’s social ascent, while Miss Havisham and her relationship with Estella are placed in the foreground. However, since about eight minutes of the episode are dedicated to each part of the novel, only in the last eight minutes are the themes of the double and the passivity of the two characters modernized and refunctionalized in a science-fictional rereading.

To understand this refunctionalization of the roles of Miss Havisham and the Satis House rooms in the transposition, it is first necessary to come back to the role played by these elements in the source text, in order to illustrate how the science-fictional revisitation is pertinent and coherent with the inferences suggested by the source text:

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<sup>4</sup> On the theme of the double in *Great Expectations* see Frye and the psychoanalytic analysis of *Great Expectations* collected by Rosenberg, Carlisle, Marroni.

No glimpse of daylight was to be seen in it. It was a dressing-room as I supposed from the furniture, though much of it was of form and uses then quite unknown to me. But prominent in it was a draped table with a gilded looking-glass, and that I made out at first sight to be a fine lady's dressing-table. [...] She was dressed in rich materials – satins, and lace, and silks – all of white. Her shoes were white. And she had a long white veil dependent from her hair, and she had bridal flowers in her hair, but her hair was white. Some bright jewels sparkled on her neck and on her hands, and some other jewels lay sparkling on the table [...]. I saw that everything within my view which ought to be white, had been white long ago, and had lost its luster, and was faded and yellow. I saw that the bride within the bridal dress had withered like the dress, and like the flowers, and had no brightness left but the brightness of her sunken eyes. (*Great Expectations*, Dickens 1996: 70–71)

Miss Havisham's room, where the clocks have been stopped in the attempt to control and deny the natural course of the time in order to obliterate the trauma of the abandonment before the wedding, is a room where the absence of life is reflected in the attempt to refuse the existence of time. This is enhanced by the insistence on the colour white of the objects, of the powder and the wedding dress that gradually extends up to the figure of the lady, gradually assimilated to the inorganic condition of her room. As Massimo Fusillo observes (see Fusillo 2011: 47–53), at Satis House the objects contaminate the human beings and assimilate them to inanimate beings.

It is possible to find the evidence of Miss Havisham's regression to a state of pure matter from the first words addressed to Pip, during the visit of the young boy at Satis House:

"What do I touch?"

"Your heart".

"Broken!"

She uttered the word with an eager look, and with strong emphasis, and with a weird smile that had a kind of boast in it. (*Great Expectations*, Dickens 1996: 72)

The role of the old lady and her house as emblems of the assimilation of human beings to the inorganic condition is confirmed by their effects on Miss Havisham's double, Estella, who shortly after tells Pip that she was deprived, as her stepmother before her, of the element conventionally symbolic of feelings: the heart.

"You must know", said Estella, condescending to me as a brilliant and beautiful woman might, "that I have no heart – if that has anything to do with my memory" [...]. "Oh I have no heart to be stabbed in or shot in, I have no doubt", said Estella, "and of course, if it ceased to beat I should cease to be. But you know what I mean. I have no softness there, no – sympathy – sentiment – nonsense". (*Great Expectations*, Dickens 1996: 226–227)

The regressive path made by Estella towards the inorganic condition, contaminated and absorbed by Miss Havisham's underworld, is sanctioned by the words addressed to Pip during one of their meetings in London, which confirm their transformation into true inanimate tools in Miss Havisham's hands:

"Now", said Estella, gliding away the instant I touched her cheek, "you are to take care that I have some tea, and you are to take me to Richmond".

Her reverting to this tone as if our association were forced upon us and we were mere *puppets*, gave me pain; but everything in our intercourse did give me pain. (*Great Expectations*, Dickens 1996: 253)<sup>5</sup>

This reference to puppets acquires important connotations not only as a proof of the reification of the human beings inside Miss Havisham's rooms, but also as a confirmation of the importance of the manipulation of the two younger characters in this novel.

The two themes of the duplication and the passivity of Estella, up to her alienation from the human condition, already have had a great importance in the Dickensian narration, as observed by Alessandro Monti in his introduction to the Italian version of *Great Expectations*:

the rooms in which the old lady lives sequestered can be seen as a laboratory [...] a pre-futuristic place of biologic manipulation. Pip (and before him Estella) are objects of an experiment; in the case of the young boy, the animal condition of the first chapters evolves into that of guinea-pig. Estella is instead transformed into an alien creature, without normal emotive and affective instincts [...] she is implicitly a mutant, a creature not of our evolutionary moral dimension (not surprisingly compared, because of her name, to the stars and to their light, far away and without any warmth). (Monti 1996: xxv-xxvi)<sup>6</sup>

271

Before concluding with the analysis of these themes in *Great Expectations*, we have to underline that one of the main consequences of the transformation of Estella into a sort of clone of Miss Havisham's inhumanity is the duplication of the traumatic scene of Miss Havisham's abandonment, as we notice in the old lady's reaction to Estella's thanklessness:

"You stock and stone!" exclaimed Miss Havisham. "You cold, cold heart!" "What?" said Estella, preserving her attitude of indifference as she leaned against the great chimney-piece and only moving her eyes; "do you reproach me for being cold? You?" [...] "You should know", said Estella. "I am what you have made me. Take all the praise, take all the blame; take all the success, take all the failure; in short, take me". (*Great Expectations*, Dickens 1996: 284)

<sup>5</sup> Italics is mine – C.C.

<sup>6</sup> Translation is mine – C.C.

The repetition of the episode of Miss Havisham's abandonment – this time experienced through Estella – and the definitive failure of the experiments on Estella's life breaks the spell of those rooms and the figure of Miss Havisham no longer has a reason to exist. The fire, the destruction of the artificial environment that the old lady had created as a denial of the life itself, is the only possible outcome and only after the spell is broken can both Miss Havisham and Estella fully realize the consequences of their past actions: Miss Havisham confirms her awareness by asking for forgiveness on her deathbed, and in Estella's case, only after the liberation from her stepmother's influence it is possible to have a reconciliation with Pip (as suggested by both endings).

As we are going to see shortly, the science-fictional revisitation produced by *South Park* emphasizes all these aspects of the original story, focusing on the process of alienation and liberation of Estella in contrast to her stepmother.<sup>7</sup>

## The *South Park* Episode

272

Keeping in mind the two semantic levels in *Great Expectations*, I am going to focus on the translation strategies adopted by the *South Park* episode to foreground the theme of the double in the transposition of the novel in a science-fictional version. If the adaptation as a syncretic text uses multiple languages to convey its communicative intention, in this case we notice that the four main means used by this transposition are the presence and the function of the storyteller, the use of cuts and condensations, the dialectic between parody and fidelity and, finally, the shift of genre.

The main strategy adopted to allow a transposition of a work such as *Great Expectations* in so brief an episode is the presence of the storyteller. The twenty-one minutes of the episode are indeed spaced out by seven interventions of the narrator: for all of the interventions the scene moves into the living room where sitting in an armchair with the open book, we find the actor Malcolm McDowell, who gives the audience explanations about the events cut from the original plot. At first glance it might seem that the function of these interventions is either ironic – since they want

<sup>7</sup> In this case the science-fictional turn of the story is given by the new and unexpected role played by high technology and scientific experiments in Miss Havisham's attempt to change the destiny of Dickensian characters.

to remind us of the ironic role of the storyteller in the first chapters of the Dickensian text, showing the contradiction between the impressions of the young protagonist and the reality of facts – or that they are simply allusive to the intrusiveness of the omniscient narrator in the original story: well-known indeed are the narrator's "prolepsis" (Genette 1980: 40) and his intrusive moral remarks in *Great Expectations*. However, upon closer examination, it emerges that the effect obtained by the presence of the storyteller is to highlight the true core of the story that *South Park* has chosen as its focal point: the relationship between Miss Havisham and Estella. Without the many interventions of the narrator, who summarizes the events that do not relate to the two ladies, it would not be possible to keep the focus mainly on their story in the conventionally brief duration of the episode, given the complexity of the whole plot.

However, the interventions of the narrator are only the first of the many translation strategies of the transposition to convey its communicative intention. Strictly related to them are two further elements: cuts and condensations. In this regard, we should specify that some characters of the source text (with the respective subplots) have been suppressed: Wopsle and Pumblechook, Orlick and Biddy, Compeyson and his relationship with Miss Havisham and Magwitch. Even if, as McFarlane states, they are the same characters normally eliminated for reasons of duration in longer transpositions, too – as in the cinematographic one – we have to specify that normally at least one or more of them are maintained for their *semantic function* in the story: they should highlight the centrality of Pip's story because the comparison with them allows the audience to focus on his evolution and on the moral taught by his story. The elimination of all of them together is a confirmation of the centrality acquired by another narrative strand of the source text as well as of the denial of Pip's centrality.

A clearer hint as to the purpose of the cuts and condensations is given by the duration of the original scenes re-proposed in the adaptation and, in particular, by the dialectic between parodic scenes and the ones that are faithful to the source text. A confirmation of the secondariness of the theme of Pip's social ascent is given by the overall duration of just two minutes of the two scenes where – at the beginning and at the end of the story – Pip and Magwitch are protagonists (their first encounter at the graveyard and their final reconciliation).

The same can be said for the brevity of the scenes dedicated to Pip's education in London as a gentleman, mostly summarized by the narrator, while the only moment to which more attention is given is when Herbert tells Miss Havisham's story to Pip during their first dinner in London.

Not only the brevity of the scenes dedicated to these parts or the interventions of the narrator, but also the skilful alternation between parodic scenes and faithful one confirm the secondariness of the rise and fall of Pip and his love story with Estella: in the first fifteen minutes, the love story between Pip and Estella and Pip's education are transposed in a parodic form, whereas the main events regarding Miss Havisham's attempt to catch Pip and Estella in her trap are transposed accurately, reconfirming the focal function of this narrative core in the adaptation.

In this case, it is the dialogues which communicate the higher or lower level of fidelity. When Pip and Estella are the protagonists – during their first encounter, or during their walk through the garden, or at the dance party in the English “king” Tony Blair's house – dialogues are indeed characterized by a parodic tone: they are not only modernized by the use of anachronistic references and by the choice of the words used – very far from the Dickensian one – but the obscenity of the dialogues and events are also taken to the extreme. We can consider, for example, the moment in which Estella tells Pip that she has a boyfriend, Steve (the equivalent of Bentley Drummle), and she underlines that “he is seventeen and he has a car” or the number of insults that she constantly addresses to Pip. The effect of these choices is clearly the transformation of Pip into a caricature of himself, since his passivity before the young girl is emphasized.

On the contrary, in the first two-thirds of the transposition, the only faithful moments to Dickensian dialogues and atmospheres are those which show Miss Havisham in the darkness of her dining room at Satis House. The attention for her manipulative role, first in relation to Pip and then to Estella, is stressed by the choice of reporting faithfully the first words addressed to the two young characters:

Miss Havisham: “Sometimes I have sick fancies. And I have a fancy I shall like to see someone play. So play. Play. Estella play with this boy”.

Estella: “But he is just a commoner”.

Miss Havisham: “But you can break his heart”.

Estella: “All right, boy, let us play”.

The same attention for the old lady is confirmed few minutes later by the choice to refer to her attempt to convince Pip to love Estella:

Miss Havisham: “Oh, you love her don't you, Pip?”

Pip: “I don't know. I mean, I think about her every day”.

Miss Havisham: “Do you know what love is, Pip? It is blind devotion, unquestioning self-humiliation, utter submission. Trust and believe against yourself and against the whole world. Giving up your whole heart and soul. Love her, Pip. I developed her into what she is so that she might [...] be loved [...]. Go and seek her out and love her,

love her. [...] If she wounds you, love her. If she tears your heart into pieces – and as you get older it will tear deeper – love her!”

The fidelity with which these dialogues are quoted in the adaptation is also important for the centrality acquired from this moment by the motif of the “broken heart”, repeated several times in the next seven minutes of the episode. The ending of the episode demonstrates that in the passage from the hypotext to the transposition this motif becomes a symbol of the alienation and passivity of the two young characters. The last part is indeed the moment in which the parodic, modernizing and the condensing strategies are taken to the extreme: as in the source text, the trap set by Miss Havisham for Pip emerges with the discovery of the engagement of Estella and Steve. Now, in accord with the modernizing and parodic intentions of the transposition revealed in the previous two parts, the adaptation foregrounds the manipulative role of Miss Havisham.

Miss Havisham: “Things aren't always what they seem, Pip. Oh, what's the matter? Did she... break your heart?”

Pip: “Well... I suppose that if you set out to break my heart, you did a very good job of it... Because it certainly does hurt”.

Miss Havisham: “Yes! Tell me about the pain!”

[...]

Pip: “But why do you make your daughter hurt people?”

Miss Havisham: “Why? Well, that's simple. Because I need the tears of broken hearted men to use in my ‘Genesis’ device. You see, my foolish child, I am growing very old. But tonight, I will fuse my soul into Estella's once and for all. And then I can go on breaking men's hearts for another entire generation!!! [...] Estella, prepare yourself for the Genesis platform. [...] And as for you, Pip, my robot monkeys should take care of you”.

275

Her attempt to control time – which in the source text was expressed by the stopped clocks – is now transposed into an attempt to halt her aging by her fusion with Estella, and the elimination of the young lady's agency is therefore transposed into the definitive cancellation of her existence in favour of Miss Havisham's eternal youth. Her control over the girl, who is already reduced in the source text to a puppet in her hands, is translated here to an explicit transformation of Estella into a guinea pig: her alienation and reduction to an inorganic element, are now necessary for Miss Havisham's experiment. The original role of Pip as a guinea pig and the motif of revenge against the human race are reflected now in her need for the tears of men, Estella's victims, to operate the Genesis device that will finally merge the souls of the two ladies.

In the science-fictional re-reading of the third part of the Dickensian novel, the themes of the duplication, alienation, revenge, and the passivity



of Pip and Estella in Miss Havisham's hands therefore return with new functions. The change from the Bildungsroman to the science-fiction story in the third part of the episode is understandable only if put in relation to the other means used by the intersemiotic translation to convey its communicative intention. The focus of this adaptation has ceased to be Pip and the moral teaching of his story of rise and fall: the focal point recognized by the adaptors of *South Park* is occupied by Miss Havisham and Satis House as a place of manipulation and transformation of human into inhuman.

The change of genre grounds these issues in a parodic and modernizing form, but maintains some elements invariant with respect to the source text, remaining faithful to the intention of the original work: as a place of experimentation, Satis House was destined to be destroyed in a fire shortly after Estella's rebellion. Therefore, the ending of the animated series, which shows Estella as the means through which Miss Havisham can achieve her ultimate goal of control of time and life – a clearly extreme version of the original motif of the stopped clocks – expresses the close link between the rebellion of Estella's adoptive mother and the destruction of Satis House through the image of Miss Havisham going up in flames at the exact moment when Estella leaves the Genesis device.

A final mention should be reserved for the original endings: coherently with both Dickensian endings, even the *South Park* episode shows the possibility of a total liberation of Estella from the influence of Miss Havisham and the possibility of a union between Pip and Estella, but only after the death of the old lady. After that moment, Estella can discover that she has a heart, forsaking her unnatural state as an alien creature, or even as inorganic matter such as a stone or a puppet, to which the manipulation of Miss Havisham had led her.

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## A Philosophical Debate on the Screen – Bishop Berkeley’s *Esse Est Percipi* and Samuel Beckett’s *Film*

George Berkeley (1685–1753) advanced a theory which he called “immaterialism” (later referred to as “subjective idealism”). This theory denies the existence of material substance and concedes that familiar objects are only ideas in the minds of perceivers and, as a result, cannot exist without being perceived. In his philosophic treatise, *The Principles of Human Knowledge*, Berkeley argues: “For as to what is said of the absolute existence of unthinking things without any relation to their being perceived, that is to me perfectly unintelligible. Their *esse* is *percipi*, nor is it possible that they should have any existence out of the minds or thinking things which perceive them” (Berkeley 1972: 66). The assumption concerning the necessity of being perceived in order to exist posed problems with the durability and unity of objects. The solution to this difficulty was provided by another field of Berkeley’s philosophy, namely his spiritualism. He introduced “the will of the Creator. He alone is he who, ‘upholding all things by word of His power’, maintains that intercourse between spirits enables them to perceive the existence of each other. And yet this pure and clear light which enlightens everyone is itself invisible” (1972: 140).

