

# Intersemiotic and intertextuality: Picaresque and romance in opera

Dinda L. Gorlée

Wittgenstein Archives, University of Bergen  
Sydnesplassen 12, N-5020 Bergen  
Norway  
e-mail: gorlee@xs4all.nl

**Abstract.** Jakobson introduced the concept of intersemioticity as transmutation of verbal signs by nonverbal sign systems (1959). Intersemioticity generates the linguistic-and-cultural elements of intersemiosis (from *without*), crystallizing mythology and archetypal symbolism, and intertextuality (from *within*), analyzing the human emotions in the cultural situation of language-and-music aspects. The operatic example of Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* (1867) intertextualized the cultural trends of Scandinavia. This literary script was set to music by Grieg to make an operatic expression. After the "picaresque" adventures, *Peer Gynt* ends in a "romantic" revelation. Grieg's music reworded and rephrased the script in musical verse and rhythm, following the intertextuality of Nordic folk music and Wagner's fashionable operas. Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* text has since been translated in Jakobson's "translation proper" to other languages. After 150 years, the *vocal translation* of the operatic text needs the "intersemiotic translation or *transmutation*" to modernize the translated text and attract present-day audiences.

**Keywords:** Jakobson; intersemioticity; intertextuality; Ibsen; Grieg; vocal translation; opera; Scandinavian cultures

## Intersemiotic translation or transmutation

In this essay, I shall discuss the interpretation, translation, transformation, and transposition of language-and-music into the intersemiotic process of the dramatic genre of opera. The script of the opera is the combination of the music and words in the libretto. The libretto is simply the practical manual of the opera, but has no real drama in itself. The libretto is not a romantic, literary text, but materializes the dramatic qualities of the opera in a total discourse (van Baest 2000). The poetic and literary genres are reserved for the exploration of human emotions on stage (Meyer

1970[1956]: 6–32) affecting the emotional response of the audience to the description of the inner lives of the protagonists and events of the opera. The cultural (semiotic) sense of the communication of the emotional qualities translates the time-and-space interplay of music and language on the scene. In semiotic words: the battle between the sign-system of language with the non-linguistic sign-systems of music is the play-act from old to new discourse. The present-day ideal of opera is realized in the bold move to translate, or better revolutionarily transpose, the “old” drama of the opera into the “renewed” overtone or undertone of the opera on stage.

The linguistic associations of the subject, intersemiotic translation and intertextuality, are used to the Latin prefix *inter-*, meaning ‘among’ or ‘between’. Used with stress, *inter-* is like the literary criticism in modern arts, which ‘intermediates’ the uncoded and coded signs of ‘interrelations’, ‘interpretation’, and ‘intertexture’ of emotions happening between the ‘interlinked’ events of the libretto. The ‘intersemiotic’ and ‘intertextual’ translation combines the ‘interconnectedness’ of text with music in the script. The ‘interartistic’ event of vocal translation today has become an ‘intermedial’ readaptation as the ‘intersemiosis’ of mainly old operas in new ‘interartistic’ ideas of cultural thoughts.

Roman Jakobson provided three types of translation, broadening the traditional significance of the literal concept of translation to this evolutionary and revolutionary scheme:

Intralingual translation or *rewording* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language.

Interlingual translation or *translation proper* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.

Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems. (Jakobson 1959: 233)

Through Jakobson’s division into the three types of translation, he explained information, adaptation, and reproduction of the notion of “ordinary” translation to become transplanted into the “equivalence” of the dimensions of an alien system of signs (Gorlée 2012). The linguistic and extralinguistic horizons have denied the primacy of language in the comparison of two languages including the specialized (meaning musical-and-textual) situation of vocal translation (Gorlée 1997, 2002, 2005a, 2005b, 2008a, 2008b, 2010).

Jakobson’s idea provoked a controversy in linguistic circles, because he moved beyond the literal and exact “rewording” of intralingual translation, dealing with one language, and beyond the less accurate “translation proper” managing the time-and-space reality of interlingual translation, taking place between two languages. Jakobson stressed the free play of “transmutation” (Gorlée 1994: 147–168, 2008a) as the ideal

method of semiotic interconnectedness (“togetherness”) of linguistic, non-linguistic, and extra-linguistic aspects jointly creating the multimedia (trans-media and cross-media) art forms. Jakobson’s broader phenomenon includes the unconventional repertoire of the intersemiotic objects of languages-and-culture – called the “linguicultural” objects (Anderson, Gorlée 2011: 221–226). The transformation from “ordinary” translations into new interartistic or trans-artistic objects is called the process of making artistic “transductions”, moving from one linguistic medium to the another, non-linguistic medium applied to the operatic genre (discussed in Gorlée 2015a: 171–201; see Silverstein 2003).

The concept of ‘transmutation’ has been used historically to change from and to different disciplines, such as archaic law (transfer of property), biology (transformation of one species into another), mathematics (permutation, transformation), and even theology (transubstantiation) (OED 1989; 18: 416–417). Etymologically, the word ‘transmutation’ is derived from Old French and Latin, indicating today the natural or artificial act of conversion (or the change from one form to another, or the process of being exchanged) from and to different disciplines. In 1959, Jakobson refigured the term ‘transmutation’ within semiotics and translation theory as a new cliché – resounding with the Russian word ‘*transmutatsiya*’, familiar to Jakobson. As the final translational form, ‘transmutation’ indicates a bold lapsus, jumping from the familiar cotext of the source language to another, unfamiliar cultural context (umwelt) of the target language. Transmutation is the type of translation, which departs significantly from the linear (denotative) experiences of language to go hand-in-hand with the non-linear (connotative) alternations of culture (including subcultures).

The three kinds of translation were rather narrowly defined by Jakobson’s special use of transmutation. In 1959, Jakobson was still unconcerned with the reverse (or inverse) operations during the remainder of the 20th-century ideas about *avant-garde* art. Now, after the 21st-century experimentations with intermedia and multi-media *objects d’art*, the idea of transmutation has become common as artists search to show the pure “ornaments” (Meyer 1970[1956]: 206–211) to provide artistic subjects for the future. The adventitious composition of uncoded folk music, emotional (uncoded) in outlook, set to Grieg’s artificial (coded) arrangements of arias and songs, gave musical arrangements to Ibsen’s libretto in verse drama, will be discussed as the double perspective of Jakobson’s transmutation, involving the activities of vocal translation.

## Intersemiosis and intertextuality

The intersemiosis of the operatic libretti fostered the human feelings of contemporary operas in the cultivation of semiotic (cultural) phenomenon of Jakobson’s transmutation in time and space. The creative translation between two different sign

systems reflects and represents the freedom of the “interpretation of verbal signs by means of nonverbal sign systems” (Jakobson 1959: 233) analysing the moral, mythical, historical, political, logical, and social approaches to the communication of the operas. Applied to the operatic genre, we may say that not the literal script, but the theatrical script of the libretto “translated” the mythological dimension and/or a particular literary work with a poetical history (Weisstein 1961). The libretto is an exploration of musicology and literary story. The surface of the libretto contains the music and words of the opera, but the dramatic content is not pure fantasy but has the intersemiotic basis of the actual performance on stage. Intersemiosis is situated from “outside” in the history of cultural life to form the drama of the opera. The libretto reshapes the opera’s rhetoric taking in the “outer” symbolism of collective folklore and archetypal mythology.

The performance of the opera can be split into three steps. First, it brings attention to the importance of the opera as a play of wonder, absorbed in expressing the delight and disappointment from the “old” mythology. Taken from an intermixture of folk epic, folk-songs, fairytales, and religious tales, parables, and proverbs dealing with human, respectively ethical, standards of virtues and sins, opera has a mythological background. Opera can be regarded as the hidden but magical crystallization of the psychological attitudes of mankind. The human qualities of cleverness, wit, wisdom, trickery, patience, sex, beauty, and ugliness are the central motifs of the creation of human art in all cultures. Both the “higher” arts of painting, sculpture, music, poetry, and dance and the “lower” arts of circus, photography, tattooing, and gardening involve the “troublesome ambiguity of the interrelations of ‘art’” as vehicles for the beauty and pleasure of the artistic expressions (Munro 1969: 67–74, 139–142). Opera includes the mythological imagery of modern drama, which expresses the deep emotions of the loves, hatreds, and conflicts of the operatic etiquette.

For example, the collection of fairytales has turned into the symbolist allegories of Humperdinck’s opera *Hansel und Gretel* (Weimar, 1893), Debussy’s *Pelléas et Mélisande* (Paris, 1902), Bartok’s *Bluebeard’s Castle* (Budapest, 1918), and other operas. The German *Nibelungenlied*, composed eight hundred years ago, inspired Wagner to write the operatic cyclus *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. The first opera by Sibelius, *Kullervo* (Helsinki, 1892), was based on a Finnish national epic, the *Kalevala*. The Masonic vision was the influence and passion of Mozart’s *The Magic Flute* (Vienna, 1791). Saint-Saëns followed the Bible story in the opera *Samson et Dalila* (Weimar, 1877). Mussorgsky’s *Borís Godunóv* (Saint Petersburg, 1874) is rooted in Russian religious music and the devotional iconography during Czarism.

Second, beyond the timelessness of the epic mythology, many composers used aspects of the particular work of literature as models or patterns for the opera. The literary novels, theater plays, biblical phrases, and other literary works were shortened

or reworked by the composer or librettist to work for the poetic vocalization of the libretto. For example, the heroic legend of Switzerland influenced the story of guilt, courage and redemption of Rossini's *Wilhelm Tell* (Paris, 1829), but Rossini also followed Schiller's theater play of the Swiss hero (1804; see Gorrée 1987). Verdi followed in his operas *Macbeth* (Paris, 1865), *Othello* (Milan, 1887), and *Falstaff* (Milan, 1893) William Shakespeare's plays of the same name. Massenet's opera *Werther* (Vienna 1892) followed in French language the sentimental melancholy of Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774). Kurt Weill's *Die Dreigroschenoper* (Berlin, 1928) put John Gray's *The Beggar's Opera* (1777) into the music-hall of the 20th century. The operatic events cherish in the emotional images previous and "old" clichés dramatizing the human world of passion, struggle, love, and death.

Third, the composer-librettist can plan the rational images of "conscious" human passions and conflicts to work as the emotional or "unconscious" signs of the opera's libretto. Donnington (1990) has argued the archetypal figures as the cultural confrontation with the opera audience. The libretto exposes the basic skeleton for the modernized "clarification" of the "old" opera by the contemporary opera director-empresario. Frequently, the symbolist vision of the opera set on stage cuts the underlying libretto loose from the historical background and turns it into a new work to be performed in a modern setting on stage. In the steady progress of intersemiosis, the libretto can escape the fossilized frame of reference of "old" operas performed before to form fresh associations in contemporaneous theater. In this fashionable trend, the past is demystified and radical changes are made in the libretto to please the cultural taste of the present-day audience.

Intersemiosis in operatic art is the transmutation of the wide spectrum of fictional possibilities in time and space, mixing traditional and individual, old and new language-and-music inside the new (or renewed) opera:



On situating the historical geneology of language and music, see the mythical and social realism of Richard Wagner's opera *Die Meistersinger von Nuremberg* (1976[1868]); discussed in Gorlée 2008b: 105–132), composed in the same year as *Peer Gynt* (1978[1867]). In the historical opera of *Meistersinger*, the 16th-century guild of *Minnesänger* in the German city of Nuremberg hold their annual song contest as part of the Midsummer's celebrations. The prize-song is the both carnivalesque and serious aria "*Morgentlich leuchtend*" ("Bathing in sunlight at dawning of day") composed by Wagner in verse with stanzas and rhyme for the libretto. In modern performances, the director (impresario) of *Meistersinger* may perhaps avoid the cultural and political ideologies of the final resounding chorus in praise of the greatness of German art. This opera has been troubled by Wagner's pseudo-fascism, which created the strength of the polemical space of publicizing or not Nazi conflicts. Indeed, as a favorite opera of Adolf Hitler, the myth of Wagner's *Meistersinger* became at a later date a real political reality in the national-socialist Party rallies in Nuremberg, where the *Meistersinger* was staged every year. In contrast, the libretto of *Peer Gynt* also had a political and ideological reality, but because it was set in Norwegian language, it did not become well-known outside Scandinavia.

There are no "ideal types" of operatic narrative; they are pure imagination as individual and collective art-objects. The elements can be reimagined and retextualized from "without", because the opera's plot of events are the romanticized rearrangements from the old legends and myths. The starting-points of operatic art can also be reworked and reconstructed from "within" the opera. The input into the libretto considers the relative, variable, and overlapping genres of the virtual and artistic sign elements into the paranarrative of the opera. The paranarrative of operatic transmutation is more than the paradoxical myth of the historical intersemioticity from "without", and even more than the intermixture with the ahistorical intertextuality "within" the opera. The "Janus-faced concept of Intertextuality" (Sebeok 1985: 657) is mixed up in the transaction with the internal kind of the "interrelation of a text (such as a novel) and with other texts external to it, such as a religious text, a scientific text, etc." (Danesi 2003: 163). The outward work of art, the opera, is full of the existential adventure of intertextual signals in significant clues. This subtext explores the internal adventure of the libretto in the new performance. The continuum of the old tradition goes without sacrificing the uniqueness of the particular opera in itself.

In the late 1960s, intertextuality is derived from Kristeva's formulation of 'transposition' to show the possibility of the signifying process to transform itself and be transformed, so that "the old system is abandoned and after a propulsive intermediary stage common to both systems, the new system is articulated as a new configuration" (Kristeva 1974: 60; Gorlée 1994: 22). The logical formula of Kristeva's transposition was adopted by literary theorists to demonstrate the complex ways in

which a given text is related to other (known and even unknown) intertextual codes. Barthes (1974: 10) used the “mirage of citations” to demonstrate the intersubjectivity of the reader. Kristeva (1969: 146) stated that “every text is constructed as a mosaic of other texts, every text is an absorption and transformation of other texts. The notion of intertextuality comes to replace that of intersubjectivity”.