279

In his book, *Einstein and Beckett. A Record of an Imaginary Discussion with Albert Einstein and Samuel Beckett*, Schlossberg (1973: 46) argues that for Beckett perception (or being perceived by others) is equivalent to existence which would indicate the influence of the philosopher’s ideas on the Nobel prize winner. On the one hand, it has been proved by Beckett’s biographers and critics that he was perfectly familiar with Berkeley’s philosophy and that his novels, plays, notebooks and correspondence indicate his interest in and criticism of the Bishop’s ideas.<sup>1</sup> There are numerous references to

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<sup>1</sup> See, among others, Ackerley and Gontarski (2006: 49); Gontarski (2006: 156); Casanova (2007: 68); Harvey (1970: 247–249); Calder (2001: 4); Uhlmann (2006: 118), and Smith (1998: 154).

the need of being seen or heard in his oeuvre<sup>2</sup> and, as Smith argues, the influence is not restricted to the content but also to the form of *Trilogy* and *How It Is* (1998: 331). On the other hand, however, Beckett's references to the philosopher's idea often present a kind of philosophical controversy concerning their validity. Furthermore, in Beckett's Godless universe they are not used as a spiritualistic proof of God's existence.

It seems that, while the associations with Berkeley's *esse est percipi* are valid and fully justified, the need to be perceived so often voiced by the Beckettian characters, has also something in common with the philosophy of Martin Buber and his idea of the need of the other, satisfied by the I-Thou relationship.<sup>3</sup> There is no evidence that Beckett was familiar with the Austrian-born Jewish philosopher's theories. Both of them were interested in existential issues and while Buber introduced the philosophy of dialogue, a variant of existentialism, Beckett's *oeuvre* may be considered to be an illustration of the existential dilemmas of his modern everyman.

Beckett's views concerning human existence appear in his essay *Proust* which is of equal validity in analysing Marcel Proust's work as the literary output of Samuel Beckett. Just like Proust's characters, Beckett's also have to expiate "for the eternal sin of having been born" (Beckett 1970: 67) and thus their lives are characterised by the "suffering of being" (ibid.: 8). In most cases they are lonely, forlorn creatures, suspended between despair and hope, finding occasional relief in different kinds of habit, often employed with the help of the other. Their lot is best exemplified by two sentences, the first coming from *Murphy*: "The sun shone, having no alternative, on the nothing new" (Beckett 1970: 5). While the sentence quoted opens the novel, the following one closes another, also a part of *The Trilogy*, namely *The Unnamable*: "you must go on, I can't go on, I'll go on" (Beckett 1980: 382). Suspended between hope and despair, Beckett's characters go on living and suffering, their only help in the dreadful situation being Habit (Beckett 1970: 8 and 16): talking, inventing stories, playing games and inventing other pastimes to keep up with their companions (if they have any). Most of them seem to be repeating *The Unnamable's* sentence: "you must go on, I can't go on, I'll go on". Occasionally, they may think about committing suicide, as Vladimir and Estragon do in *Waiting for Godot*. Do they really want to end their lives, however? It might be argued that they do not think about it seriously and

<sup>2</sup> Ackerley and Gontarski (2006: 50); Uhlmann (1991: 176); Gontarski and Uhlmann (2006: 11) and Smith (1998: 332).

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of this issue see Uchman (2013).

the thought about it comes when they have an interval in their habitual activities. It is then that, after a silence, looking at the tree Vladimir says "What do we do now?" and the following dialogue ensues:

ESTRAGON: *Wait.*

VLADIMIR: *Yes, but while waiting.*

ESTRAGON: *What about hanging ourselves?*

VLADIMIR: *Hmm. It'd give us an erection.*

ESTRAGON: (highly excited). *An erection!* (Beckett 1069: 17)

It can be justifiably argued that they do not treat the idea of committing suicide sincerely as, firstly the phrase "what about", repeatedly occurring in their dialogues, marks a moment of their enlarged awareness of "the suffering of being" and a need to employ some kind of Habit which would muffle it. Secondly, no suicide victim can be expected to think about an erection while contemplating ending his life. The situation in most of Beckett's plays in many respects, at least, resembles that in *Waiting for Godot* – thrown into a hopeless existence the characters wait for their deaths to come.<sup>4</sup>

The question might be asked whether Beckett's characters, belonging to "the foul brood to which a cruel fate consigned" them in Vladimir's phrasing (Beckett 1969: 79), really are aware of the situation they are in. Winnie, the heroine of *Happy Days*, seems to be another interesting case in this respect. On the one hand, she expresses a death wish (Beckett 1961: 33–34), on the other, however, she repeatedly uses the phrase "happy day"; she complains about the bell which "hurts like a knife" (ibid.: 54) yet, on various occasions, repeats the same idea: "can't complain – (*looks for spectacles*) – no, no – (*takes up spectacles*) – mustn't complain – (*holds up spectacles, looks through lens*) – so much to be thankful for – (*looks through other lens*) – no pain – (*puts on spectacles*) – hardly any – (*looks for toothbrush*) – wonderful thing that – (*takes up toothbrush*) – nothing like it – (*examines handle of toothbrush*) – slight ache sometimes –" (ibid.: 11). One might wonder to what extent she is aware of her hopeless situation. Beckett said: "She's not stoic, she's unaware" (Worth 1990: 48).<sup>5</sup> It seems that this

<sup>4</sup> Martin Heidegger's terms "Geworfenheit", "Dasein" and "Sein zum Tode" seem to be very adequate for describing the situation of the Beckettian characters especially if one takes into account the fact that Beckett in the late twenties was on friendly terms with Jean Beaufret, who, according to the artist's own words, was "a very well known philosopher and a specialist on Heidegger" (Knowlson 1006: 104).

<sup>5</sup> On 22 December 2009, to commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Beckett's death, TV Kultura broadcast a production of *Happy Days* starring Maja Komorowska and directed by Antoni Libera. It was preceded by a talk with the two of them. Even though they had been producing the drama together for sixteen years their opinions concerning

opinion refers to most of Beckett's characters. If they are conscious of this, it is so only in the rare, painful moments of full awareness from which they escape thanks to the blessed Habit – games, talking, being assured of the other's existence and certainty that they are perceived (seen or heard). The need for the other seems to characterize the existence of most of them.

In this context *Film*, the only cinematic work in Beckett's canon, bearing the generic title, seems to be an exception. While Berkeley's *esse est percipi* is of greater importance in this piece than in any other work of the Nobel prize winner, at the same time the script departs from the original idea to the greatest extent. Whereas in a lot of Beckett's writings the need to be seen (and heard) is a way for the characters to get reassurance about their existence and also a way of forming a satisfactory relationship in accordance with Martin Buber's notion of the I-Thou bond, and is, therefore, something to be yearned for, in the case of *Film*, perception is to be avoided because only in this way, can the protagonist argue that it is possible to stop existing. Thus, then, O, the protagonist is an exception in Beckett's canon – he is the only character who desperately seeks death.

Before passing to the analysis of *Film* it seems worthwhile to devote some time to Beckett's interest in the cinematic art. His biographer, James Knowlson writes:

He had always been very interested in cinema. And at this time [1936] he borrowed many books on the subject, reading about the director Vsevolod Pudovkin and the theoretician Rudolf Arnheim and going through back numbers of *Close-up*. He even seriously considered going to Moscow to the State Institute of Cinematography, writing a letter to Sergei Eisenstein in which he asked him to take him as a trainee. He thought that the possibilities for the silent film had been far from exhausted and that, with the development of color talkies, "a backwater may be created for the two-dimensional silent film that had barely emerged from the rudiments when it was swamped. Then there would be two separate things and no question of a fight between them, or rather of a rout". (1996: 212–213)

Beckett's interest in the silver screen is noticeable in numerous intertextual cinematic references in his *Film*<sup>6</sup> as well as his specific treatment of light and the focus being centred on the subjective reality. Writing about the similarities between Eisenstein's theory and practice and those of Beckett, Antoine-Dunne concedes: "Eisenstein believed that film brought to fulfilment the promise of all other art forms and that film's capacity to unite time and space in movement enabled it to bridge the

Winnie differed: Komorowska argued that she was an optimist while Libera expressed the opposite opinion, adding that, ultimately, the decision has to be taken by each individual viewer (Majcherek 2009).

<sup>6</sup> For the discussion of these, see, for instance, Feshbach (1999: 345).

gap between subjective and objective reality" and his "paper analyses Beckett's use of light and shows that the unique usage is based on a belief in the ability of film to project directly into the mind of viewer or auditor and to map psychic states" (Antoine-Dunne 2001: 315).

The psychic state of *O* is really the subject matter of *Film*. Kundert-Gibbert contends that Beckett, "like other artists of the time, including John Cage (in music) and two of Beckett's favourites, Bram van Velde and Tal Coal (painting), discarded with the closure of meaning and a traditionally comprehensible structure in favour of a minimalistic expression of extreme subjectivity and the richness of open-ended iterations on a motif" (Kundert-Gibbert 1998: 365).

Writing about Beckett's attitude to life and art, Lawrence Harvey concedes:

During conversations in 1961 and 1962 Beckett frequently expressed himself on his activity as a writer in relation to his existence as a human being. [...] An image Beckett used repeatedly to express his sense of the unreality of life on the surface was 'existence by proxy'. [...] On another occasion he made an association between this feeling and the idealist philosophy of Berkeley. Perhaps it was an Irish thing, basically a skepticism before nature as given, complicated by skepticism about the perceiving subject as well. (1970: 247)

This scepticism, alongside with the interest in Berkeley's theory are the basic issues tackled by *Film*.

The idea of the venture was suggested by Barney Rosset, the head of Grove Press and Beckett's publisher who in 1963 approached three "intellectually fashionable authors playing out the absurdist line, authors he had also published with good success", Samuel Beckett, Eugene Ionesco and Harold Pinter, "with a project to make three half-hour movies". Only in the case of Beckett was the undertaking successfully completed (Feshbach 1999: 334). A series of preproduction sessions took place in New York in the summer of 1964, whose participants, apart from Beckett were Alan Schneider (director), Boris Kaufman (cinematographer) and Barney Rosset (producer). Their transcript has been published by Gontarski ("Appendix"). The history of the creation of this work leaves a lot to be desired, a point voiced by Gontarski in "*Film* and Formal Integrity":

A full biography of the composition of *Film* is not now possible because the textual evidence is not as complete as for other works. Beckett's primary creative effort was recorded in a gold, soft-covered, seventy-leaf notebook on deposit at the University of Reading's Beckett Archive. [...] The notebook contains two full holograph versions of *Film*. The first, [is] called both 'Notes for Film' and '*Percipi* Notes', dated Ussy, 5 April 1963. [...] The subtitle accurately describes the work: 'For Eye and Him [revised to 'One'] who does not wish to [revised to 'would not'] be seen" (p. 2).



The summary on the title page suggests that Beckett had a very clear idea about the nature of this work from the very beginning: "For one striving to see one striving not to be seen". This earliest version is followed. [...] by a series of holograph notes and a second version called "Outline sent to Grove [...]".<sup>7</sup> The earliest notes available suggest that Beckett began the composition of his film uncharacteristically, with a clearly established theme that remained unaltered throughout composition. [...] In Beckett's revisions of *Film* we see clearly what he wanted to do, in what direction he was trying to shape his film-script but in the final work we can also see much of that intention unrealized. (Gontarski 1985a: 105 and 111)

The plot of *Film* seems to be really simple, a point made by Schneider: "It's a movie about the perceiving eye, about the perceived and the perceiver – two aspects of the same man. The perceiver desires like mad to perceive, the perceived tries desperately to hide. Then, in the end, one wins".<sup>8</sup> The perceived (the object – O) is trying to escape the eye (E)<sup>9</sup>, that is the camera. Beckett specifies clearly his stand in the general notes:

All extraneous perception suppressed, animal, human, divine, self-perception remains in being.

Search of non-being in flight from extraneous perception breaking down in inescapability of self-perception.

No truth value attaches to above, regarded as of merely structural and dramatic convenience.

In order to be figured in this situation the protagonist is sundered into object (O) and eye (E), the former in flight, the latter in pursuit.

It will not be clear until end of film that pursuing perceiver is not extraneous, but self. Until end of film O is perceived by E from behind and at an angle not exceeding 45°.

Convention: O enters *percipi* = experiences anguish of perceivedness, only when this angle is exceeded. (Beckett 1984a: 163)

The film consists of three parts, the division reflecting the place of action. Part 1 – the street, presents a "dead straight" street, and a "Moderate animation of workers going unhurriedly to work. All going in the same direction and all in couples. [...] All persons in opening scene to be shown in some way perceiving – one another, an object, a shop window, a poster, etc. i.e., all contently in *percipere* and *percipi*. [...] O finally comes into view hastening blindly along sidewalk, hugging the wall on the left, in opposite direction to all the others. Long dark overcoat (whereas all others in light summer dress) with collar up, hat pulled down over

<sup>7</sup> Feshbach mentions yet another book publication: Samuel Beckett. *Film. Complete Scenario, Illustrations, Production shots*, with an essay "On Directing Film" by Alan Schneider (New York, Grove Press, n.d) (1969: 361, n. 3).

<sup>8</sup> "Beckett" (*The New Yorker*. 8 Aug. 1964: 22–23) quoted by Knowlson (1996: 463–464).

<sup>9</sup> It is worthwhile paying attention to the Eye/I pun. The final moments of the film reveal that E is not only the eye/the camera which is watching but also the I of the protagonist and thus they demonstrate that it is not possible to escape self-perception.

eyes, briefcase in left hand, right hand shielding exposed side of face. [...] O, entering perceivedness, reacts [...] by halting and cringing aside towards wall. E immediately draws to close the angle (2) and O, released from perceivedness, hurries on" (Beckett 1984a: 164). In this part of the script some people are visible, all of them contrasted with O – they are in couples, they move in the opposite direction n, they wear light summer clothes and do not mind being perceived. Yet the couple who are caught by the camera a little later on share O's fear – after having been spotted by it they have to recover from shock: "He opens his mouth to vituperate. She checks him with a gesture and soft 'shhh!'" (1984a: 165). The "sssh!" is the only sound emitted in this otherwise silent movie".<sup>10</sup> The reaction of the couple is described in more detail: "As they both stare at E the expression gradually comes over their faces which will be that of the flower woman in the stairs scene and that of O at the end of the film, the expression only to be described as corresponding to an agony of perceivedness" (1984a: 165).

The second scene takes place in the vestibule, on the stairs and presents O still trying to avoid being seen. The only other character who appears in it is the already mentioned flower woman: "She halts and looks full at E. Gradually same expression as that of the couple in street. She closes her eyes, then sinks to the ground and lies with face in scattered flowers" (1984a: 166). The last scene presents the only character visible – O – hiding from E in a room and consists, as Beckett argues, of three parts:

1. Preparation of room (occlusion of window and mirror, ejection of dog and cat, destruction of God's image, occlusion of parrot and goldfish);
2. Period in rocking-chair. Inspection and destruction of photographs;
3. Final investment of O by E and dénouement. (1984a: 167)

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<sup>10</sup> The correspondence between Beckett and Schneider, edited by Harmon, is interesting in many respects because it contains to a great extent the exchange of opinions pertaining to the playwright's dramas directed by the latter. As far as the scene with the couple is concerned, the dramatist wrote the following: "I have thought a lot about that distressing couple. Of course the 'shhh' without the look has no meaning. And I don't see how we can eliminate them completely. Again my feeling is to reduce them to their essential functions. The 'shhh' & the look, cutting out O's inspection of them and their actual exit from frame.

Harold rang from London very warm about the film & with some good points. He finds Buster's look of horror at the best unconvincing and thinks it might be shortened. I'm inclined to agree. With his suggestions for a sound track ('selective natural sounds') I disagree entirely, as with Fred Jordan's arguments in favour of some kind of sound. I am quite decided now that I want it silent" (Beckett 1984a: 178). The letter quoted above clearly indicates the meticulous attention paid to even minutest details not only by Beckett but also by a number of other people involved to a greater or smaller extent in the venture.