Sebeok (1985: 658) used intertextuality in a general sense to describe the degree to which a work of art

[...] becomes distorted, opaque even, a darkly specular reflection of actuality – as, for instance, a myth. It becomes a lattice of signposts, regressing into, effectively, infinity, and thus capable of sustaining many alternative interpretations. Yet it may become a dialectical (versus insequential) tool for furthering the study of typological goals far more tellingly than the more indeterminate conception of “influence”, and, as such, may assume various shapes, including, notably, allegorical.

Applied to the operatic genre, the combination of the outer intersemiosis (from “without” the opera) and the inner network of intertextuality (from “within” the opera) makes the opera itself a generative object with no principle of closure. The semiotic gap in language-and-culture between the time and space of the original text (Popovič 1975: 18) occurs in the “allegorical” flow of the open art-work in modern opera.

Most of the operas were composed in “archaic” time (mostly in the 18th and 19th centuries) about “old” characters living “old” adventures in “old” cultural etiquette. Today, the opera director-impresario feels utterly free to transform some features, details, or events of the “old” features into new ones, to abandon scenes or characters, or ignore other features. The commercial ideal of the present-day opera performance readapts and rearranges the old “narrated” words into a new “narrating” production, renewed in the retextualized vision of the director (impresario). Instead of following the old libretto, the opera seems to follow the free abstractions of modern art. To persuade and amuse the new audience, the music will stay unchanged, but the text of the libretto undergoes a striking modernization from the ordinary old “translation” into a new linguistic-and-cultural transmutation. The transmutation of old into new will be discussed in the vocal translation of the libretto, which moves far away from the visual side of acting and theater in conventional decorations, light, costume, make-up, gesture, and tone of voice to the production of the renewed opera.

## Dramatic emotions

Jakobson's transmutation signified that the operatic genre is a linguïcultural system of intersecting levels, binding it to the cultural situation of human emotionality (from "within") and the mythological epic (from "without"). Gradually and progressively, the libretto has in time and space been reshaped and reworked to persuade the audience with the intersemiotic and intertextual production. While the opera in itself has a historical approach that sees it in the cultural etiquette of the "old" fiction of the 18th, 19th, and perhaps 20th centuries, we do realize today that we live in the ahistorical period, in which the amusement of opera is seen as the illustration of yesterday, and it is fashionable to modernize opera to the intersemiotic level of today.

The responsibility assumed by the director-impresario is to demonstrate the practical existence of art in the "positive" fantasy of the heroic "romance" and the "negative" one of the opera's "satire". The literary scholar Robert Scholes proposed the following genre-theory situating the three primary modes of literary fiction:

<b>satire</b>	<b>history</b>	<b>romance</b>
(Scholes 1969: 105)		

The midpoint – 'history' – expresses the 'realistic' space of the fictional narratives, including the dramatic world of the opera's libretto. The emotions of the narrative opera involves in the heroic world of "romance" and the degraded world of "satire", working together in language-and-culture as the emotional tension of musical realism in the opera's fiction. Human emotions do not work in isolation, but have a "number of fictional forms" (Scholes 1969: 105) divided into generic categories. The primary division can be further subdivided into the emotional ramification performed in the opera, as follows:

<b>satire</b>	<b>picaresque</b>	<b>comedy</b>	<b>history</b>	<b>sentiment</b>	<b>tragedy</b>	<b>romance</b>
(Scholes 1969: 105)						

The fictional modes were Scholes' reply to Wayne C. Booth's [1974(1961)] criticism of his book, *A Rhetoric of Irony*. Booth had evidenced that the literary standards of literary taste or fashion can turn into ambiguous or contradictory moods, making a shallow version of the general term of rhetoric. Booth (1974[1961]: 214) wrote that:

A great deal as been written, from Aristotle on, about the superiority of tragedy to epic, or of comedy to farce, or of dramatic narrative forms to discursive, or of Ibsenian tragedy to Millerian, or of tragedy-with-ironic-denouement to tragedy-



with-resounding-resolution. So much of such evaluation has been so crudely assertive, with so little effort to give reasons, that one can understand the recent impulse to damn the whole effort to compare and simply appreciate or interpret.

The rich scale of fictional modes generates a variety of emotional states to rhetoricize the chief emotions from text and music into actual performance. The satirical character or event of the opera is on the one hand the picaresque events, mocking the social norms of society in evil or “bad” behavior, while on the other hand, the romantic opera highlights the moral standards of “good” behavior. The libretto involves the dramatic reality (or social unreality) of the protagonists and their fictional surroundings becoming intersemioticized and intertextualized into the “neutral” reality of the operagoers, assimilating the emotional spectrum of the operatic genre. In Scholes’ (1969: 105–106) words:

Romance offers us superhuman types in an ideal world; satire presents subhuman grotesques enmeshed in chaos. Tragedy offers us heroic figures in a world which makes their heroism meaningful. In picaresque fiction, the protagonists endure a world which is chaotic beyond ordinary human tolerance, but both the picaresque world and the world of tragedy offer us characters and situations which are closer to our own than those of romance and satire. In sentimental fiction, the characters have unheroic virtues, to which we may well aspire; in comedy, human failings which we, too, may strive to correct. Comedy is the lightest and brightest of the low worlds; it looks toward romance frequently, offering a limited kind of poetic justice. And sentiment is the darkest and most ordinary of the high worlds. It looks toward the chaos of satire, and it may see virtue perish without the grace of tragic ripeness. In a sense, comedy and sentiment overlap – in that comedy suggests a world somewhat superior to its protagonists and sentiment offers us characters somewhat superior to their world.

The emotional attitude of intersemiosis and intertextuality recalled Charles Darwin’s book, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1998[1872]), which transferred the points of biology into cultural (semiotic) matters. Darwin’s revolutionary vision of emotions, gestures, and facial expressions belonged to biology, but announced human psychology, which at the end of the 18th century was an emerging science. In the artistic and conceptual theory of anthropomorphism in his work about human emotions, Darwin used the climax of his thought, *The Origin of Species* (1958[1859]) centering on the evolution of natural selection between animal and man. Darwin’s theory implied that the evolution was a kind of revolution because of the neglect, or even the rejection, of God’s creation of the world and its attributes. Darwin’s *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1998[1872]) was one of the first books with illustrations of pictures and photographs, and became a bestseller, translated

into many languages. This textbook became popular with musicologists in England and abroad. It instructed on the emotional feelings romanticized with the vocal performance of music, but also took into account the pronunciation of the linguistic text and the gestures and mimic of the aria or song.

Darwin's theory described and analyzed the common, that is natural, behavior of the oral mimic expressed by humans to picture the combination of "low spirits" of "anxiety, grief, dejection, despair" and the "high spirits" of "joy, love, tender feelings, devotion" (1998[1872]: 176–218). He also pictured the intermediate emotions of "hatred and anger", "disdain, contempt, disgust, guilt, pride, helplessness, patience, affirmation, and negation", "surprise, astonishment, fear, horror", "self-attention, shame, shyness, modesty: blushing" (1998[1872]: 219–344), and other emotions. Psychology in Darwin's time had no vocabulary and terminology of its own, so that Darwin used the common language of "high" and "low spirits" to refer to man's natural feelings. Darwin's natural enumeration had been reclassified into "good" and "bad" emotions for the artificial sense of dramatic musicology and literature for opera.