The room seems to be for O the desired shelter in which, he hopes, to find an escape from perceivedness, a point made clear by Beckett: "Here we assume the problem of dual perception solved and enter O's perception" (1984a: 166). Already on the stairs, in the shot film (but not in the printed script) he checks his pulse. No reaction of his is presented, yet we may assume he still hears his heartbeat. He does the same after having closed and locked the door and, for the third time, when he is already sitting in the rocking chair. On all three occasions no reaction of his is shown. Those three shots indicate clearly that he is hoping to stop existing.

The room, which is the setting for the third scene, deserves some attention as it is filled with animals and objects, all of which seem to be looking at O, as if inspecting him. Beckett was very explicit in describing the room during the preproduction discussions of *Film*:

This place [the room] is a trap prepared for him, with nothing in it that wasn't trapped. There is nothing in this place, this room, that isn't prepared for him. One might suppose that his mother had gone to hospital. It can't be his room because he wouldn't have a room of this kind. He wouldn't have a room full of eyes. (Gontarski 1985b: 190)

286 Apart from the eyes of animals and God and objects connected with perception (mirror, window with possible onlookers outside) mentioned in the printed text, the shot version of the film presents extra eyes: those of the headrest of the rocking chair and the ones visible on the folder containing photographs – it is closed by means of a special gadget made of two buttons and a piece of string. The introduction of the two pairs of eyes in the shot film is an example of quite a few changes initiated in the process of working on the venture. Knowlson quotes what one of the participants making the film said:

The rocker we were using happened to have two holes in the headrest, which began to glare at us. Sam was delighted and encouraged us to include the headrest.<sup>11</sup> The folder from which photographs were taken had two eyelets, well proportioned. Another pair of "eyes" for O to avoid. (Knowlson 1996: 465–466)

Having got rid of all the "eyes" which endanger him, O sits down in the rocking chair and opens the folder, containing, it is certain, his own images from the past: (1) a male infant of 6 months, his mother's "severe

<sup>11</sup> Note 54, p. 717: "In his manuscript notes Beckett had not envisaged these 'eye' holes but had written: 'Make chair back memorable' and foresaw an 'upright back, intersecting wooden bars or lozenges'. The Faber & Faber edition reads: "the curiously carved headrest" (Beckett 1984a: 167).

eyes devouring him" (Beckett 1984a: 173); (2) 4 years old, praying, being watched attentively by his mother<sup>12</sup>; (3) 15 years old, teaching a dog, which is looking at him, to beg; (4) 20 years old, on graduation day with a "section of public watching" (ibid.: 174); (5) 21 years old, with fiancée; (6) 25 years, "Newly enlisted [...] holding a little girl in his arms. She looks into his face, exploring it with finger" (ibid.: 174) and, finally (ibid.: 7) "The same. 30 years. Looking over 40. Wearing hat and overcoat. Patch over left eye. Cleanshaven. Grim expression" (ibid.: 174).

The photographs, taken in the past on different occasions, show him quite often as being watched – by the mother, the little girl and the dog, so in the condition defined as *esse est percipi*. He sometimes has an emotional link with them, his hands are trembling when he inspects pictures 5 and 6 and he touches with his forefinger the little girl's face in photograph 6. All the same, he destroys them all, tearing them in four and dropping the pieces on the floor. The last picture deserves some attention – we do not know when the picture was taken, he looks the same as he does at present. What needs stressing, however, is the fact that at the age of 30 he looked over 40 and he had a grim expression. Both of these indicate his exhaustion with having to bear the "suffering of being" intrinsically bound with his existence.

Bignell argues that the pictures "entail the mechanical remembering of lived identity for the individual. [...] They appeared to be a pure moment of perception by a transcendent other, like the perception of God in Berkeley's account. Although O strokes his photographs as he examines them in *Film*, suggesting precisely the nostalgic construction of a history of identity, the photographs preserve the traces which authenticate being, so O tears them up" (Bignell 1999: 36). It could be argued that O's attitude to the photographs is a reflection of the discrepancy between the past as remembered and the recorded past.

Memory as such is strictly connected with and subject to the laws of Habit. Since all living is Habit, Beckett wants us to be aware that this filters our perception and distorts our view of reality. For Beckett, memory becomes conditioned through perception. Rather than serve us as a moment of discovery and contemplation of reality, it becomes

<sup>12</sup> The pictures O inspects may have some autobiographical reference. The first and the second may relate to Beckett's own childhood and youth. The picture of the praying child evokes the well known picture of the small Beckett praying, which was a fake (Cronin 1996: 20). The severe eyes of the mother, on the other hand, mentioned in reference to both of them, may be a reference to Beckett's mother. Their relationship was far from satisfactory and in a letter written to Tom McGreevy on 28 September 1933 he mentioned in detail her savage loving (Beckett 2009: 552).

distorted through perception. "Strictly speaking we can only remember what has been registered by our extreme inattention and stored in that ultimate and inaccessible dungeon of our being to what Habit does not possess the key" (Beckett 1970: 18). This kind of memory is called by Beckett involuntary memory and is contrasted with voluntary memory which "is of no use as an instrument of evocation, and provides an image far removed from the real" (ibid.: 4) and which, furthermore, "is not memory, but the application of a concordance to the Old Testament of the individual" (ibid.: 19). Voluntary memory's "action has been compared by Proust to that of turning the leaves of an album of photographs" (ibid.: 19). In this respect, the photographs of O's inspection and reaction are similar to the tapes of the protagonist in *Krapp's Last Tape*.<sup>13</sup> Gontarski has thus compared *Film* and *Krapp's Last Tape* and it seems that his opinion is to a great extent justified:

Despite some stunning theoretical and technical achievements in *Film*, the work never quite coalesces. Beckett seems, almost at every stage of the creative process, to have engaged in a struggle with his referential, cognitive medium, from which he could not disentangle himself. The immediate rapport between artist and machine evident in the composition of *Krapp's Last Tape*, for example, is missing in *Film*. (Gontarski 1985a: 110)

288

Bouchard links the interpretation of O's reaction to the photographs in "the context of Beckett's interrogation of vision" (Bouchard 1998: 121) and concedes; "vision, now in the form of the still image of a photograph, is again rejected in its metaphysical role of providing a coherent image of personal history. In an effect analogous to that of the camera-eye, the photographic lens fragments the subject into seven, separate images. In the words of Barthes' *Camera Lucida*, "the Photograph is the advent of myself as other: a cunning dissociation of consciousness from identity"<sup>14</sup> (ibid.: 126).

A few words should be devoted to the end of the film. Having destroyed the photographs, still sitting in the rocking chair. He falls asleep, and then

E's gaze pierces the sleep, O starts awake, stares up at E. Patch over O's left eye now seen for the first time. Rock revived by start, stilled at once by foot to ground. Hand clutches the armrests. O half starts from the chair, then stiffens, staring up at E. Gradually that look. Cut to E, of whom this very first image (face only, against

<sup>13</sup> For the discussion of that play from the point of view of voluntary and involuntary memory see Uchman 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Roland Barthes. *Camera Lucida: Reflections of Photography*. New York: Hill & Wang, 1981: 12.

ground of tattered wall). It is O's face (with patch) but with very different expression, impossible to describe, neither severity nor benignity, but rather acute *intentness*. A big nail is visible near left temple (patch side). Long image of the unblinking eye. Cut back to O, still half risen, staring up, with that look. He covers his face with his hands. Image of O rocking, his head in his hands but not yet bowed. Cut back to E. As before. Cut back to O. He sits, bowed forward, his head in his hands, gently rocking. Hold it as the rocking dies down. (Beckett 1984a: 169)

The final moments are revealing in some respects. First of all, they make the viewer aware of the fact that E is no one other than O – the perceived and the perceiver are the same person. The conclusion, then, is that existence lasts as long as self-perception does or, in other words, the only way of ending perception and existence can be found in complete annihilation, death. Does O, however, reach this blessed, as it seems, state? The answer to this question is not simple at all. On the one hand, looking at the prolonged process of Beckett's characters' dying, one can argue that the final solution cannot be reached that easily. On the other, however, if we take into account the rocking chair, it can be justifiably argued, it seems, that the final escape is possible, after all. When O first spots E, he immediately stills the chair by putting his foot to the ground. Then, however, he starts the rock again. Before the final blackout we notice the rocking dies down. The image of a rocking chair appears again in Beckett's later play *Rockaby* (1981). In that short play, a "prematurely old" woman (Beckett 1984b: 273) is sitting in a chair, rocking and listening to her "recorded voice" (ibid.: 274). The rock is "Slight. Slow. Controlled mechanically without assistance from w" (ibid.: 274). Whenever the recorded voice becomes silent and the rocking stops, the woman says "More" (275, 276, 278 and 280). The play closes with the recorded voice saying:

*So in the end  
Close of a long day went down...  
Right down  
Into the old rocker  
Those arms at last  
and rocked  
rocked  
with closed eyes  
closing eyes  
she so long all eyes  
famished eyes  
all sides  
high and low  
to and fro  
at her window*

to see  
 to be seen  
 till in the end  
 close of a long day  
 to herself  
 whom else  
 time she stopped  
 let down the blind and stopped  
 time she went down  
 down the steep stair'  
 time she went right down  
 was her own other  
 own other living soul  
 so in the end  
 close of a long day  
 went down  
 let down the blind and down  
 right down  
 into the old rocker  
 and rocked  
 rocked  
 saying to herself  
 no  
 done with that  
 the rocker  
 those arms at last  
 saying to the rocker  
 rock her off  
 stop her eyes  
 fuck life  
 stop her eyes  
 rock her off  
 rock her off  
 [Together: echo of 'rock her off', coming to rest of rock, slow fade out]. (Beckett 1984: 281–282)

290

On the one hand, the similarities between *Film* and *Rockaby* are, indeed, striking: the rocking chair finally coming to a stop, the eyes, the others who are, potentially, looking, the wish to stop being perceived (also by oneself) and, finally, die. The ends of both pieces are very similar, in both cases, however, inconclusive – is it finally an end or will a repetition follow? Each viewer has to decide for themselves.

Even though *Rockaby* makes a reference to the other/or oneself who is perceiving, it does not include a reference to the other component of Berkeley's philosophy, namely God.

It must be stressed, however, that the latter's doctrine of *esse est percipi*, which was meant to be a proof of God's existence, was treated by

Beckett in a slightly ironic way. Kalb argues that some critics “suggest that Beckett intends to give a religious maxim an atheistic twist” (Kalb 1996: 136), an opinion that deserves to be supported fully. In *Film* there is an image of God hanging on the wall. O does not notice it, until safely seated in the rocking chair, he gets a glimpse of “the face of God the Father, the eyes staring at him severely. He sets down case on the floor to his left, gets up and inspects print. Insistent image on the wall, tears it in four, throws down the pieces and grinds them underfoot” (Beckett 1984a: 167). A very specific picture was used: “the photograph of the head with large eye sockets that is pinned to the wall, suggested by Avignor Arikha, was a reproduction of a Sumerian head of the god Abu in the museum in Baghdad” (Knowlson 1996: 465). This image with its terrifying, protruding eyes, is disposed of in a much more vehement way than the others, which might be an indication of the rejection of the very idea of God. Bignell’s argument seems to support such a reading:

Film’s subject could be described as the effect of the lack of God’s authority as perceiver, as author of Being, and thus *Film* works as a displacement of Berkeley. The notion of displacement appears in the structure of *Film*, since we see that without God to guarantee perception, the authority for being is displaced onto the individual O, and the visual technologies which represent him to himself. *Film* divides the individual into perceiver and perceived, but shows that self as subject and self as object must co-exist in the state of being. Being is inescapably split in itself, as Sylvie Debevec Henning’s essay on *Film* points out: “all perception requires two and this is true even of apperception. Hence there can never be full unity of the self, nor any perfect self-identity”.<sup>15</sup>

291

Many different critical opinions have been voiced as far as the evaluation of the concept and its artistic realization of *Film* are concerned. And so, for instance, Casanova has written:

The transformation of a technical philosophical proposition into a (virtually) narrative film of pursuit featuring Buster Keaton is of the same order as his attempts to undermine literary proprieties. In ironic and formal fashion, Beckett proceeds to overrun the self-evident narrative and realistic assumptions of cinema, inaugurating a new cinematographic ‘genre’: the speculative ‘drama’ and ‘thriller’. (2007: 70)

Beckett was not often willing to provide a commentary to his work but, as he did so in the case of *Film*, it seems fully justified to finish the discussion of this venture by quoting what the Nobel prize winner said. As far as the general opinion concerning *Film* is concerned, Beckett stated, as reported by Ackerley and Gontarski:

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<sup>15</sup> Sylvie Debevec Henning (1982). “*Film*: A Dialogue between Beckett and Berkeley”. *Journal of Beckett Studies* 7 (Spring): 89–99.



SB was dissatisfied as he struggled with compromises his film demanded. He found portions of it powerful if “Not quite the way intended”; he told Rosset that it was an “interesting failure”, an opinion many share. The Berkeleyan framework, SB admitted to Schneider, is something “you and I and a few others can discern”. Despite his reservations it retains a power and mystery. Though not a commercial success it won festival awards in Venice, New York, and London (1965), and at Oberhausen, Tours, Sydney, and Kraków (1966). (2006: 195)

In 1976 Morton Feldman, an American composer and professor of music came to visit Beckett. He showed the playwright a score of music he had written on some lines from the script of *Film*. Showing interest in the music, Beckett said there was only one theme in his life.

“May I write it down?” [asked Feldman]. (Beckett himself takes Feldman’s music paper and writes down the theme. [...] It reads “ To and fro in shadow, from outer shadow to inner shadow. To and fro, between unattainable self and unattainable non-self). [...] “It would need a bit of work, wouldn’t it? Well, if I get any further ideas on it, I’ll send them on to you”.<sup>16</sup> (Knowlson 1996: 557)


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<sup>16</sup> John Dwyer. “In the Shadows with Feldman and Beckett”. *Buffalo News* (New York), 27 Nov., 1976. “Lively Arts” section.

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## **Between Text and Performance: On the Productive Reception of H. C. Andersen's Fairy Tales by the Slovak Radio**

### **Intersemiotic Translation as a Form of Reception**

History of translation is closely connected with the process of its reception. Beside translated texts, reception also includes “accompanying texts, as well as interpretations, references and miscellaneous interrelations” (Vajdová 2009: 238). In fact, translation (like any text) only exists when it is read, interpreted, discussed, etc. Particular forms of reception were classified by the German scholar Hannelore Link who distinguished between passive, reproductive and productive reception (2009: 89–90). Her classification may be extended by the fourth category, i.e. translation, which the Slovak literary scholar and comparatist Dionýz Ďurišin considered to be a “specific form” of reception (1985: 128). These four forms of reception create a complex system. First, passive reception can be understood as an essential step a reader takes towards the work, but does not necessarily lead to any further scholarly or artistic creation. Second, reproductive reception refers to the process of reading which is followed by creating a new literary-critic or literary-historic text dealing with and directly referring to its primary source (a review, an afterword, a monograph, etc.). Third, translation is a result of reading a text with the aim of creating its variant in another language. And fourth, productive reception includes all texts which arise as results of creative transformation of the primary text and now represent an independent piece of art (parody, allusion, etc.). Apart from this, the process of creative transformation is not restricted to printed texts only but also includes adaptations for other media, such as radio, theatre or film.

In his essay *On Linguistic Aspects of Translation* (1959), Roman Jakobson proposed three types of translating (i.e. interpreting) a verbal sign: intralingual translation (i.e. rewording), interlingual translation (i.e. translation proper) and intersemiotic translation. He defined intersemiotic translation, also referred to as transmutation or intersemiotic transposition, as an “interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems” (Jakobson 1959). By naming music, dance, cinema or painting as examples of transformation possibilities of verbal art, Jakobson opened the term of intersemiotic translation to arts employing both one and more than one creative techniques. This allows us to consider, for example, radio adaptations as intersemiotic translations, too – although the verbal part (characteristic for the field of written literature) still constitutes its basis and only is enriched by the acoustic dimension. In this way, it is the creative transformation of existing work accompanied by changing or adding a sign system, which can be seen as a criterion/definition of intersemiotic translation. The process can also be described as “aesthetic re-creation”, as Haroldo de Campo has put it (qtd. in Pereira 2008: 106).