Scholes' panoramic "world" means transmutation (intersemiotic translation) producing instead of the linguistic-and-cultural world of the source language text the different "world" of the target language text. In linguistic and cultural terms, the transmutation follows the knowledge, conjectures, and sensitivity of the theatrical agents (the librettist, director, impresario, and translator) to translate the intermixture of the thematic, spatio-temporal, and conceptual fabric of the source text into the equivalent in the target text. Translation functions in neutral reality in time and space, but creates a secondary quasi-reality: the dramatic metalanguage of the collective opera. The translation theoretician Anton Popovič (1975: 13) called the intermixture of the dramatic metalanguage the translator's professional metanarrative (1975: 13), where the notion of reality is called more and more into question.

Metanarrative is not only analytical and rational as in Jakobson's "ordinary" intralingual translation, focusing on vocabulary, terminology, and grammar. Proper translation deals with the division and subdivision of languages, dialects, and speeches to the modified proposition of interlingual translation. In interarts studies, including opera, translation moves further, specializing in the poetic and emotional production of the "metapoem" (Popovič 1975: 13). The idea of the metapoem is the meta-cultural equivalent of Jakobson's intersemiotic translation. Jakobson's transmutation of operatic arts is conditioned by the high level of the opera director's and translator's linguïcultural knowledge acting on the source and target texts. Mediated through his or her linguistic competence, cultural comprehension is at the heart of the ability to look for the signals of intersemiosis and clues of intertextuality.

In cultural transmutation, "this dimension gets manifested through approximating the original time (historization) or through its withdrawing (modernization), which

depends upon the translator's communicative attitude" (Popovič 1975: 18). The "communicative attitude" of the literary translator signifies the affinities and antipathies to coded language and uncoded culture, which may not be equivalent to the social, moral, or aesthetic responses of the literary object. The linguistic and cultural richness of what we know and value can come together in unexpected, unheard-of combinations. The translator can envision that the renewed opera can be in the form of prose with meter and rhythm, against the original opera in verse. The translator can perhaps ignore some characters or make fragments and even scenes disappear, or any other changes from different times to contemporary culture. The imaginative consistency of the freely reconstructed or refashioned opera can be judged as a source of enjoyment or misapprehension, artistic workmanship or false authorship.

The examples of intersemiosis and intertextuality go through several stages in the choice of themes to transform "ordinary" traditional operas into socially- and politically-toned scenes. The creative and carnivalesque operas started with the influence and inspiration of the opera director to the singers. First, the Italian opera director Luchino Visconti introduced in *La Scala* new gestures, movements, and expression in Verdi's *La Traviata* (Milan, 1955). In *La Traviata*, the lyrical love affair of the concubine Violetta in *La Dame aux Camélias*, written by Alexandre Dumas, Visconti made legendary changes. The protagonist Violetta, sung and performed by Maria Callas, kicked off her shoes before singing "*Sempre libera*" at the end of the first act, and died on her feet with her head and coat on with her big eyes staring blankly into the full view of the audience, at the end of the last act. Visconti's revolutionary touches of irony or bitterness came under fire.

Second, the Belgian opera director Ivo van Hove turned Wagner's *Siegfried* (Ghent, 2007) into a radical or extreme show. The young hero Siegfried, who was, in Wagner's libretto, the lover of nature trying to understand by magic the mysterious language of the forest birds, had been changed into the introverted and aggressive character of a nerd playing non-stop computer games. Finally, the recent *Ring* myth (Berlin 2015) called *Der Untergang des Nibelungen* can be seen as the intersemiosis of Wagner's intertextuality, based on Medieval myth and J. R. R. Tolkien's epic novel, *The Lord of the Rings* (1954–1955). Under the directorship of Sebastian Nübling, the opera presents a dangerous breed of egotistic machos struggling around a black Mercedes limousine as the centerpiece on stage. The existential struggle is not for Wagner's Rhinegold but rather the appalling evil of the German economy after the *Wirtschaftswunder*. Such political events require of the opera director as well as of the librettist the special duty of advancing literary knowledge.

The analysis of the markedness for cultural keywords and catchwords (called literary or musical clues) is the vital sign for the historical intersemiosis of opera libretti with special stanza forms, verse lines, phrases, and words. The declamation of

vocal translation can easily transpose the historical “grammar” of language to prepare an intelligible and singable text today. Yet the cultural and dramatic readaptation of the “old” cultural signals into a contemporary readaptation (Van den Broeck 1986) can also provoke a controversy of intertextuality for singing operas. If we agree with Blake’s argument in “*Wort oder Ton?* Reading the Libretto in Contemporary Opera” (2010), we can apply his proposition to the example of *Peer Gynt*, written by playwright and librettist Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906) and set to music by the composer Edvard Grieg (1843–1907), to observe the redramatization of the new operatic vision with an alternative way of reality and unreality.

### From poetic script to theaterplay

In 1867, in the early years of his career, Ibsen’s presented the mythological, political or even ideological play *Peer Gynt* (1978[1867]) in verse. Ibsen romanced the realism of Norway as a poor country into a tale of farmer’s lives revolving around fishing and lumbering, grazing of cattle and sheep, and reindeering in the North. At the same time, Ibsen described in his theaterplays the realism of the intellectual families which ran the country: the governing bourgeoisie of the merchant, consul, lawyer, clergyman, and landowner classes. Norway was at that time governed by Sweden, considered to be a Swedish province (*landskap*) (Aasen 1918[1873]: 421). However, from the second half of the 19th century, during Ibsen’s work *Peer Gynt*, Norway was emancipating and on the cusp of becoming a free country. In 1905, Norway was officially emancipated from the political union with Sweden.

The political vision of the independence of the country was reflected in the battle of the linguistic and cultural separation of the Norwegian reformism. The official language of Norway was the Danish dialect (*bokmål*), from which the Norwegian varieties of dialect in *landsmål* developed for rural areas (Aasen 1918[1873]: 69, 421). This happened under the nationalistic aegis of linguist Ivar Aasen (1813–1986). He worked with the dialects of Western Norway and produced a grammar and dictionary of *landsmål*. In his later years, Aasen also wrote *Norsk Ordbog med dansk forklaring* (*Norwegian Dictionary with Danish Explication*) (1918[1873]) in a Dano-Norwegian beginning to lose its Danish elements. Ibsen’s legendary character Peer Gynt was officially composed in *bokmål*, with a number of words in *landsmål*.

The sociopolitical situation influenced the development of the arts in a negative way (Meyer 1970[1956]: 67). Norwegian artists (writers, poets, playwrights, painters, sculptors) lived mostly abroad in Paris, Berlin, München, Florence, Rome, and Copenhagen. Their lives spent beyond the periphery of Norway enabled them to take active part in the circles of modern European art. During the era of the independence,

many of the artists were tempted to return to their country to build up their own artistic milieu. For the art journal *Kunstbladet* (from Copenhagen), the intersemiosis of the Scandinavian countries mirrored the contemporary Danish movement, with a Nordic extension, while the intertextuality was in Scandinavian art to reproduce the replicas of the Venetian patterns, Wagnerian figures, and the Roman and Greek images with a Nordic twist. During the independence era in Norway, Norwegian culture seems to emerge to “the good times [...] of our pioneer society” (*De gode Tider [...] vi er et Nybyggersamfund*) (Werenskiold 1989: 49) to create the new reality.

*Kunstbladet* published the critical battle of two art critics on the future of Norwegian art (Werenskiold 1989; Konow 1989). It seemed that only the best-known artists such as the composer Edvard Grieg, painter Edvard Munch, playwright Henrik Ibsen, and writer Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson were able to “flourish” (*Blomstring*) due to the rise of the arts at home and abroad (Werenskiold 1989: 49). The privilege of these giants was that they travelled abroad for long working stays. The lyrical influence of the paintings, symphonies, and theaterplays romanced the dramatic reality of the homeland (and abroad) into the social scale of human emotions. Munch’s painting *The Scream* was an alarm cry in the grip of an unknown terror, the social dramas of Ibsen gave a voice to women’s emancipation, and Grieg’s picturesque music to *Peer Gynt* suggested and revealed on the one hand solitude, anguish, and anxiety, and on the other, friendship, happiness, and love.

Norwegian art was mainly primitive folk culture (Meyer 1970[1956]: 67–68). Folk art involved the historical belief in the magic properties of Norwegian mythology, with the adventures of pagan gods and goddesses of the Vikings accompanied by trolls, mastersmiths, and magicians. The tension between old Viking religion and Christianity increased and improvised Norwegian folk life in the folk culture of provincial costumes, weaving textiles, rose painting, woodwork, and folk ballads. In the late 19th century, folk life was “taken over” by intellectual interthinkers and artists, introducing theoretical literature to produce pseudo-intellectual ideas of Norwegian folk culture.

Imagine, for example, the intersemioticity and intertextuality of the Norwegian folktales, assembled and published by Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe, following those of the brothers Grimm’s *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (first published 1812–1815) on Ibsen, Grieg, and other artists (Kaplan 2003: 492–499). The folktales are steeped in the theatricality and authenticity of the vital and natural realism of rural life in the mid-19th-century’s folk narrative. Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm collected and revised the folk tradition in Napoleonic kingdom of Westphalia (Warner 2015). The “romantic” fairytales of the *Norske Folkeeventyr* by Asbjørnsen and Moe (first published in 1845; English translation *Norwegian Folk Tales* 1982[1960]) followed the “picaresque” metaphor of the brothers Grimm describing the biting satire of humor

of the church and its clergymen, and the king and its followers, decreeing Norway from the power of their masters into freedom. The desire for personal freedom was fictionalized in Norway by the success of the trickster hero Askeladden, who sits by the fire as an episodic dreamer of happiness, but who overcomes many obstacles to win the princess and half the kingdom, turning him into a national cult image (Logeman 1917: 20, fn. 1, 2, 338; see also Gorlée 2004: 162).

In the late 19th century, the cultural relevance of the musical-and-written events of operas awakened the mythological characters of Richard Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen* cycle to universal fame. Wagner's operas were grounded in the intersemiotic elements of Nordic lore and the intertextual aspects of the German *Nibelungenlied*. One can say that Ibsen's protagonist Peer Gynt followed, in a Nordic style, Wagner's King Parsifal, who through tokens of pain and suffering would turn to God's tone of inspired salvation (Donington 1990: 133–140; see also Blake 2012: 190). At the same time, Ibsen's Peer also personified the literary Nietzsche-like Everyman in the role of Superman. He was forsaken in slavery and uplifted into the majesty of royalty. Ibsen's protagonist Peer Gynt stands for the sins and virtues of all men in all ages.

To write *Peer Gynt*, Ibsen had prepared himself with a working stay in the Gudsbrandsdal valley, to familiarize himself with the rural setting of *Peer Gynt* (Logeman 1917: 11–12). *Peer Gynt* was actually written abroad, in Southern Italy, on the island of Ischia. The dramatic play had the anti-hero of Peer in various qualities as Viking, hunter, drinker, sky-runner, rapist, businessman, tourist, pilgrim, son, lover, and finally a braggart, who was often “economical” with the truth. After many adventures, old Peer returns to the Christian faith and reconciles himself with his old love, Solveig. The vaudeville of the troll world, the travel to the Arabian desert, the visit to the Egyptian sphinxes, the amorous tryst with Anitra, the shipwreck, and other episodes produce a dramatic fantasy of 22 pieces in poetry for declamation on stage. When the poetic script was performed on stage in Christiania (Oslo) in 1867, Ibsen had to realize that the panorama of the literary genres acted for the audience as the outer spectacle of literary work, but – alas! – without the inner success of the dramatic play.

In 1874, Ibsen wrote a letter to Grieg from Dresden, asking him to take on the “adaptation” of the nationalistic and romantic poem *Peer Gynt*. Ibsen would “arrange” the libretto further for the stage performance with Grieg's incidental music (Grieg 2000: 441–442). In the invitation letter, Ibsen went even further: he detailed the musical setting-up with his circumstantial ideas of how the acts and the music were to become in Grieg's arrangements. Grieg's friendly reply was more or less positive, but he was not persuaded to run into the difficulties of Ibsen's leadership in music. He wanted to solve the musical problems in his own way (Meyer 1970[1956]: 69–70). Grieg fully accepted the invitation, but said that in the stage events “there must be

devilry" (*djevelskap*) connoting the diablerie of "darkness and evil, of something that takes part over the good part of us" (Akerholt 1980: 190). Grieg wrote back to Ibsen, implicitly stating that the unpleasant, or even mischievous, behavior of "devilry" was not really in the sophisticated tradition of the intellectual language (*bokmål*), but more in the rural past of provincial speech (*landsmål*). Grieg's ideological attitude was avant-garde music: he put music to the author and journalist Åsmund Olavsson Vinje's (1818–1870) home-grown *landsmål* poems from Telemark and those of Arne Garborg's (1851–1924) early poems from Rogaland into dramatic songs.

Grieg's creative transmutation of *Peer Gynt* changed Ibsen's style, experimenting and ornamenting with the musical intermixture of Norwegian folk music with Wagnerian style. For Ibsen's "*bel canto*" libretto, Grieg created the popular novelty of musical arrangements, personal arias, and choral songs (Meyer [1956]1970: 69–71). Grieg's diablerie refreshed the intersemiosis of Ibsen's libretto with no singular meaning of the fixed perspective, but articulated the music into the double vision of the "picaresque" performance ending with a fairytale "romance". Perhaps Ibsen and Grieg had knowledge of the Spanish tradition of picaresque novels to protagonize *Peer Gynt* with the first-person adventures of the *pícaro* in Lazarillo de Tormes, Guzmán de Alfarache, el Buscón, and other picaresque novels of Spain and other countries (Chandler 1907; Valbuena Prat [1943]1966). Moving beyond the Nordic-Germanic mythology into the Spanish picaresque novels, the finale of *Peer Gynt* reached out to the choral hymnal tradition of Christendom (Gorlée 2005b).