Jakobson’s term of intersemiotic translation was accepted by the Slovak translation theoreticians and included into the classification of translation. In 1975, the crucial work of Slovak translation studies was published by Anton Popovič under the title *Teória umeleckého prekladu* [The Theory of Literary Translation]. Referring to the influence of linguistic semiology, he defined intersemiotic translation as “a sort of intersemantic transformation, e.g. from the language of literature into the language of film, from the language of fine arts into the language of music, etc.” (Popovič 1975: 22). Later, the definition was also taken into the dictionary of interpretation terminology *Originál/preklad* [Original/Translation] from 1983. In spite of drawing inspiration from Jakobson, Popovič does not strictly operate with the term “sign system” but adds the term “language” into the discussion (the language of film, for instance, implicitly including the verbal, the visual and the acoustic). In this way, he shifts the perspective from the semantic point of view to the medial one, though without offering any further explanation.

Understanding intersemiotic translation as creative transformation based primarily on the usage of a different medium and not necessarily on a complete change of the sign system opens up a space for analysing various sorts of productive reception – be it in the field of literature, music, visual arts, theatre, radio, etc. In the process, the original piece of art is adapted for a new medium. As Gideon Toury says, this medium operates within the limits of its own repertoire of tools and models (qtd. in Weissbrod 2006: 44). Therefore, the level of dependence on the primary piece of art results not only from the

authorial (i.e. creative) contribution of the adaptor and his aim of preserving/deconstructing the original meaning but also from the creative possibilities given by the chosen medium (e.g. sound cannot be transferred to picture by employing the same tools as in composition, for instance). On one hand, the quality of intersemiotic translation as such does not allow all the features of the prototext (i.e. the original written literary text) to be transformed for the new media. On the other hand, new elements are added to the work, thus creating a new – and in many ways independent – piece of art. Nevertheless, if the intersemiotic transposition aims at meeting the criteria of translation, the set of meanings which are constant, constitutive and unchangeable need to be preserved in the new form, too. This set of meanings defines Popovič as the “invariant” (Popovič 1983: 174). In an adaptation (intralingual, interlingual, or intersemiotic), the invariant core is what has been left untouched by selection, substitution, or condensation (see Popovič 1983: 154).

## Slovak Reception of Hans Christian Andersen’s Literary Work

The Slovak reception of H. C. Andersen developed in a context of rising international recognition of an author, whose novel *The Improvisatore* brought him success in the German area in the 1830’s and later also among the Russian, English and French critics and readers. In the 1840’s, first translations started to appear also in Czech and Polish periodicals and in the next decade, they were followed by respective translations of Andersen’s first novel. However, while the early translation reception of the author in these areas is connected to the novel genre, the first phases of Slovak reception process only are based on his tales.

The first Andersen’s magazine translation into Slovak was recorded in 1867, when the Sokol magazine published his tale “Múdri ľudia” (i.e. “Emperor’s new Clothes”) translated by Viliam Paulíny-Tóth. A new wave of interest arose in 1875, when the Orol magazine published six tales translated by Andrej Truchlý Sytniansky, the editor-in-chief himself. The tales were presented as counterparts of domestic folk legends of the Slovak nation. A transition from magazine to book translation only occurred in 1888 when František Macvejda, a teacher, prepared a selection of twelve texts by Andersen. Next selection was prepared by another teacher, Cyrill Gallay, no sooner than in 1911. As it contributed to enlivening the literary production for children and youth of the time, the collection was highly appreciated by contemporary critics.

The first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century brought several book selections, translated or edited by Michal Slávik (1922; 1925), Anton Macht (1930), Michal Kubiš (1935), Eva Orolimová (1945), Štefan Koperdan (1945), and Mária Rumplová (1947). However, analyses and evidence show, that all of them worked with a translation into a third language or with an already existing Slovak variant. The method of relay translation reflected itself in a number of negative shifts of meaning. First translations directly from Danish came to existence in the 1950's thanks to Jaroslav Kaňa who translated 108 tales published in a dozen of collections during his career – many of them in numerous reeditions. Kaňa proved himself as a skilful translator and despite several semantic shifts and language imperfections, his texts are smooth to read. It was mainly in the first phase of his active work that censorship (introduced in Czechoslovakia during the Communist period after 1948) influenced the target texts. The period also left its trace in the selection of tales and in eliminating or substituting religious motifs.

After the revolution in 1989, the translation reception of H. C. Andersen's work has been typical for two streams. There is a group of educated translators working directly with the Danish original (J. Kaňa, M. Richter, M. Žitný) and a group of creators who produce Slovak versions of adapted variants in a third language. And it is the latter group that reflects the model of receiving Andersen as an exclusive children writer. This is to be seen mainly in eliminating unsuitable passages (violence, realities, and irony), dynamization of static elements, or interventions on the level of meaning with the aim to soften the text. By promoting definite number of tales, the adaptations also contribute to reducing Andersen's work to approximately ten texts, copying the situation in the world. The picture is only partly disturbed by extensive collections by Kaňa, Richter, and Žitný, which to a certain extent also reflects the discussion about the (non-)intentional character of the author's tales.

At the beginning, Slovak translations of Andersen substituted the deficient domestic non-didactic literature for children and later (in the 1920's and 1930's) functioned as its complements and stimuli. After the World War II, Kaňa's translations anchored the receiving of Andersen's work in the target culture and their function became more informative and representative. In spite of Andersen's tales and stories having become more of a tradition, their livingness is reflected in other fields of art. Radio and theatre have drawn inspiration from them since 1950's and produced dramatizations as well as radio or theatre plays. Moreover, the field of productive reception also includes literary texts, fine arts (illustrations), music (operas as well as popular songs), etc.

## Productive Reception by the Slovak Radio

When looking for the first traces of Hans Christian Andersen in the Slovak Radio (established in 1926), one has to bear in mind that the archives only provide information from approximately 1950's. However, first Andersen's tale must have been broadcast even earlier, which is also proved by a book of radio tales from the 1930's that includes four of his texts (edited by Hana Gregorová). Nevertheless, the beginnings of Andersen's presence in the (Czecho)Slovak Radio are to be associated with the so-called monological readings, i.e. readings of already existing translations into Slovak. Only in 1953 plays were introduced to the programme. Their final shape was also a result of ideological intentions (see Lefevere 1992: 14): the programme was called "Sunday fairy-tale" and was meant to distract children from attending Sunday masses. Radio plays had to follow two main criteria at that time: length (app. 40 minutes) and ideology (no religious motifs, optimistic outcome).

Between 1954 and 2010, Andersen's tales were broadcast at least 240 times by the Slovak Radio, the number of them continuously rising:

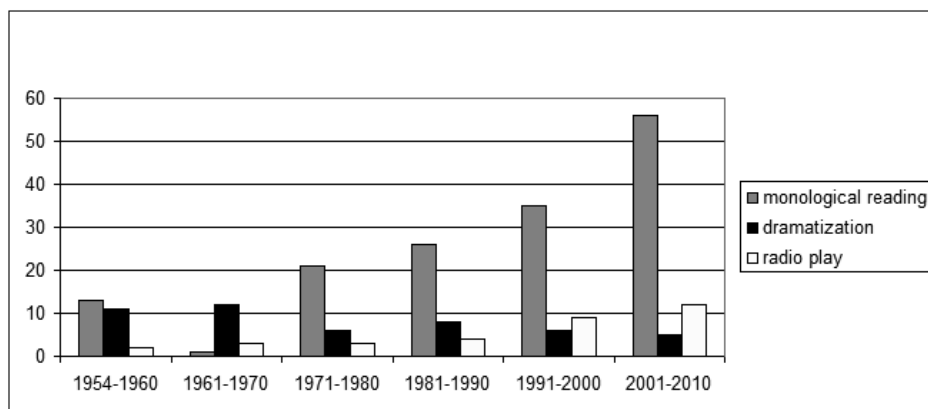


Figure 1. Broadcast tales according to genres

The numbers include both premieres and repeated broadcastings of the same recording, which partly opens the question, whether the reception of the Danish author was rather a matter of living interest or of mere tradition.

As for the genre classification, the list of broadcast tales consists of three types of radio form:



1. Monological readings, i.e. readings of existing published translations with no or minimal intervention into the text of translation and length not exceeding 10 minutes;

2. Dramatizations, i.e. prose transformed into drama but making use of original the text (when possible);

3. Radio plays, i.e. plays written directly for the radio, which result from a strong creative input of the author, often introduced by words “on the motifs of XY” and lasting app. 45 minutes.

Monological readings are pure reproductions of literary texts by means of radio broadcasting. The only tools specific for the radio as a media that are allowed here are voice modulations. Though acoustic dimension being added, the original text is left without change and almost no creative transformation can be observed. From this perspective, monological readings can only be understood as minimalistic variants of transferring the “language of literature” into the “language of radio” and as they lack the creative aspect, we do not consider them to be intersemiotic translations proper.

Dramatizations already integrate the language of acoustic drama into the process and radio plays show even greater deviation from the original text. Therefore – by combining change of the media and creative transposition of the original piece of art – they stand closer to the field of productive reception and both can be treated as intersemiotic translations. As for their position towards original, the relationship is similar to the one between “faithful” and “free” translations and depends on the aims and intentions of the adaptor.

An overview of the most broadcast Andersen’s fairy-tales copies the situation with the published literary translations. Genre classification not being taken into consideration, the tales “The Ugly Duckling”, “The Snow Queen”, “The Hardy Tin Soldier”, “The Nightingale”, “The Darning-Needle” as well as “The Little Sea Maid” belong to the most preferred. However, the stories “Wild Swans”, “The Emperor’s New Clothes” or “Thumbelina” have inspired a number of radio plays and dramatizations as well, especially in the period of 1990’s.

## Case Study: H. C. Andersen’s “Wild Swans” Adapted by Peter Gregor (1992)

As defined by the Slovak scholar Pavol Palkovič, “dramatic works for radio are often described as one-dimensional theatre [...] because the piece of art can only be perceived by hearing” (1974: 36). Due to the exclusivity of

acoustic perception, radio plays and dramatizations should meet several criteria: (1) the plot should be simplified and condensed; (2) the number of figures reduced, and (3) the text easily perceptible (e.g. by means of the dialogues). Moreover, direct communication with the audience should be strengthened by employing sound effects and music, which create both the background of the story and its emotional load. Bearing this in mind, a look shall now be taken at the adaptation of H.C. Andersen's tale "Wild Swans", premiered by the Slovak Radio on May, 17<sup>th</sup> 1992 and adapted by Peter Gregor. The example passages are taken both from Andersen's translation into English from 2009 and from the original script to the radio drama adapted by Peter Gregor (the particular passages are translated by the author of this paper).

H. C. Andersen tells a story of eleven brothers and one sister, the twelve children of a king and his second wife, their step-mother (who is not very friendly with them, as it usually goes). As the queen can't stand the brothers, she casts a spell over them and turns them into swans. Their sister Eliza comes back from the country and finds out that her brothers are gone. Later, as a result of the queen's hostility, she leaves the palace, too. In the woods, Eliza meets an old woman who shows her eleven swans floating on the nearby lake and Eliza recognizes her brothers. Together they fly to a foreign country. In a dream, Eliza finds out how to break queen's spell and turn her brothers into young men again: she needs to collect nettles and sew eleven shirts, but must not say a word during her work. In the meantime, a young prince falls in love with her. His archbishop, however, doesn't like Eliza. He spies on her and watches her visiting the cemetery at midnight, picking nettles. He labels her as a witch and requests her to be burnt to death. However, in the last moment the swans come flying, Eliza throws the nettle-shirts on them and they become princes again.

Andersen's text is more lyrical-epical than dramatic and is characteristic for its long descriptive passages and monologues. It abounds in depicting nature and reflecting frames of mind and does not avoid religious and folk references. On the other hand, the dramatic potential can be suspected in dialogues (not seldom marked by irony and humour), repetitive motifs, or folk-tale elements. How has Peter Gregor treated the material at his disposal when taking into consideration the criteria set upon radio drama? Which tools of the radio language did he use?

## A. Condensing the story and developing action-loaded passages

Peter Gregor is a skilful writer who adapts the original Andersen's text according to presumed expectations of the audience. He makes use of naturalization strategies and changes the protagonist's name from the Danish Eliza into Slovak Elenka. He also directly connects Andersen's story with the domestic folk tradition and instead of swans, there are crows featuring in his play. Nevertheless, the script of his radio drama is indisputably based on the story by H. C. Andersen, as whole sentences and structures can be identified as taken over word by word from the Slovak translation of the Danish author. Although these strategies only help the listeners to create a frame of the story more easily, several further changes are necessary to be incorporated on the structural level in order to make prose into drama. One of them is developing the dramatic potential of the text.

As stated before, descriptions and monological passages make up the repertoire of literature but do not effectively function with acoustic forms – mainly due to increased demand of attention required from the listeners. They do not push the story forward and that is the reason why Peter Gregor simplifies the fable and eliminates chosen parts. For instance, he completely omits the passage describing the twelve siblings flying to another country, which in book form makes up two pages. The same is true for the story line taking place at the forest: there is no old woman in Gregor's version, no meeting with the brothers at the lake, no longwinded retelling of Eliza's dream. Instead, the radio play introduces new figures on the scene – the River and the Willow Tree – they tell Eliza about her brothers' fate as well as about the possibility to rescue them. At the same time, the passage is retold in the language of radio. Although it preserves the lyrical dreamy mood, the story is given by means of dialogues, not by monological narration.

Hans Christian Andersen (2009: 152)

(Eliza having a dreamy vision of an old woman)

*Your brothers can be released, said she. But have you courage and perseverance? Certainly, water is softer than your delicate hands, and yet it changes the shape of stones; but it feels not the pain that your fingers will feel; it has no heart, and does not suffer the agony and torment you will have to endure. Do you see the stinging-nettle which I hold in my hand? Many of the same kind grow around the cave in which you sleep [...].*

Peter Gregor (1995: 8)

Elenka: *I have seen them in the garden [...] And the River told me about them, too [...].  
Is it them? My brothers?*

Willow Tree: *Yes, it is them. They were enchanted.*

Elenka: *Where are they? Where have they flown to?*

Willow Tree: *There [...] to the country on the other side of the river.*

Elenka: *I will go there and save them. But [...] how can I break the horrible spell?*

Willow Tree: *Can you see the nettle growing on the banks?*

Elenka: *Yes, I can! How high and dense it grows!*

Willow Tree: *And can you see the flax?*

Elenka: *Yes, I can! The fields are full of it [...].*

Willow Tree: *Although the water is softer than your hand, it can turn stone into sand. But  
the water does not feel the pain your hands will feel, when collecting nettle and  
flax in order to turn them into thread.*

The invariant information is preserved in both the original and its adaptation: Elizabeth gets to know how to release her brothers. The difference lies in the tools being used as well as in the emphasis put by Peter Gregor on the interactive aspect of the dialogical form.

## B. Making the text more easily perceptible by introducing colloquial speech

303

Peter Gregor attempts at making the lyrical parts more dynamic not only by transferring them from the narrator's speech into the speech of figures (as shown above) but also by making them more attractive on the level of language. By using the rhythm of colloquial speech, he enters the field of expressiveness and adds emotional dimension to the original text. To be able to develop his strategy, he focuses on conflict-bearing figures, such as the queen, and creates new situations in which their temperament might be verbalized. Doing so, he moves away from the original and creatively transforms the prototext by means of the radio language.

Hans Christian Andersen (2009: 143)

*The next week the Queen took the little sister Eliza into the country, to a peasant and his wife; and but a short time had elapsed before she told the King so many falsehoods about the poor princes that he did not trouble himself any more about them.*

*"Fly out into the world and get your own living", said the wicked Queen. "Fly like great birds without a voice".*

*But she could not make it so bad for them as she would have liked, for they became eleven magnificent wild swans.*

Peter Gregor (1995: 3–4)

(The queen asks her husband to get rid of the princes as she cannot stand them anymore. He promises to conquer twelve kingdoms for them)

Queen: /laughing/ *Have you already forgotten, that your old famous armour does not fit you anymore? And even if it did, that you are not able to mount your horse? And even if you would, that the horse breaks in two under the pounds of yours? And even if it didn't, that it would last toooooo long for you to conquer the twelve richest countries of the world, because you are old and fat. And I will not wait that long! I won't, I won't! I will take care of everything by myself.*

Sound: music motif

Queen: /echoed/ *All of you, turn into black birds! All of you, turn into crows and fly! Fly into the world, I don't want to see you anymore! Fly! Fly!*

Sound: the motif of transformation, craws, music

In Andersen's original, the queen prepares the act of casting a spell over the princes by intrigues and badmouthing. In Gregor's variant, she prefers an open argument with the king – a solution which is more expressive on the level of language, more dynamic and at the same time more applying to the audience.

### C. Reducing the number of figures

The tale "Wild Swans" does not belong to stories with a very high number of characters, therefore no considerable reduction of their amount has been observed in this particular case. On the contrary, Gregor adds new figures but not to make the plot more complicated. Rather to emphasize the emotional load of it – for instance, in the final scene when Eliza is standing on the stake and waiting for her death. Gregor makes Andersen's single man's cry to a cry of a mass, which adds dynamics and emotion to the story.

Hans Christian Andersen (2009: 158)

*Look at the witch, how she mutters! She has no hymn-book in her hand; no, there she sits with her ugly sorcery – tear it in a thousand pieces!*

Peter Gregor (1995: 17)

Voice 5: *What does she have in her hands?*

Voice 1: *Look, people! It is shirts!*

Voice 3: *From nettle and flax! From nettle and flax has she sewed them, the witch!*

Voice 1: *Put her into flames!*

Voice 2: *Burn her to death!*

Although the number of characters actually is enlarged, we may consider the crowd as one collective character, which also underlines the hysteria provoked by the archbishop. Moreover, by dividing the monologue of the original into cries of more people, the acoustic perception of the situation is prolonged and the suspense intensified.

#### D. Using music as (emotional) background

As already said, sound effects multiply the emotional load of spoken words. Whereas emotions and psychological state of mind usually are described by long passages in literary texts, radio drama often uses the tool of music. In the case of Gregor's adaptation of "Wild Swans", sound effects help to evoke both negative (fear, danger, evil) as well as neutral or positive emotions (joy, security, peace). Acoustic transformation makes the experience of listening to the story stronger and increases the listener's ability to internalize protagonists' feelings.

Hans Christian Andersen (2009: 155–156)

*There, on one of the broadest tombstones, she saw sitting a circle of lamias [...] Eliza was obliged to pass close by them, and they fastened their evil glances upon her; but she prayed silently, and collected the burning nettles, and carried them into the castle.*

305

Peter Gregor (1995: 12)

Sound:        an owl howling  
a choir of screeching and dull voices being heard  
*Who is it creeping there at midnight?*  
*Who is it searching there for something?*  
*You don't know? It is Elenka from the king's palace [...]*  
/voices repeating/  
              *Elenka?*  
              *Elenka?*  
              *Elenka [...]*

Adding music and sound effects to the text represents one of the major advantages of the radio language when compared to the language of literature. In the passage above, sound effects are used to evoke fear on the side of both Elenka and the (child) listener. To achieve this goal, they effectively employ stereotypes in the process (e.g. a howling owl as a symbol of a dark forest).

## Conclusion

Transforming literary texts into other types of arts and media is a widely-used practice. This sort of creative transformation includes not only a change in the way of mediating the message carried by the work itself, but also a change in the tools used during the process. However, as intersemiotic translation is defined as a transfer from one sign system into another (R. Jakobson) or as a transfer from one “language” into another (A. Popovič), it allows us to analyse the adaptations of literary works in the light of possibilities offered by the medium chosen. The paper outlined some features of radio adaptations and of the process of transferring written word to a word “performed” – even if only acoustically.

Radio adaptations – understood as intersemiotic translations – occupy the position between reproductive and productive reception of a literary work and according to the extent of their faithfulness to the original/pretext, they can be described as “faithful” or “free” – as any other sort of translation. Nevertheless, creative transformation accompanied by the change of the medium also causes negative shifts with regard to the message transferred. As two different media (in our case literature and radio) do not have the same repertoire of tools at their disposal, it is not possible for the entire set of meanings to be preserved in the new form. Nevertheless, the invariant set of meanings of the original piece of art is preserved in the process of intersemiotic translation. It is the outer form and the way of displaying the invariant, which undergoes changes. The language of radio is typical for its dynamics, expressiveness and emotionality (often underlined by music or sound effects) and it is these three qualities that form pillars of radio drama production. This was also proven by an analysis of intersemiotic translation of H. C. Andersen’s “Wild Swans” by Peter Gregor.

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## Inside Noise: Intersemiotic Translation and Metatheatre in Radio Drama<sup>1</sup>

It is fascinating to observe different ways in which radio drama enthusiasts and researchers constantly have to reassert the need for their focusing on the art of radio drama. It is enough to browse through a selection of the most significant representatives in this research field to notice how they paraphrase one another in their justifications. In 1981 John Drakakis, began the introduction to his seminal work *British Radio Drama* by stating that radio plays are characterized by “sporadic” and “incomplete” history (Drakakis 1981: 1). Almost 20 years later, in 1999, another important radio drama researcher Tim Crook echoed Drakakis’ observation when in the acknowledgements section of his *Radio Drama: Theory and Practice* he called radio plays “the most understated creative, dramatic and literary art [form]”. Indeed, it seems that even one of the major contributions to the close analytical study of radio drama, that is Elissa S. Guralnick’s *Sight Unseen: Beckett, Pinter, Stoppard and Other Contemporary Dramatists on Radio* from 1996 has not influenced the perception of radio drama as a subject worthy of scholarly analysis. She combines the inherent invisibility of radio plays with their low academic status:

309

The distinguishing feature of plays conceived for radio, that we do not see them, is true not only literally, but also metaphorically. Unlikely to be noticed in reviews or in scholarship, even less likely to be published [...] radio plays ghost away on the airwaves, leaving behind not a trace of their existence. (Guralnick 1996: ix)

And although radio drama seems not to be leaving scholarly interests – good examples of which being *Immaterial Culture: Literature, Drama*

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<sup>1</sup> This article was first published under the title “Inside Noise: A Case of Intersemiotic Translation and Metatheatre in Radio Drama” in *Cultural Intertexts*, Year 5, Vol. 8/2018: 32–44.

and the American Radio Play, 1929–1954 by Harry Heuser or the special issue of “Tekstualia” (1/2013), just to give the most recent examples – it is compelling to begin one’s own study of yet another aspect of radio drama by justifying its relevance for academic study, even if only by signalling that virtually every researcher faces the problem of introducing it by resorting to its academic negligence (or perhaps every researcher has the problem solved due to the unchanging validity of the previously made statements in that matter). Therefore, it seems safe to claim that this paper suggests another approach to the rich field of scattered radio drama analysis and aims to locate itself in the field of semiotic approach to radio plays, which is not altogether unfamiliar. It is enough to mention one of the most outstanding works in this respect, Andrew Crisell’s *Understanding Radio*, whose chapter on radio signs and codes consistently follows the principles of semiotics, enriched by other broad insights, for example from music theory (cf. Crisell 1986: 45–56).

With the beginning of the so-called era of “web 2.0”, which quite obviously includes the rapid proliferation of podcasts, streaming content and readily available software for all interested in sound and voice production, radio drama may be said to have entered a new phase, this time connected with its greater accessibility and faster dissemination.<sup>2</sup> These numerous technological advances – which there is no room to discuss at this point – result in two major consequences for radio drama.

Firstly, the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries brought more awareness of and a further proliferation of independent radio drama producers. These include, for instance, The Wireless Theatre Company in the UK or Chatterbox Audio Theater in the US. Such initiatives are supplemented by theatre groups which perform live radio drama, thus providing insights into the technicalities involved in radio drama productions which are incorporated into the form and content of radio plays themselves.<sup>3</sup>

Secondly, and perhaps even more importantly, the internet has the most important influence on the accessibility of radio drama. The

<sup>2</sup> For an overview of earlier stages of radio drama development see the insightful chapter “The Six Ages of Radio Drama and the Internet Epoch” (Crook 1999: 21–29). An attempt to bridge the gap between the pre-Internet and “web 2.0” developments in radio drama is *The Radio Drama Handbook: Audio Drama in Context and Practice* (2011) by R. J. Hand and M. Traynor, where a historical overview of radio drama development until the year 2011 is combined with direct advice on how to become a self-made radio drama creator with the use of modern technology available via the internet. See also Hilmes 2001: 1–20.

<sup>3</sup> Interesting examples in this respect are provided especially by American theatre groups: e.g. *Hope Leaves the Theater* by Theatre of the New Ear (2005), SITI Company’s *Radio Macbeth* (2007), or Noel Coward’s *Present Laughter* (2012) by Gotham Radio Theatre.

possibility to listen to radio online means relieving the listeners from the time constraints of broadcasts. Here, BBC Sounds – with virtually all radio content available after broadcast – stands out as a prominent example. As Lawrence Raw rightly observes, listeners are able to control their listening experience “rather than [be] at the scheduling and archiving whims of individual radio stations and/or their controllers” (Raw 2013: 37–38), a further consequence of it being a greater internationalization of radio drama content.

The fact that modern technology provides an opportunity for multiple broadcasts of one single radio play can undoubtedly facilitate academic, and if not academic then at least a closer study of radio drama. What is more, this reflects the long-awaited need to see radio drama as more than a one-off event. As one of the leading post-war radio drama researchers Donald McWhinnie succinctly noted in 1959:

I do believe that any artistic experience worth having can only be enriched by a second acquaintance, and the more profound the content the more closely you need to study it, as you come back again and again to a painting or a piece of music to discover new perspectives, new shades of meaning. (qtd. in Hand, Traynor 2011: 60)

The above quotation brings us to the methods of studying plays. These varied a lot from the very inception of radio dramatic forms. Although “by 1930 a basic grammar of radio production had been formulated”, the vocabulary of radio drama was borrowed from such diverse disciplines as film, literature, theatre or psychology (Drakakis 1981: 7). This interdisciplinarity of theoretical approaches to radio drama seems to have been developing until the present times (to include for instance adaptation studies<sup>4</sup>). Its characteristic feature is the fact that no theories established at the very beginning of radio studies have been consigned to oblivion. They are constantly reformulated or retrieved from obscurity in order to yield new insights to the developing radio form of artistic expression. Good examples of such practices may be the incorporation of Lance Sieveking’s theories by Tim Crook in his *Radio Drama: Theory and Practice* (1999: 70–89) or, in the field of Polish studies on radio drama, the return to phenomenological and aesthetic theories of Leopold Blaustein from the inter-war period (Łastowiecki 2013: 39–52).

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<sup>4</sup> See, for example, *Dwa teatry. Studia z zakresu teorii i interpretacji sztuki słuchowiskowej* (Pleszkun-Olejniczakowa, Bachura, Pawlik 2001) and there articles entitled “Język adaptacji radiowej w słuchowisku *Od siódmej rano*” by Joanna Bachura (365–380) or “Pułapki adaptacji radiowej. Kilka uwag o dziele audialnym *Ciotka Julia i skryba* według powieści Mario Vargasa Llosy” by Aleksandra Pawlik (395–409).

When analysing the nature of radio drama, Dermot Rattigan in his *Theatre of Sound: Radio and the Dramatic Imagination* (2002) provides a neat diagram of radio drama's constituent parts and it is quite obvious that the underlying theoretical assumptions are based here on semiotics (Rattigan 2002: 222). The two opposing poles of the diagram present the dramatic text and the performance text, which instantly brings to mind such semiotic discussions of drama/theatre relationships as the classic one by Anne Ubersfeld in her *Reading Theatre* (1999). The numerous elements located between both texts imply that the script of radio drama has to undergo a certain process of translation into signs of a different nature in order to become a fully realized radio production.<sup>5</sup> This kind of translation, therefore, can safely be called intersemiotic, as it mediates between two different semiotic systems: that of the written text and of its sound realization.<sup>6</sup> This application, albeit indirect in Rattigan's case, of semiotic terminology is nothing surprising and even taken for granted among radio drama researchers (see, for instance, Crisell, White, or Bachura in Poland). However, it is interesting that the concept of intersemiotic translation is mainly, if not exclusively, used to study how the meanings are produced by various elements of radio drama on its way from the script to the listener's ear (as Rattigan's diagram proves). What could further these analyses is attempting to find out how the concept of intersemiotic translation could be used for the discussion of the worlds created by radio drama, that is *within* the imaginary realms created by radio productions.

Taking the above as the starting point, in this paper I would like to show how intersemiotic translation works *inside* a radio play. I want to focus specifically on one recent BBC radio production entitled *Noise* (2012) by Alex Bulmer<sup>7</sup> and on the basis of it present the way in which various semiotic systems (in spite of the apparent limitations of radio drama as a purely sound medium) interact on various levels. This, in turn, reveals intersemiotic translation within radio drama as conducive to emphasizing its dramatic form, which further results in uncovering radio drama's metatheatrical elements.

<sup>5</sup> Rattigan calls the two opposing processes "literary inception" and "aural realization" (2002: 222).

<sup>6</sup> The term "intersemiotic translation" is used here after R. Jakobson, who in his essay "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation" defines intersemiotic translation as an interpretation of verbal signs into non-verbal ones. By extension, intersemiotic translation can be understood more broadly as an interpretation of one semiotic system by another.

<sup>7</sup> First broadcast on 20 March 2012, BBC Radio 4.

*Noise* tells the story of an orphan of Polish origin, a young woman called Kit, who is suffering from a memory loss. Her amnesia is the result of a serious case of hypothermia whose causes are unknown at the beginning of the story. After some time spent in a special clinic, where she takes part in sessions with the psychologist Helena, Kit goes back home and is taken care of by her partner Dan, a freelance music editor and an ex-lecturer. As the story develops, the listener learns that shortly before Kit's accident her relationship with Dan was on the verge of falling apart. Now Dan tries to take advantage of Kit's memory loss in order to replace her original memories with the ones he creates in his own studio by remixing the recordings from their past. He is almost successful when Kit's two encounters – first with Helena, and next with Dan's colleague Matt – spark off a chain of associations in her head that lead to her final realization that she has been cheated and that Dan is responsible for her suffering.

The play begins with a mixture of inexplicable voices, sounds and a piano tune. They together create the title noise which is going to be deciphered for the listeners in the course of the play. Out of the noise, the sound of an encephalograph comes to the fore, which signifies the space of the hospital in which we first meet Kit. The first words of the play are spoken by Dan. His exclamation "She blinked!"<sup>8</sup> marks Kit's transition from the unconscious state in which only sounds dominate to the visual reality with language as its defining feature (the listeners would not know what happens to Kit if it were not for Dan's words). Thus, the transition may be said to take place between the aural and visual/verbal semiotic systems, although Kit's core memories still remain in the sound sphere. Additionally, the beginning of the play swiftly foregrounds Kit as the main character by giving the listeners access to her mind's 'noise' out of which they accompany her in entering the visual world.

The next step for Kit is to get accustomed to reality again after the shock of hypothermia, which means learning the basics of everyday life anew. Her first helper – to use Mukařovský's terminology – is Helena, who from the very beginning takes total control over Kit's convalescence by isolating Kit from Dan and arranging regular sessions with the girl. During these meetings Helena turns out to be a very matter-of-fact doctor who tries to awaken self-confidence in Kit and build in her mind a consistent picture of reality.