Ibsen and Grieg read Asbjørnsen and Moe's folkloric sagas. On Hans Christian Andersen's (1805–1875) seventieth birthday, Grieg even visited the famous storyteller in Copenhagen to congratulate him. The story-telling opportunity of Andersen's fairytales was retextualized in Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, where he retold Andersen's "The Little Mermaid" (Andersen 1893: 1–36). When drinking the potions given by the sea witch, the sea siren would sacrifice her fish-tail. She demands to have legs for the love of a Prince. Andersen's fairytale about the mermaid lacks the lightness of touch, but has the dreamy kind of stress disorder of adolescents in self-mutilation and self-sacrifice in the interest of love. The romantic naivety was for Andersen only some part of love, because the picaresque or satirical sense of "humor" makes sense of the honest metafiction in Andersen's fairytales.

While Ibsen reworded and rephrased the "inward" picaresque-and-romantic elements through the intralingual translation into the libretto, Grieg pictured the structure and content of Ibsen's lyrical vaudeville in a different "outward" medium. The music readapted the epic or gothic "romance" of Ibsen's libretto into the folk belief of "picaresque" art and then hymnal folk life of "romance". Grieg's contribution went further than simple incidental music, because he readapted *Peer Gynt* into musical theater. The model of the musical arrangements was the ethnomusical work

of the Norwegian organist Ludvig Mathias Lindeman's (1812–1887) *Aldre og Nyere Feldmelodier*. Lindeman collected traditional folk songs and church hymns of Norway (published 1963[1853–1867]) (Gorrée 2002: 156). Lindeman's treasury included 636 folk melodies in simple arrangements for piano. From Lindeman, Grieg attempted to upshift the popular folk melodies to the aesthetic art song formula in the variations of folk music and church hymns to suit the musical setting of the European fashion (Meyer 1970[1956]: 275).

One can conclude that Grieg's musical work spills over from the conventional manners into a show with songs and ballet with a chorus singing Ibsen's text. *Peer Gynt* turned into an operetta, rearranging and refashioning the historical mix of epic myth and folktales into the cultural values of picaresque and romantic scenes. Operetta in Ibsen's and Grieg's time was the light and entertaining variant of Wagner's high and demystifying narrativity. The Wagnerian tradition was transformed into the popular and nostalgic desire with cliché (or archetypal) models. Opera in the second half of the 19th century had two faces (Pearsall 1973: 149–164). First, there was the “grand opera” of Italian, German, or French origin as the cultural heritage from the 18th century. The operatic performances involved spectacular shows with casts of international singers and chorus, and elaborate sets. Such lavish productions were very expensive for European opera houses. Second, when the “artificial” fashion of “grand opera” went into decline, the fashion of a totally new theater of the Wagnerian cult emerged with “no set pieces and no jettisoning of action [...] but only incomprehensible music and stage trickery” (Pearsall 1973: 153–154). The new music hall came to involve the “natural” ballet of bodily exercises “by merging with skirt-dancing, and opera by expanding [music], encompassing not only Wagner, but operetta, the musical comedy of the ‘nineties’” (Pearsall 1973: 157). The music hall brought both sentimental and comic theaterplays to the new public. The script of the operetta became commonplace in the inventive elaborations of “romance.” The operetta represented little more than the sentiment of the Christmas card, the quasi-Japanese nonsense songs, to express the inward emotions by the outward signs of wild romantic love. Grieg's incidental poetics of the musico-fictional *Peer Gynt* set to Ibsen's libretto included the fictional mixture of Scholes' (1969: 105–106, quoted above) ramifications of human emotions in the operetta for the music hall.

### Antihero and hero

The libretto of *Peer Gynt* (Grieg's Opus 23) builds up the heroic folk ballad (Kaplan 2003: 505), set in a lyrical story of the protagonist's unethical behavior and ending with a happy ending as folk hero. The fairytale antihero-hero Askeladden was readapted



and reconstructed to Ibsen's adventures of Peer. The narrative "begins with the climatic period, tell[ing] the story tersely by means of action and dialogue", while the evil events are told directly "without expressing [the] personal attitudes or feelings" (Abrams 1957[1941]: 12). The emotional attitudes are indirectly expressed in the decorative details of Peer's plot of events, explained in time with cause and effect, while Grieg adventured the stanza form in the musical series of sung or declamated episodes.

*Peer Gynt* turned from simple folk songs into the epic sketch of church hymns, creating from Peer's "unmediated experiences" of picaresque lifestyles the opposite, the *Heldenlied* (Kaplan 2003: 503–507). The emotional genre of young Peer was the ugly and deconstructive life of pseudo-reality, literally mixed in the destructive world of "satire". After the negative ideas and disruptive behavior towards others, the finale of the libretto points to the real possibilities of emotionality in the "ideal" world of religion. The fictional "romance" is played in the cultural effort of everyday unheroic men or women to become religious heroes and heroines. In the libretto of *Peer Gynt*, the linguistic progress to perfection follows the cultural virtue of Wicks' emotion of "sentiment", in the judgmental "sentence", to romanticize the heroes as children of God.

Wicks (1974) described the *pizaro's* situation in *his* fictional environment. The *pizaro's* desire for glory has a double perspective of cultural approaches. First, Wicks wrote that "Picaresque satisfies our darker yearnings for demonic disharmony, disintegration, ugliness, disorder, evil, and the gaping abyss", while the opposite "Romance satisfies our craving for divine harmony, integration, beauty, order, goodness, and ultimate fulfillment" (Wicks 1974: 242). Through the intermediate genres of the mock-heroic parody, the adventures and journeys of the protagonist play in the variety of episodes, fragments, and scenes to combine "the grotesque in characterization" with the "arabesque of construction" (Scholes 1969: 109).

Away from the light emotions of "comedy" and the darker feelings of "tragedy", the "comic" element is the picaresque violation of "the rule committed by a person of lower degree, of bestial character, toward whom we feel a sense of superiority, so that we do not identify ourselves with his downfall, which in any case does not move us because the outcome will not be bloody" (Eco 1986: 270).

The roguish chaos of the *pizaro's* events can turn into Peer's negative downfall. Yet the blind fate of being totally outcast by the family and the community points (at least in the plot of *Peer Gynt*) to the prophetic "sentiment" of truth. The comic element means "playing" with Peer's tragic "rules, even unconsciously, are accepted [and] their unmotivated violation becomes comic" (Eco 1986: 273; see also Eco 1984: 2). Eco described that in the picaresque development, when he "no longer feel[s] superior and detached toward the bestial character who acts against the proper rules", he "suffer[s] his drama, and my laugh is transformed into a smile" (Eco 1986: 276). The definition

of comic freedom leads to the idea of the ridiculization of rules and the carnivalization of life (Eco 1984: 2–8). Eco’s comic catharsis of the rules and rituals can be compared to the chivalric ideals of the Spanish madman Don Quixote fighting the windmills in *La Mancha* (Eco 1984: 8, 1986: 276; see Gorfée 1988).

The “picaresque fictional world often parodies the social norm and ideal harmony as well by including within itself anti-societies of rogues, which are more highly structured than society at large (as thus, parody of comedy)” (Wicks 1974: 245). Such anti-societies exist in the picaresque myths of the supernatural or subhuman troll-tales in Norwegian lore. Peer was kidnapped by the trolls and became the victim of the trollish trickery (Ibsen [1978]1967: 330; Logeman 1917: 38–39). “Taken in” (*bergtagen*) by the trolls was a serious business; Peer’s proper rules of reality had been transformed into the carnivalesque non-rule of quasi-reality. As trollish anti-hero, the protagonist’s rebellious conduct reacted upon the norms and ideals of the Norwegian peasant community. Through the parody of the libretto, the emotional gesture here in *Peer Gynt* is one of rebellious mockery of his own community.