It is interesting to observe how much emphasis Helena puts on language. Even before the beginning of the therapy, Helena hears Kit

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<sup>8</sup> All quotations from the play are from my own transcript.

slowly uttering the sequence of letters “ABD”, which she instantly corrects to “ABC” in accordance with the alphabetical system. It is only later revealed that Kit at that moment is naming the notes of the melody (so, in other words, sequence of sounds) she remembers. However, Helena’s concentration on the linguistic aspect of reality is too strong to consider the sequence from a wider perspective. This linguistic focus is further proved by Helena’s request that Kit should keep a journal in which she would record all events of a given day so that she could later reread them and gradually construct reliable reality around her.

On the one hand, the journal is supposed to facilitate the recovery of memory which may be frequently overburdened with the information coming in every minute. As Yury Lotman rightly observes, the “written text and the process of writing shift the burden of memory from an individual to an external symbolic system”. At the same time, however, language in this case acts like a “condenser of memory” (qtd. in Andrews and Maksimova 2008: 264), which results in the fact that the written down observations quite obviously present the subjective perception which cannot ever be verified again by any objective means, as going back in time is impossible. Therefore, at the very beginning of her recovery Kit is subjected to the process of reality transformation, albeit for a good purpose.

Helena further underlines the importance of keeping a journal by claiming that “[w]e need history”. For her, the process of one’s conscious act of writing can at least give an impression of maintaining control over one’s life, as she advises Kit: “Take control of the things you can control”. In this way, she asks Kit to “translate [herself] through [...] history” (Kloepfer and Shaw 1981: 33)<sup>9</sup>, which also implies an intersemiotic translation of her memories based on sound into the linguistic order that seems to govern the visible reality.

In their discussion on intersemiotic transposition, based on examples taken from poems accompanied by visual elements, Claus Clüver and Burton Watson observe:

[T]he interpenetration of visual and verbal signs is such that the meaning constructed from the text as a whole will be quite different from the meanings derived from the signs alone; not infrequently, the signs of one system by themselves do not permit the production of any coherent meaning at all. (1989: 57)

<sup>9</sup> Although Kloepfer and Shaw use the quoted statement in reference to prose works and the characters’ relation to historical change, it seems also perfectly applicable to the context of the discussed play.

This is exactly what Kit seems to be afraid of when she finally returns home and begins her struggle for independent life. As if to 'double check' reality of her new space, she keeps repeating the words which refer to objects or actions she is performing at a given moment (for example, while pouring hot water into a cup and brewing tea). The naming process she undertakes can seem to be an illustration of gluing together Saussurean signifieds and signifiers. In a comic exchange with Dan, Kit even questions the nature of the object called "coffee table" as they never put coffee on it. Thus, she underlines the arbitrariness of names given to objects in a language which she is forced to hold on to in order to regain her former self.

Dan's involvement in Kit's convalescence employs a different means. The man attempts to help Kit in her recovery by asking her to listen to selected recordings from the past that they both shared. Dan's strategy is based on his intimate knowledge of Kit. She does not realize it yet, but he is fully aware of Kit's previous fascination with music and, by extension, the reality of sound. That is why he chooses to appeal to her emotions through recorded voices which he has intentionally edited in advance. What is more, in his conversations with Kit – which he also records – he purposefully steers each dialogue in the direction which would equip him with more material for further editing. For instance, shortly after they arrive from the hospital, Dan encourages Kit to repeat the word 'home' with reference to the space of his flat in order to use her voice later as part of the recording which is to prove her former attachment to the life they spent together.

Thus, the word 'home' becomes a metonymy of security and lost happiness for Kit. The significance of this metonymy – which apart from a metaphor is, in Bruno Osimo's words, a "fundamental [mechanism] of meaning construction" (Osimo 2008: 329) in artistic texts (which a radio play can be an example of) – is intentionally narrowed by Dan in order to limit the range of possible interpretations that Kit might come up with while listening to the recordings. What is more, Osimo proposes to see single words as well as texts as metaphorical "mugs":

One mug (special nuance of a word) is the one that interests us in the given chronotopic context, but the other ones are inseparable, and go around with it. When we stop at a table to deliver our tray (word), we put down our tray having in mind one particular mug (acceptation), but our receivers, sitting at the table, since we (inevitably) give them a lot of mugs with different drinks (acceptations), may decide that they prefer to interpret our word as composed of some other drink, and we, senders, don't always realize that. (Osimo 2008: 328–329)



Kit is actually unable to see beyond a much broader scope of possible interpretations due to Dan's interference with the recordings. The fact that Dan wants to be the sole controller of sound reality for Kit is further highlighted by his admonition that she is never to enter his studio where he gives acoustic shape to his intrigue.

The "meaning-changing mechanism" (Osimo 2008: 330) that in Dan's case are the edited recordings may also influence the listeners' perception of the main protagonist's name. In this way, even the seemingly stable proper name becomes a fluid concept (cf. Osimo 2008: 330–331). Under Dan's control, Kit becomes a metaphorical "tool kit" which he makes use of to realize his plan of keeping his partner forever subordinate to him. The listeners are being reminded of the man's obsession with control every time Dan is alone working on his recordings – at these moments piano music, the same as the one in Kit's head in the opening of the play, is audible in the background.

Therefore, it seems justifiable to claim that two semiotic systems are in conflict inside Kit. Inspired by Helena, Kit strives to establish some contact with reality through the spoken and written language that are to remain in constant collaboration. On the other hand, her yet unrealized fascination with sound is abused by Dan, who provides her with fabricated facts. These two conflicting semiotic systems fight within Kit's mind and as the play progresses it transpires that the constant undermining of Helena's therapeutic measures by Dan's deception leaves Kit alone in her struggle for recovery.

The turning point for Kit comes with the unexpected visit of Dan's colleague Matt, who shortly before Kit's accident became her confidant. It is him to whom she confessed the problems she had with Dan's obsessive love for her. The meeting ends quite abruptly because Dan earlier falsely informs Kit that she was sexually abused by Matt. Having been isolated from all other people apart from Helena and Dan, Kit resorts to the only information she possesses and asks Matt to leave.

However, the visit is long enough to awaken Kit's suspicions. This takes place in an exchange which interweaves numerous strands of the semiotic systems presented in the play. As a music teacher who previously taught Kit to play the piano, Matt expresses his surprise at the fact that the piano in Dan and Kit's flat serves only as a support for flowers. For Kit, this object's function, which has been devised and imposed by Dan, is unquestionable. In Kit's linguistic system "piano" may only be a piece of decorative furniture, which is in agreement with the inexplicable nature of the above-mentioned coffee table. However, when Matt keeps insisting that the piano is actually Kit's property, brought to the flat of her own

initiative, the two semiotic systems which Kit has so far tried to reconcile begin to be in conflict.

The linguistic system proposed by Helena seems to have failed, as the process of naming and assigning function is questioned by an outside observer in the person of Matt. Inevitably, Dan becomes the first suspect as it is him that prepared the flat before Kit's arrival from the hospital. In addition, Dan stands for the semiotic system of sound which provides Kit with her memories and is intended to help her construct an integrated personality. What is even more important, the object which triggers the conflict of semiotic systems may be also said to embody both of them. At first, piano for Kit is a linguistic construct with a function unconnected with any production of sound. After Matt's visit the piano reveals its potential for producing sounds which Kit can control – it was her who learnt to play it, the learnt piece was by Chopin and in fact it was his music that the listeners can hear at the beginning of the play and later in various moments of the story.

Thus, Kit undergoes a transformation. She starts from being an active interpreter and creator of the linguistic semiotic system and a mere recipient of the sound semiotic system. With the realization that she could and perhaps still can control sounds, Kit expands her area of independence and realizes that her freedom in interpreting reality can go beyond just one semiotic system.

The climax of the play results precisely from this realization. While preparing a special dinner to celebrate Kit's progress, the girl picks up on Dan's accidental remark about one of their trips and asks him to play one of the recordings again. It is important to notice that at this point it is she who for the first time makes a conscious decision about selection of sound input. After listening to the recording she quickly compares it with her written records in the journal and finds out a serious discrepancy between two versions of the same story. This pushes her to instinctively, and rightly, accuse Dan of deceiving her. Paradoxically, the inconsistency between two semiotic systems brings about her consistency of mind. This is how she becomes the organising agent in constructing her own independent perspective on the world.

The play ends with a mix of sounds, voices and noises that are almost identical with the opening sequence. Now, however, all elements are clear and understandable. Once more the listeners enter Kit's mind to find out that perhaps the form of her memories has not changed, but its content is finally decipherable. The last exchange between the characters belongs to Dan and Kit. After the man observes that the weather outside is so cold that it is hard to imagine anyone being able to endure such

low temperatures, Kit answers briefly: "I can". Thus, she makes a double reference which points both to her regained physical endurance as well as mental abilities which she can now learn to control even more fully.

As it can be observed, intersemiotic translation in *Noise* works on numerous levels. With regard to therapeutic methods applied to Kit, Helena attempts to translate her sensations, feelings and observations into the semiotic system of language. Dan not only translates Kit's unconscious memories into sound, but first of all by fabricating them supplies the versions which conform to his devious plan. In each case, intersemiotic translation has Kit as its final recipient. Kit does not translate anything to either Helena, Matt or Dan until between the semiotic systems she notices interrelationships based on contradictions.

It is interesting to note that during the scene when Kit compares the two versions of her memories – one in sound and the other in its written form – it is the latter that turns out to find its additional confirmation in Matt's words during his visit. Therefore, in terms of the hierarchy of semiotic systems, the suggestion might be that it is the written record, which might be called a translation of a conceptual structure into its corresponding linguistic form (cf. Osimo 2002: 618–619), that is supposed to be credited with more reliability. At this point one is reminded of the above-mentioned diagram by Dermot Rattigan, in which the written text remains at the source of the aural realization of a radio play. Therefore, the hierarchy suggested inside the play *Noise* is also applicable to the process of creating radio drama, which always possesses the written text as its underlying and indispensable element. Such a connection provokes a discussion on metatheatrical elements as they are presented in the analyzed play.

In the words of Lionel Abel, metatheatrical plays

have a common character: all of them are theatre pieces about life seen as already theatricalized. By this I mean that the persons appearing on the stage in these plays are there not simply because they were caught by the playwright in dramatic postures as a camera might catch them, but because they themselves knew they were dramatic before the playwright took note of them. What dramatized them originally? Myth, legend, past literature, they themselves. They represent to the playwright the effect of dramatic imagination before he has begun to exercise his own; on the other hand, unlike figures in tragedy, they are aware of their own theatricality. Now, from a certain point of view, only that life which has acknowledged its inherent theatricality can be made interesting on the stage. From the same modern view, events, when interesting, will have the quality of having been thought, rather than of having simply occurred. (Abel 2003: 135)

These remarks are only partly applicable to *Noise*. This is because, on the one hand, the listeners throughout the play are encouraged to accept that they are participating in the events that have “simply occurred”. Kit has to struggle with her memory loss and at no time does she signal that as a person “appearing on the [radio] stage” she knows she is “dramatic before the playwright took note of [her]”.

On the other hand, a closer look at *Noise* reveals that this radio drama is in fact about various aspects of creation, thus implying that “it was [the playwright’s] imagination which controlled the event from beginning to end.” Of course, the author does not enter the play in person, but he equips all his characters with the power of creation: Dan in his recordings creates memories for Kit; Helena creates a way of approaching reality in order to help Kit regain her former self; finally, Kit struggles to create her own world out of the contradictory elements she is supplied with.

Among metatheatrical elements enumerated by Patrice Pavis – which include for instance a play within a play, addressing the audience or placing theatre as the subject of dialogue (Pavis 2002: 287–289) – he also suggests that metatheatres is present everywhere the depicted reality resembles theatre. This is especially true of *Noise*, in which Dan is involved in the process of editing the recordings, which is precisely what takes place during the post-production of radio dramas. Therefore, the listeners experience post-production on a double level. They are faced with the effects of post production of the play called *Noise* (produced for the BBC by Polly Thomas) as a play about a man trying to post-produce a young woman’s memories. In this way, everything that takes place once Kit moves to stay in Dan’s flat resembles a carefully planned performance based primarily on verbal and sound elements, which radio drama actually is in its essence.

What is more, the fact that the play begins with the noise inside Kit’s head gains here additional significance. By placing emphasis on the need for the disentanglement of the various sounds in Kit’s memory the listeners are persuaded to think of the radio play *Noise* as a collection of Kit’s memories which are remixed by Dan, transcribed with Helena’s help and targeted at Kit as the ultimate listener *within* the world of radio drama.

When one steps beyond this world and becomes conscious of his role as a listener, the fact to be considered is the moment when Kit finds her independent way to regaining memory through combining contradictory verbal and sound inputs she has received. Transferred to the sphere of radio drama reception, Kit’s decisions suggest that it is possible that the unity of word and sound in radio plays provides the best analytical

material for their audiences. Just like Kit's understanding arises out of the discovery of interrelationships and contradictions which she is left alone to decipher, the task of the listener – also alone in his experience of listening to radio drama – also seems to hinge on being careful of gaps that have to be filled in. These do not refer to the playwright's or producer's slips, but to the organising power of the listeners' imagination whose aim is to discover the "translation system" peculiar to a given radio play and then learn its "system of teaching it" (Kloepfer and Shaw 1981: 34) to the listener.

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## **Reading the Signs: Intersemiotic and Non-Verbal Communication**

### **Introduction**

Jakobson (1971) stressed the semiotic value of all five senses in human society such that syncretic messages, that is, those based on a combination of several sign patterns are brought together. The reading and interpretation of non-verbal signs has often involved a comparison with verbal communication in order to examine the extent to which the two sign systems, that is 'body language' and spoken language, are congruent. The study of non-verbal communication in terms of posture, gestures, and facial expressions has long tradition in terms of a populist psychological literature that is predicated upon the notion that the body can speak louder than words, that it can reveal 'hidden' thoughts and feelings. This offering, of a revelatory analysis of the body's sign value, is a defining rhetorical aspect of this field of study. The power to reveal the body's language trades upon a linkage between body and mind in which the embodied person emits signals that displays their inner psychology. These signals are taken as requiring expert interpretation in terms of reading their intersemiotic value and meaning. Analyses of this kind trade upon forging a linkage between body and mind in which the embodied person emits signals that displays their "inner" psychology during interaction and particularly in relation to status, power and relationships. This sustains a visual ideology of the communicative body.

323

The study of non-verbal communication or body language as it is commonly known, is popular amongst laypeople as well as being an established area of academic psychology. There has been a thriving populist and academic literature in the field in recent years (e.g. Beattie 2003; Eaves and Leathers 2017; Hall and Knapp 2009; Hall, Horgan,



and Murphy 2019; Hinde 2005; Matsumoto, Frank and Hwang 2013; Wharton 2009). There is also a huge applied side to this work in terms of coaching programmes associated with interaction in the world of business and personal relationships (e.g. Dunbar and Bernhold 2019; Collett 2004; Glass 2012; Pease and Pease 2011; Wezowski and Wezowski 2012). Much of the appeal of this area rests upon the idea that body language involves people communicating their 'true' thoughts and feelings. Work in this area has traded upon Birdwhistle's (1970: 427) findings that around two thirds of emotional content is communicated by non-verbal cues. It is for this reason that there is an obvious appeal in reading these signals and de-coding what they mean. The revelatory power of being able to de-code these signals provides much of the appeal and rhetorical power of this kind of study.

Bodies are viewed as communicating socially shared 'meanings' such as joy, interest, boredom, status etc., some of which are unconscious whilst other are taken as being controllable. The idea of the body as the site of a struggle for communicative intent has a resonance with Goffman's (1959) work on self-presentation but less attention has been paid to the underlying process of intersemiotic translation involved. This in itself is a powerful rhetoric and in the case of non-verbal communication the notion of direct visual 'experience' that requires translation is used as the bedrock for interpreting what a person is thinking or feeling. The body is positioned as a communicative device in which every movement is taken as displaying some meaning or insight into what someone is saying or doing.

## Movements and Minds

In the study of non-verbal communication there is one major underlying assumption: signs that require translation. What is said, in what way and with what accompanying body movements, are taken as requiring interpretation in order to assess the degree of congruence between them and what they reveal about the person during the interaction. There is an assumed intra-psychic world that is mediated through the outer world of the body which is in turn is relayed to other minds. The nuances of body movements in terms of facial expressions and bodily positions and gestures are taken as being the *focus* of investigation. Therefore, the body in this *view* is treated as a window onto something else; an inner world that requires to be exposed.

It is this revelatory discourse that gives the study of body language so much of its rhetorical power. To be able to read the mind of another by analysing the micro-movements of their body is an area that has captured the public imagination and shows no sign of abating. It is perhaps no accident that this should be the case given that the mass appeal of this area of study has been applied to topics such as personal relationships, politics and business. The ability to communicate effectively and to be influence and 'read' others is often crucial in these aspects of people's lives. It is also the case that these are just the areas where success in doing so carries much in terms of individual 'rewards'.

Viewing the body as a means of communication in which there is an exchange of signs about some 'inner' psychological state sets up the problem of interpretation and of interactional 'rules' and norms. It raises such issues as: How can we know the mind of others by watching them? What is the status of these bodily signals with respect to what a person is saying about something? Which movements and actions are intentional and which are unconscious? Can we be trained to control these signals to some degree? Which signals convey the most important information about what a person feels? Which signals are best related to what a person thinks? All of these questions flow from this communication model of non-verbal behaviour in terms of an assumed transmission of 'information' as a basis for inter-subjectivity. This assumed perceptual-cognitive basis for interaction is, of course, the basis of much psychological investigation which trades on the assumption that people are concerned with seeing and interacting with one another in order to understand what they are thinking and feeling. This is part of a wider cultural commonplace, the notion of an 'inner/outer' dualism, and one in which the disciplines of psychology and sociology have played a considerable part in actively maintaining. Moreover, it provides a means of trading on notions of 'sense making' as well as the portrayal of people's 'inner' psychological states.

Cognition is regarded as the element of control and providing a basis for thinking before acting. The affective or emotional element is taken being spontaneous and representing 'feelings' and it is this aspect that is often taken as being a major part of what body language can reveal. The emotional state of a person as displayed through non-verbal cues is often taken as a reliable indicator of a person's 'true' feelings. The physiology of these bodily movements and facial expressions is regarded as virtually beyond the total control of the individual. Nevertheless, there is a vast industry based upon trying to literally discipline the body to bring these under conscious rational control: a case of mind over body. It is also interesting to note that much of the discourse on the study of body

language revolves around the detection of deception by reading non-verbal leakage, or in Goffman's (1959) terms, the signals that are given off.

This way of viewing these signals is based on the notion of what people say as largely intentional and based upon 'thoughts', 'ideas' and 'views' where these are taken as being the result of some process of reasoning. Emotion provides a means of supporting this process in terms of action or as something that skews or bypasses the reasoning process and is ultimately manifested in the body. This duality is interesting in terms of the ways in which emotion can be presented and interpreted as a means of characterising action. As Edwards (1997) notes emotions are a very flexible accounting resource whereby they can be contrasted with cognitions in terms of their less deliberative nature, taken as being as 'understandable' and appropriate as how any reasonable person would react, characterised as being the outcome of events or in the nature of the person, treated as being kept under the control of a person's reasoning or as reactions that resist control, presented as the interaction of mental and physiological systems, as natural, or as derived from moral and ethical concerns.

These discursive resources can also be applied to the visual domain when people index emotions to how various bodily aspects look or are occluded from view. The visibility of 'emotions' as indexed to the body is therefore a major cultural resource and means of referring to issues of accountability. Studying participants' orientations to the visibility of emotions, either in terms of direct psychological accounting, or in terms of orientating towards aspects of the inner/outer dualism allows for a level of analysis in term of the study of the orderliness of social action. In this way a major cultural dualism is maintained: taking people's 'outward' non-verbal signs as representations that can be translated into cultural texts in terms of what they are like 'inside'. This derives from accountability within practices rather than as the result of some sort of inner mental cognitive processing and exchange of representations.

This model is orientated to as part of the social practices that people engage in and they ways in which they index psychological states to visible aspects of the body. It is something that people orientate to in terms of a communicative translation process that reveals an individual's attitudes, beliefs, motives, goals, judgements etc. In effect, this cultural orientation is one of a treating the body as a window onto an intrapsychic world as something that is normatively attended to as a means of accomplishing order within social practices. The nature of this order is founded upon an orientation of participants employing a discourse related to mental processes in order to account for how they perceive matters and

as the basis for action. In this way bodily signals are placed prior to this operation, as having happened and that need to be 'understood' within interaction.

It is this intersemiotic model therefore that drives the 'expertise' of those in the study of non-verbal behaviour. The stories of emotional and other states laid upon the body through notions of revealing the signals that is given off leads to a discourse of functionality as related to particular bodily 'channels': vocal quality, facial movements, eye movements; posture, orientation, distance and touch, gestures, appearance, and even chemical. These channels are then related to functions such as marking identity and status; the display of emotional states; role relationships; joint focus of attention; rituals, and illustrators. There is also a move to consider the inter-dependence of verbal and non-verbal communication in terms of such aspects as being able to do two different things at once (e.g. the regulation of conversation through eye contact; the use of pointing in giving verbal directions) or the use of as both channels in affording faster transmission.

## **Viewing the Body as Communicating an Inner Psychology**

327

Jakobson (1971) suggested that intersemiotic translation or transmutation involves the interpretation of the signs of a sign system with the signs of another sign system. He also saw the translation process as involving two processes that take place simultaneously: recoding and transposing. However, the distinction between the changing and retaining processes sits within a psychological view of translation (see Deely 2004). To this Jakobson stresses "all five external senses carry semiotic functions in human society" (1971: 701) thereby adding a cultural dimension to his thought. He also stressed the importance of distinguishing between homogeneous messages based upon a single sign system and syncretic messages involving the combination of multiple sign systems (1971: 705).

What is interesting about Jakobson's view of intersemiotic translation is the extent to which auto-communicative activity underwrites culture. Culture is in a permanent process of intersemiotic translation and the interpretation of non-verbal signs actualises the flow of cultural communication and its relationship with language Ruthrof (2000). Gorrée (1989) takes up this focus on the active and cultural nature of intersemiotic translation through a consideration of Wittgenstein's later philosophy

(*Philosophical Investigations* (PI)1953). She draws attention to Wittgenstein's notion of *language games* as a form of life and that he underlined that "the term language-game is meant to bring into prominence the fact that the speaking of language is part of an activity" (PI: §133). These instances of "operating with words", have a built-in nonverbal component and are bound up with forms of life within cultures. Wittgenstein also argues that 'we follow rules blindly' (PI: §219), in the sense that we proceed in an unthinking way that requires no intermediary step such as interpretation. One way that we may do this is through engaging in the language game of translating the body as representing an inner psychological world, of solving the 'problem' of hearing language being spoken and seeing the speaker's non-verbal movements as part of the communication process. An example that captures this well the gesture of a father 'showing' a teenage daughter what to pick up in order to clean up her room (Gerhardt 2019). This type of nonverbal communication, as well as being a specific activity, is also part of an encounter where that response acts as a powerful means of displaying, not only frustration or annoyance, but also local roles and moral obligations. It is part of a language game enacted between a parent and a reluctant child in which 'showing' what do to by picking up an object to be tidied away has a much greater directive force than simply pointing to it.

This language game involves treating the person as a psychological agent in terms of 'mental processes' being *required* to operate upon how they view others in the interactional world in order to 'make sense' of them. In this way the bodily signs are placed prior to this operation, as having happened and needing to be 'understood'.

In this process of communication there is a realm of embodied interaction and a realm of assumed mental operations requiring to be brought together in order to apprehend or grasp the nature of these non-verbal signals. The selection and active constitution of these signals as a social practice is occluded through the reification of 'reality' and 'mind', that requires to 'understood' or 'made sense' of by an inner mental processing system that 'perceives' that outer reality.

This association between the labelling of 'perceptual moments' in the understanding of body language and the mental operations that have been applied to them provides for a means of establishing a rationalist account of non-verbal communication in terms of functionality. The body must be attended to in terms of discrete signals and in this way a perceptual-cognitivist form of viewing the body is actively maintained. It is this outer body that is taken as presenting itself as requiring 'interpretation' or 'understanding' in terms of an active 'inner' response.

It can also be the basis for creating a version of temporality in which what 'has happened' is taken as being apparent in the person's actions. The body is therefore divided into expressive functions that require interpretation as 'language'.

This can be found at 'lay' and 'expert' levels of analysis. At the lay level of analysis this is considered as an common aspect of everyday intersemiotic translation as people go about their lives. Thus Berger (2014: 23) writes:

We often "watch" people when we sit in cafes or restaurants but we also scrutinize them when we look at the facial expressions of our wives, of our husbands and of our children, of actors and actresses in plays, films and television programs, and of politicians. We consider things such as hair styles, hair colors, eye colors, body structure, body language, styles of eyeglasses, brands of smart phones, purses, clothes, watches, smart phones, and so on [...] ad infinitum.

Berger further goes on to note the 'expert' interest in this area by drawing attention to the work of the psychologist Paul Ekman in arguing that "[...] facial expression provides information about our emotions and moods, reflects cognitive activity such as boredom and perplexity, can reveal truthfulness and lying, and can offer information about mania, schizophrenia and depression" (2014: 23).

329

Therefore the ubiquitous nature of observing body language as a form of communication, both at lay and expert levels, give credence to the distinction between the two. People may in their day-to-day conduct engage in reading body language but this is at the level of everyday moral encounters and self-presentation (Goffman 1959). On the other hand, there is a justification for expert analysis of body language, including facial expressions, as a means of information about mental states that may, in some cases, point to medical conditions. These different circumstances can be considered as different language games, one rooted in interpersonal moral issues, the other in diagnostic evaluation. However, there are occasions when expert and lay concerns are involved in the same language game, and this is often related to 'reading' people more effectively for the purpose of business or personal relationships. As previously noted, the authority of experts resides in their assumed enhanced ability to decode body language in ways that others may quite literally not see.

Whether lay or expert, one of the most important features of body language is emotional expression. This is commonly conceived of as related to various emotional clusters. For example, in a review of the

importance of research in this area Kaushal (2013: 16–17) draws attention to the following:

**Aggressive:** tightened jaws, stiff facial muscles, a sombre face and straight staring eyes, thumping the table with tight fists to make a point, raised voice, animated gestures with overuse of arms and fingers—and sometimes of the whole body.

**Submissive:** head held down, closed stance, nods agreement much more frequently than desired, chin kept down, palm open to indicate this openness.

**Attentive:** gazing of the eyes towards the speaker, mild nods of heads at periodic intervals, saying ‘hmmm’, ‘yes’, ‘is it so’, at appropriate points.

**Nervous:** frequent (visible) swallowing of the saliva, unsteady voice often accompanied by a stammer, avoiding eye contact, and head bent down.

**Upset:** tightened jaws, deliberate frown on the forehead, taking off the reading glasses, eyes closed occasionally, avoiding eye contact with others or unstable or losing control over emotions (e.g., voice shaking, out-of-control gestures).

**Bored:** prolonged or frequent yawns or eyes shut for a duration, blank stares when eyes are open.

**Relaxed:** head straight, chest upright and balanced body, no folds or frown on the forehead, easy and quite breathing, gentle smile on face and calm yes.

**Power:** common body language gestures that indicate power are sitting at the head of a table, standing/sitting from an elevated platform, thumping fist on the table, or accompanied by key aides at all times etc.

**Defensive:** tightly folded arms, crossed legs, sitting on a reverse chair or showing nervousness while giving excuses etc.

What is striking about these kinds of descriptors is their apparent banality. They appear commonsensical and somewhat obvious. However, this apparent obviousness betrays our ability to engage in a language game of intersemiotic translation in which we are able match up these terms with bodily ‘signals’. Insofar we are familiar with this language game it is because we have learned it as part of our culture through being socialized into it. This socialization process does not necessarily consist of matching people’s outward body language to some inner notion of their mental state, nor does it entail a process of ‘interpretation’ on the part of the observer. Such attempts abstracting, regularizing and generalizing this process is what gives authority to the apparent expertise of those who decode these signals.

The availability of a shared visual experience is built into and presupposed by this intersemiotic translation process in order to then correspond with the kinds of emotion descriptors outlined above. The capacity to use observations of other people's body movements and facial expressions in order to identify, recognize and describe these as signals and to relate them to language, is something that is therefore part of the enculturation and socialization process. Observing others in this sense is not simply observing in general but rather is related to particular circumstances and various language games. These might, for example, involve engaging in acceptances and refusals, giving views and opinions, maintaining institutional role-appropriate behaviour, displaying affection, annoyance, anger and so on. Learning to engage in these activities through either attempting to control one's own body language or observing that of others is not an abstract process of inner interpretation. On the contrary, it is all about participation in activities that are not separable from learning the public nature of what kinds of bodily signals are taken as mattering in terms of their relationship with the nature of the concepts that we learn.

Therefore, in short, it is the fact that we have learned to engage in this translation process as a matter of course that enables us to treat attempts to enhance its revelatory power as being something that we can connect with. However, such attempts tend to formalize what we already 'know' and in so doing glosses over these in an abstract way as 'body language' that speaks of an inner psychology. The popularity of this kind of approach derives from the idea of making the hidden visible through the interpretation of this body language. However, this only 'works' so long as an inner/outer dualism is maintained as a channel through which signals can move and be interpreted. By considering the relationship between the visual observation of the body in interaction and the language games that they sit within, then it is possible to adopt a more reflexive stance on the power of the discourse of 'body language' and its appeal as giving the power to see the body and through it.

## Conclusion

The construction of an 'inner/outer' dualism in people's embodied interaction presents a world of texts of 'meaning' in which a process of intersemiotic translation is brought to bear upon viewing the others in order to 'make sense' of them, and in terms of inner 'thoughts' and 'feelings'. In this way the inner/outer dualism is maintained as a pervasive



discursive cultural common place: the construction of ‘mind’ as an active perceptual-cognitive system ‘working on’ perceptual signals.

Such accounting is a matter of public practice as people engage in various forms of social relations that are mediated through different social and organisational practices. The basis for a person’s agency has to be intelligible and therefore such accounts must attend to this in their construction. In this sense the person-as-viewer, as positioned as ‘outside’ of another external psychological agent and who must in the course of the account employ his or her own inner thought processes in order to know the other’s mind. Perhaps this is what makes the language-game of non-verbal communication such a powerful one; a discourse of perceptual-cognitivism in which the positioning of interlocutors is based upon the achievement of displaying and interpreting certain kinds non-verbal signals that may or may not be congruent with verbal interaction. The complexity of these signals, and being able to read them correctly, is taken as being required to ‘understand’ others. However, this can be considered as an attempt to relate various semi-conscious aspects of the body or automatisms with a rational discourse of the performative body and associated emotion-based categories. In so doing it represents a means of defining and rationalising the unruliness of the body, a means of subjecting it to an abstract language game of intersemiotic translation.

332

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<https://doi.org/10.18778/8220-191-8.23>

## Serialization and Multiplication in Portraiture: Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz and Photographic Translations

*The face is the thing.*

Virginia Woolf

In the words of Urszula Czarторыska, the proto-modernist artist and philosopher Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz created a “new ‘gravitational field’” in photography (Czarторыska 1980: 61). I propose to consider the highly expressive portraits by Witkiewicz (1885–1939) as forms which dramatize something pioneering about the openness of the photographed human face, about the interface of photographic portraits and other forms of expression, such as portrait painting and verbal portraiture, about the meanings of repetition which does not repeat. Caught between indexical, iconic, and symbolic qualities, Witkiewicz’s multimedia expositions of the face present a powerful provocation to speculation on intersemiotic translations.