Beyond the ancestral mythology, Grieg used Ibsen’s Wagner-like sung versification in the erotic scene of the three farm girls, who are transformed into troll women, sexually flirting with Peer (Poizat 1992; Abel 1996: 79–125). Wagner’s participatory intertextuality also used the intertext of Andersen’s seductive cast of the five sea-princesses to coming up from the sea to see the outer world (Andersen 1893: 4–15). In this scene, the trio of the shepherdesses intersemioticized and intertextualized in the three water-maidens of Wagner’s *Das Rheingold* (first performed Munich 1869). The three Rhine-maidens joyfully play around during the picaresque scene of the balletic swimming in the river Rhine. The chorus of Woglinde, Wellgunde, and Flosshilde vocalize to each other in the waves of the river, playing the rhythmic “poem” with their fanciful interjections: “*Weia! Waga! Woge, du Welle! Walle zur Wiege! Wagalaweia! Wallala weiala weia!*” (Act I scene 1; Wagner n.d. a: 9–11). When diving away from the grasp of the dwarf Alberich, who tries to embrace the laughing water maidens, the Rhine-maidens sing the exclamations “*Hahahahaha!*” (Wagner n.d. a: 19, 24, 29), but at the sight of the Rheingold hoard they end with “*Wallala! Lalaleia! Leialalei! Heia! Heia! Haha!*” (Wagner n.d.a: 32–33, 39–43; see Gorfée 1997: 252–255; for exclamations and interjections, see Gorfée 2015b). The “nonsensical” phonetical cries are also found in the Valkyries of Wagner’s *Die Walküre* (first performed in Munich 1870). During the famous *Walkürenritt* (the Ride of the Valkyries) in the company of the chief god Wotan and Brünnhilde, the eight Valkyries sing many times in *staccato* tone the rhymed cries: “*Hojotoho! Hojotoho! Heiaha! Heiaha!*” and “*Hahahahahahahahaha!*” (Act III scene 1; Wagner n.d.b: 191–213). The repeated exclamations of the devilish troll-women in *Peer Gynt* seem to involve the same intertextual orchestration of text and music from Wagner’s choral scene of *The Ring des Nibelungen* (Gorfée 1997: 248–252, 2008a: 120–121, 2015b: 72).

The chorus of the teenage trolls (Act II scene 3) sounds as:

*Girls:*

Trond in the Valfjell! Bård and Kåre!

Troll-pack! Do you want to sleep in our arms?

*Peer Gynt:* Who are you calling for?

*Girls:* For the trolls! For the trolls!

*Girl 1:* Trond! Treat me gently!

*Girl 2:* Bård! Treat me violently!

*Girl 3:* In the hut all the bedrooms are empty.

*Girl 1:* And gentleness is violence!

*Girl 2:* Bård! Treat me violently!

*Girl 3:* If there are no boys, one plays with trolls!

[*Peer Gynt:* Who are you calling for?

*Trond i Valfjellet! Bård og Kåre!*

*Trollpakk! Vil I sove i armene vore*

*Hvem skriger I efter?*

*Efter Troid! Efter Troid!*

*Trond! Far med Lempe!*

*Bård! Far med Vold!*

*I Saelet står alle Koverne tomme.*

*Og Lempe er Vold!*

*Bård! Far med Vold!*

*Fattes der Gutter, en leger med Troid!*

*Hvem skriger I efter?*]

The half-words and quasi-sentences (grammatically, the short exclamation of proper names and interjections) as well as the punctuation (exclamation marks) are repeated, when the girls sing loudly the *più crescendo* and *allegro vivace* passage of promising sexual magic (even ridiculing marriage and motherhood). The picaresque parody sounds as:

*Girls:*

Ha, ha, ha, ha! They cannot come!

*Girl 1:*

Mine called me both dearest and kinswoman.

Now he is married to a middle-aged widow.

*Girl 2:*

Mine met a gypsy wench up north on the mountain. *Min mødte en Taterløs nord i Lien.*

Now the two are tramping the gypsy path.

*Nu traver de To på Fantesien.*

*Girl 3:*

Mine killed our illegitimate child

*Min tog Løsungen vor afdage.*

Now his head stands grinning on a stake.

*Nu står hans Hoved og griner på en Stage.*

*Girls:*

Trond in the Valfjell! Bård and Kåre!

*Trond i Valfjellet! Bård og Kåre!*

Troll-pack! Do you want to sleep in our arms?

*Trollpakk! Vil I sove i armene vore?*

*Peer Gynt:*

[I am a three-headed troll, and a three-girls lad!

*Jeg er tree Hoders Troid og tre Jenters Gut!]*

*Girls:* Are you such a chap?

*Er du slig Kar du?*

[*Peer Gynt:* You can judge afterwards!

*I får dømme tilslut!]*

*Girl 1:* To the hut! To the hut!

*Til Saelet! Til Saelet!*

*Girl 2:* We have mead!

*Vi har Mjød!*

[*Peer Gynt:* Let it flow!

*Lad den flomme!]*

Girls 3:

This Saturday night no bedroom will be empty!

*Denne Lørdagsnatt skall ingen Kover stå tomme!*

Girl 2:

He flashes and sparks like red-hot iron!

*Han gnistrer og sprutter som glohede Jernet!*

Girl 3:

Like a trout [literally: babies' eyes] from the blackest tarn!

*Som Barneøje fra svarteste Tjernet!*

Girls:

Trond in the Valfjell! Bård and Kåre!

*Trond i Valfjellet! Bård og Kåre!*

Troll-pack! Do you want to sleep in our arms?

*Trollpakk! Vil I sove i armene vore?*

[Peer Gynt: A depressed mood and wild thoughts,

*Hugen sturen og Tanken kåd,*

In the eyes laughter, in the throat weeping!

*I Ojet Latter, i Halsen Gråd!]*

(Grieg 1988: 43–56; trans. Foster 2011: 74–75)

The musical speech of *Peer Gynt* rightly was a trollish allusion to Alberich in his “dwarf’s cry” with the innuendo of the “devil’s cry” (Poizat 1992: 139–141). Following the sexual invitation, the libido of the male protagonist (Peer Gynt) symbolized the “devilish” gestures. This erotization scene exposed how sexual desire functioned in the pre-Freud era, from the Victorian virgin sense to the picaresque perversity of the 19th century. The dramatic value of shock (Abel 1996: 111–125) breaks into the dramatic theater of *Peer Gynt*, creating for the audience the undeniable passions of sexual emotions. In the nymphomaniac scene, the three troll maidens openly invite their male recipient to spend the night with them (Act II, scene 3). Grieg’s comical “language” gives the pent-up clues to the singable and performable trio of sopranos, showing the harmonic and linear signals of love to illustrate this clownesque action. The word-music in arias and chorus adapts Ibsen’s rhymed verse in picaresque ensembles, while Peer’s fearful joys, without musical accompaniment, speak in “natural” *parlando*, the declamation of spoken language and gestures (Apel 1946: 554, 629–631).