335

Guided by his father who praised photography for its “arrangements of mutual relations between objects” (Barański 2000: 404), young Witkiewicz enthusiastically traced its overt and covert meanings. As a child he took many photographs which he also catalogued, thus creating a unique register of “photography + documentation” (Krzysztofowicz-Kozakowska 1989: 43). His growing personal archives included series of photographs of roads, landscapes, locomotives, and people. Albums and boxes of photographs were his distinctive space not of Art but of life creativity. Arranged by kind, documentary photographs, theatrical photographs, series of keepsake snapshots, photographs containing reproductions of his paintings, curiosity photographs, constituted a collection which the photographer additionally considered interpretable with respect to diverse qualities and feelings it

produced. This large ensemble, evoking the landscape of prewar years in Poland, burned when his Warsaw apartment was raided by Nazis in 1939 (Okołowicz 2000: 182). What has survived the war's destruction is a body of about 1500 photographs saved by friends of the artist.

Made available to the public, reproduced in commercial albums and academic publications, these images reveal that Witkacy took a special creative interest in portraits, that his key subject was the human face, his own face and the faces, in particular eyes and lips, of people he knew. To identify his interests and practice, Witkiewicz is said to have used made-up portmanteau words like "the facedesigner", "mugmodeller", and "spiritual facesampler". Towards the end of his life he developed a habit of calling himself "the old portrait prostitute" (Gerould 1993: 24). In basic terms, his portraits evoke figurative possibilities of the human face, of its abundant spurious poses, grimaces, and twitches. Witkiewicz's photographs evoke also extraordinary heterogeneity of the exteriority of the face as a theatrical mask, a camouflage, a perversion; they manifest not only some intimations of subjectivity but also the power of cultural conventions. There are readings that construe some of the portraits as indexes of complex tensions lying somewhere behind, symptoms of a model's disease. Self-portraits of the artist, his "autoWitkacies", however, are determined not only by their highly troubled model, understandable in relation to images of innumerable familial faces, but also in their historical context, as artwork produced in response to "'insatiable craving' for novelty" in 20<sup>th</sup> century art (Gerould 1993: 10). Witkiewicz recognized the potential which portraiture held to traverse the distinctions between public and private, to move towards more fluid and more accidental arrangements. If "the face is also the primary medium for deliberate self-presentation" (qtd. in Freeland 2010: 297), in his self-portraiture Witkiewicz leads us to expect a proliferation of layers of signs and a variety of means to display levels of penetration of these layers. Numerous captions and comments on these self-representations signal over and over again anticipated disintegration and even annihilation of the self.

Witkiewicz's creative use of photography has a lot to do with serialization and multiplication of images; by many decades they anticipate self-portraits and self-dramatizations by such contemporary artists as Cindy Sherman, Egon Schiele, and Bruce Nauman. "Unlike one painting", argues Susan Sontag, "one photograph [...] implies that there will be others" (1979: 166). While photography has contributed to the disparagement of the singularity of the portrait, thanks to artists like Witkiewicz it has also expanded the potential of new significations of plurality of images. His principle of multiplication of photographic

portraits made up of many views of the same subject, taken at intervals and from diverse points of view, and in diverse conditions runs counter to the revelatory and celebratory traditions of portraiture, counter to what Krauss identifies as the artistic principle of absolute innovation and originality embraced by modernist artists (Krauss 1987: 160–161). Witkiewicz's multiples alert to potentiality of the unexpected emergence of new signs. For instance, we learn in letters from his friends that Witkiewicz "[...] studied systematically human faces, enlarging the photographs to paranormal sizes [...]. Often, such an enlarged likeness revealed characteristic, funny, caricature-like details [...]" (qtd. in Krzysztofowicz-Kozakowska 1989: 44). The challenge such images presented had to do with the out of the ordinary relations formed by serialized photographs, relations introducing dynamic fields of *poiesis*, of symbolic transformations.

Striving to generate some unity in multiplicity, inspired also by successes of his photographic practice, Witkiewicz serialized photo-based images, also pastel and charcoal portraits. Many of his photographic portraits of friends but also self-portraits were taken against the background of his multiple pastel portraits and drawings. Such densely interconnected arrangements are a complex means of signaling changing motivations behind his work and changing practices of display. Photographs which include sitters as well as their painted portraits, or other painted images hanging on walls of personal interiors, undermine static, mimetic qualities of portraiture. Our attention is directed not to the monumental precision of focus or the mastery of received codes, rather, as in a 1913 photograph captioned "Jadwiga Janczewska in Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz's room", we are confronted with a site of (re)production of conflicting personal explorations. The sitter is a vehicle, objectified in a practice linked to art and familial history.

Witkiewicz was primarily a painter and it was the experience that taught him how to approach photography creatively, how to use the camera to make room for buffoonery, irony, and blague. A significant critical attention has been devoted to his large Portrait-Painting Firm, Witkiewicz's famous "large mug-modeling firm". For instance, Stefan Okołowicz stresses the important fact that such an undertaking had no equivalent in 20<sup>th</sup> century art (2000: 154). What has not been emphasized enough though is how this unprecedented project, operating for fifteen years, with a few thousand portraits to its credit, attracting the attentions of so many paying customers, contributed to the development of a novel way of marketing and distribution of portraiture as a purchasable, reproducible, and replaceable commodity. Witkiewicz, the sole owner

of the firm, highlighted the importance of the customer's decision in the choice of the "type" of desired portrait (the decision was facilitated with the aid of sample albums produced by the firm). The motto of the firm announced that "The customer must be satisfied. Misunderstandings are ruled out". If the portrait did not suit the customer because of "the degree of likeness" or any other reason it could be rejected (Gerould 1993: 239–240). The portraitist's chief focus was faces: "In general, the firm does not pay much attention to the rendering of clothing and accessories" (Gerould 1993: 240). Special arrangements were necessary for full-length portraits, and prices went significantly up if a customer wished to have his hands painted: "every hand costs one third of the price" (Gerould 1993: 240). Affordable to an average customer, though one third more expensive for women, the portraits were made according to terms and regulations published in a 1928 brochure. They were signed with the name Witkiewicz for "straightforward portraits", and Witkacy for his "deformed work" (Gerould 1993: 17). Initially customers could choose five types of portraits, however, Witkiewicz allowed mixing and diversification of the types. The firm sought to bring out the character, the type, the shared features and the shared iconographic motifs like heads captured to look like statues. The types ranged from the most objective ones to those most caricature-like. Labeled as type A, B, (including most conventional and the most expensive portraits); C, D, and E (reserved for a wide circle of friends, oneiric and mystical, expected one day to become rarities), the portraits were defined and made meaningful in relation to other portraits. For example, defining the type C, Witkiewicz allowed complex supplements like C+Co, C+H, C+Co+Et. These specifications were meant to clarify the characteristics of a sitter but also the conditions of the production. Additionally, because Witkiewicz knew many of the models intimately, he could make multiple series, at times producing "tens of versions of the portrayed model, done in varying moods and with the application of diverse stimulants" (Krzysztofowicz-Kozakowska 1989: 36). The experiments with substances like peyote and heroin helped him render the faces dark, heavy, deformed. Clearly, such portraits departed from any existing conventions in portraiture.

Photographic portraits, however, provided yet more experimental means of self-depiction and presentation of a human presence. Shearer West argues that in early stages of the development of the invention one of the most important reasons for the popularity of photography among portraitists was that "photography appeared to provide a foolproof means of conveying likeness. The conception that a photograph reveals truth initially seemed to offer the model of mimesis required for

portraiture" (West 2004: 189). West reminds that "the etymology of the term 'portraiture' indicates the genre's association with likeness and mimesis" (ibid.: 21). Thus likeness conceived as a "copy or duplication of external features" (ibid.: 21), is thought of as one of the essentials of the form of portraiture. Especially for artists interested in self-portraiture, and self-promotion, photography made it possible to manage without the mirror (ibid.: 191), to explore freely countless ways for signaling changes in identity, hiding rather than displaying likeness. Witkiewicz's probing orchestrations of experimental exposures which included also cooperation with professional photographers like Janina Kępińska resulted in the creation of an extraordinary archive of faces.

As Czartoryska observes, dating back to 1905, photograph portrait plays for Witkiewicz a double role as a "model of human relationships (between the observed and the observing in which he detected a particularly interesting situation especially when he was both) and a model for the definition of man" (Czartoryska 1980: 56). Photographically-ceased faces in Witkiewicz's portraits seem to evoke what he referred to as "directional tensions" ("Pisma o sztuce"). The "I" in these portraits is never presented in full body, a finished character, something to be simply understood. The subject is always a fragmented, even decomposed personality, often a lunatic, an unstable partial somebody with an accelerated grimace of disgust and horror, "unfinishable" and unknowing.

In a familiar multiple portrait (dated 1914–1916, taken in St. Petersburg), Witkiewicz appears dressed in a military uniform (he voluntarily joined the Imperial Army in St. Petersburg in 1914). This quintuple, cubist-like portrait – we should add a very popular type of image at the time, shows us reflections of Witkiewicz; the multiplication of uniform brings to mind multiplication of doubles that the WW1 called up as it did call up obscurity, auto-destruction, death, alterity and estrangement. We see the same face, but thanks to mirror reflection every face is different, the face en trio quarts, en face, and back. Janusz Degler interprets these portraits as autobiographical explorations of Witkiewicz's multiple selves: the self of the artist, the painter, the self of the philosopher, the self of the writer, and the self of the photographer (Degler 2009: 14). Clearly, there is no abiding self exposed though; we do not get to see the full face of the sitter; we can only sense its presence concealed somewhere there at the juncture of all these selves, or reflections. At the time of its making this type of image was not considered a portrait but "multi-photography". Yet it must have been sufficiently playful and theatrical to draw Witkiewicz's attention. A form of self-exploration, it seems to gesture beyond the particular identity of



the artist. The notable military uniform connects this image to a larger cultural and historical context and can be read as a symbol.

Witkiewicz was interested in how the portrait appropriates on the way an “otherness” that in the end reflects or even diffuses the subject. As I will show, especially his indulgent and absurd theatrical games, role playing, thematizing parodying and mocking portraiture uncover and release the strangeness or alterity of “I” as “we”.

Witkiewicz’s photographic experiments included shortening the focal length by placing a ring made of a water pipe, which allowed him to achieve more than a close up, a kind of a micro-photography of the human face. This technique (introduced around 1912) helped him liberate the image of the face from its contours. Such a tight frame is Witkiewicz’s original invention. According to Czartoryska, it is the forerunner of the way the human face became to be framed in film and TV. Witkiewicz himself thought of the resulting images as “wonderful” (Czartoryska 1980: 58). The tight frame seems to allow the face to morph, to lose its completeness, its definition. Such an image seems an effect of perception, not of “just being”.

What’s worth noticing is the fact that Witkiewicz’s experiments came a decade before French surrealists’ and American modernists’ explorations of portraiture. For example, in order to set off the eyes, Witkiewicz eliminates background, clothes, ears and hair. He uses light in an expressionistic way; dedicating intense attention to the expression of the eyes. They are enlarged, blurry and lit in such a way that we feel their powerful hypnotic appeal. Light glides across the faces producing unique visual effects, not contact. These eyes do not look at the viewer; nothing animates them. In a series of portraits presenting his fiancé, Jadwiga Janczewska, he records unreal, fuzzy facial expressions of a young woman who was to commit suicide; the repeated, multiple framing devises including busy interiors, contours of pictures hanging on walls, different angles from which the dazzling light is introduced deny clarity to her body. She is not accessible. Viewed in a series, the face of the female dissolves, it degrades to become washed away like faces in memory. Similarly to a series of portraits of Witkiewicz’s ill father, these photographs depict disappearance of traces of autonomy, of life, of subjectivity.

Contact and intimacy are problematic, if at times impossible to achieve in verbal portraits Witkiewicz produced, for example, in his early autobiographical novel *622 Falls of Bungo*. Narrative portraiture is “always a form of prosopopoeia, of ‘giving face’ to words” believed to be ‘literal’ (West 2004: 55). In *The 622 Downfalls of Bungo or the Demonic*

*Woman* (1910–1911) Bungo (Witkiewicz) looks at himself as if he were watched and recorded by someone other than himself. He sketches grotesque masks on the face of Bungo the artist, he portrays his friend Duke to reflect his own face, as when he says:

The Duke's face was frankly atrocious. His parched lips were half-open in an imbecilic smile, his eyes, without his glasses, were hazy and had a confused look of criminal desire, mute supplication, and repulsive sorrow. For a split second Bungo looked at him with artistic satisfaction. That face, almost alien to him at that moment, resembled the demonic figures in his drawings. But at almost the same moment he saw everything and something so hideous gripped him that he was suddenly paralyzed with fear. (Gerould 1993: 65)

Writing the novel, Witkiewicz was painting portraits of his friends which bore fictional names as captions. Also to illustrate the characters, Witkiewicz was relying on photography to “show” and “document” these characters to his father. This process of translation was a strategy of self-exploration which appeared throughout his work. It proves that for Witkiewicz the connections between writing and photography were always indissoluble.

Witkiewicz says that his photographic techniques were used to “export the techniques of the psyche of the photographed person” (Gerould 1993: 15). He produced series of psychological portraits which illustrate his key principle based on the assumption that only very many photographs can approximate some idea of a person. Hence we get the principle of serialization in the photographic portraits of his fiancé, of Malinowski, of other friends, and his father. Witkiewicz's father is captured sitting in the same pose, framed partially, he appears in details, his body reduced to the head only or seen as a profile. Vantage points betray the intensity of proximity and distance in the difficult relationship between the sitter and the camera operator.

Inspired by Ernst Kretschmer's explorations of connections between the human physique and inclinations towards psychic diseases; Witkiewicz tried to map a morphopsychological typology. Despite technical developments in photographic resolution, Witkacy discovered that photography could not probe the psyche of the model. He distanced himself from the search for psychic diseases, and continued to explore photography as a tool documenting the visible. He got interested in a different kind of portraiture. In the 1930s, he was staging what he called the theatre of “faces”, producing series of looks, of reflexes, mimic inventions, semblances of the face. “Miny” or “grimaces” are body art, multiplications of the variants of his faces. Witkiewicz was convinced

though that they could be more self-revealing of the mystery of the human self. In a semi-serious text "Manifest (Fest-mani)" he wrote about the necessity of breaking the intolerable boredom of "always being oneself", of hope that "I can imitate anything and thus free myself from the damned identity of individuality" (Gerould 1993: 711).

Witkiewicz's staged paratheatrical scenes are blagues which express what he felt was the "chaos of the wildest contradictions" which defines the inner life (Gerould 1993: 712). Taken with the help of his friend Jozef Glogowski, *Grimaces* show mere inconclusive possibilities of expression. They do not give us the face but rather deform the face; they are illusions of faces; they emphasize certain surplus, the "I" and something else, almost as if he were determined to conjure up some performative notions of the self. In the repeated series of "faces", facial expressions recorded by Witkiewicz are made possible as a result of transforming the body where one expression calls for another expression. Coming in series, these images make visible the loss of resemblances and differences. To try to make known things reappear and to produce them over again makes not the truth but the lie apparent. It is clear that there is no ultimate version of the ultimate gesture or face; photography makes this subversive deception clear.

These multiplied and serialized faces both resist and invite invention; such traces of pure potentiality (Markiewicz), they call attention to identity of repetition, of redundancy, the identity of the repeated elements, clearly affirmed repeated gestures. Unlike traditional art where repetition reinforces established ideologies, in avant-garde we deal with art which offers opportunities of autonomy incompatible with the social system. Witkiewicz's serialization and repetition do not stand in opposition to innovation; in Eco's words, such a strategy of ostentatious redundancy, oscillates between the assertive defense or promotion of the face and display of the impossibility of its manifestation.

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345

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346

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349

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351

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**Professor Alina Kwiatkowska's untimely departure prevented her from seeing this publication project through to the end. This book is dedicated to her memory and it is only suitable to have the volume summarised in Professor Kwiatkowska's own words, coming from a draft of the former editor's introductory chapter:**

"The present collection of papers was inspired by the international conference on *Intersemiotic Translation* held at the University of Łódź in 2013. Organized by the Institute of English Studies, it brought together many enthusiastic participants, who gathered to discuss the issues that many traditional scholars would consider to be niche and rather exotic. The volume includes a selection of papers from that conference, complemented by some additional contributions."

**Mikołaj Deckert  
Monika Kocot  
Aleksandra Majdzińska-Koczorowicz**

ISBN 978-83-8220-191-8

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