The musical realism rebelled in the late 19th century against the “romantic art” of Italian opera to promote the “realist” dimensions of natural speech and tone-painting. The musicologist Carl Dahlhaus (1985) argued that Wagner’s leitmotivic technique was partly mythological and partly naturalistic, arising in social criticism. The musical realism of Ibsen and Grieg was supported by the literary naturalism of Emile Zola, describing the ugly, even picaresque, “truth” of the social chaos of human emotions. The realism in *Peer Gynt* highlights the musical novel with the folklike nuance. During the scene with the herd-girls, Peer’s expressive recitatives co-occur with the natural (half-singing and half-speaking) *Sprechgesang* (Poizat 1992: 78–79, 139), pronounced in *tremolo* declamation (in square brackets). The natural speech suggested Peer’s mixed feelings of both delight and despair.

In the “natural” scene of the three shepherdesses, the ejaculative half-words (pre-words) seem to echo the vocal exclamations of yodel tunes (Apel 1946: 820; Gorlée 2005b: 81). The mountainous shepherdesses jump with yodelling rhythm, melody, and tempo to sing their “nonsense” words. In the music, the yodel is accompanied in the Alps by an *alphorn*, here transposed to the picaresque Norwegian folk dance (*halling*) played by the peasant violin (*hardanger fjell*) (Grieg 1988: 23; Apel 1946: 316). The listeners hear the meaningful sounds of the fiddler together with the cowbells to signal over long slopes of mountains shouting from one mountainside to another. The repeated yodel tunes and the shrill shouting and screaming of the devilish troll-women romanticize the contradictory message of active female sexuality inviting their male lovers. In musical terms, the chorus of the three girls and the single tunes of the cowbells echo Grieg’s movement from monophonic to polyphonic singing, in which the quick passing of the wild emotional tone of the singing voice shifts from a low chest voice to a high head voice (*falsetto*; Apel 1946: 255) and then back again to “natural” tones.

The rock-‘n’-roll tempo of the picaresque herd-girls with the *presto* or *quasi presto* cries, and Peer’s male sexuality, becomes the erotic repertoire of verbal comic. Peer’s faltering *vibrato* (Abel [1956]1970: 791; Meyer [1956]1970: 66, 201) gives burning sensations, cold sweat, and fainting. The rock experience of the rebel now stands for the free fantasy of hunting anonymous, ever-available female flesh, with no strings attached. The symbol of sex as the transitory pleasures of the three gypsy singing-girls is far away from the dogmatic faith Peer grew up with. But in the distance he hears the tolling of churchbells and becomes alarmed by music and text. The vibrating sonority of the natural bells is noted by Grieg as a strange *kling-klang* effect of the low-pitched bell in D. The slow movement of the churchbells should produce the frightening effect of Peer’s male hesitation.

In the next episodes, the picaresque scenes become intensified. Peer encounters a troll-witch in a green dress, the princess of a troll king, Dövre-King. He finds her sexually attractive and makes obscene gestures to parody sexual desire (“satire”). (Act II scene 8–10). Between “comedy” and “tragedy”, Peer’s marriage would be a happy event. To win the king’s daughter and half the kingdom, Peer visits the troll-court of the Dövre-King at Dövrefjell, the stronghold of Norwegian witchcraft (Dasent 1859: 62, 69). The court is a chaotic gathering of big giants and the fairy-world of gnomes, dwarfs, elves, and pygmies (Logeman 1917: 93–98). The amusement of food and drink quickly turns into a fierce fight between the courtiers. Peer is chased by an imp and becomes buried under a mass of trolls, shouting exclamations such as “Slash him” (*Flæng ham!*) (Ibsen 1988: 118–119; see 73–82). The aggressive trollishness of mad trolls is Peer’s helter-skelter, leaving him lonely and forsaken in the darkness. He hears once again the distant church bells, ridiculed by the imps as the shrill sound of cowbells (Logeman 1917: 127–128; Aaraas 1995: 57–62).

As anti-type to the “informality” of picaresque elements, the finale of *Peer Gynt* “formalizes” the romantic elements in religious faith (Wicks 1974: 242). Peer’s irony is that the quasi-reality of his youth has become a trollish trick of obstacles and hazards, luring him into the devilish trap of nothingness. The parody of the negative symbolism of Peer as gold seeker, kidnapper, and adventurer is his dark “shadow” (Franz 1964: 168–176), the other side of the dreamer, who in the alien underworld wants a genuine life and a passion. Finally, the blackness of the storm of the sea, the shipwreck, and other horrible events of Peer’s homecoming to Norway (Act V) return him from the negative “tragedy” to the positive chains of the “sentiment” into the “romance”.

“Romance” in *Peer Gynt* does not have the literal meaning. The made-up story of heroic efforts and colorful events has the literalism of romanticism, but here the significance possesses the supernatural power and the spiritual effect for religious believers (and non-believers). Peer’s secret desire in his nothingness is to receive “a foothold on the rock, with firm ground to tread” (Ps. 39: 3). Now he is provoked by the repeated intersemiosis of hearing the divine “sentiment” of the “scripture” by the religious sound of the churchbells. In biblical terms, “He has framed a new music on my lips, a song of praise to our God, to fill all that stand by with reverence” (Ps. 39: 4). Peer pushes away from the picaresque *inferno* toward the symbolic rebirth of revelation. The initiation shock of meeting God was more than a rite of passage: it was the romantic apotheosis of Peer, which drew him up “out of a deadly pin, where the mire has settled deep” (Ps. 39: 3).

Revelation is the “communication from God to man” (Hutchison 1963: 98). Traditionally, facing God was the traditional intertextuality of “what Moses received constituting the Decalogue”, but today

[...] the contemporary revival of theology in Protestant Christianity has involved an idea of revelation which abandons once and for all the idea of propositional or verbal revelation. So accordingly to these contemporary ideologies, God communicates with man, no directly through the proposition of some sacred text, but through what has been termed the divine-human encounter. (Hutchison 1963: 99)

The images of the encounters with God are the signs of the churchbells, followed by Ibsen’s hymn in Grieg’s melody (Apel 1946: 345–347). The Pentecostal hymn gives place to romantic nobility in the new revelation of faith in the symbolism of the Trinity – the tongues of fire, speaking in strange tongues, and all the rest.

The congregation, played by the chorus singing *a capella* (Apel 1946: 5) the *Whitsun Hymn* (Act V scene 10), echoed Peer’s personal demon listening within himself to God’s voice:



*Oversættelse og Behandling for mine Medskriftne*” (Explanations to his work with the selection, organization, translation, and treatment to clarify the original material) (Landstad 1862: 1). Landstad felt as the co-author of the traditional hymns, bringing them up-to-date. His intellectual and poetic work was fully defined in Jakobson’s scheme in the direct confrontation of the “intralingual translation or *rewording*” of the psalmic texts, together with the “intralingual translation or *translation proper*” of the alien source texts (Latin, Danish, German, and other languages) into the target language, standard Norwegian (1959: 233). In Jakobson’s (1959: 233) words, the “interlingual translation of a word uses either another, more or less synonymous, word or resorts to a circumlocution” in the attempt to produce synonymy between old psalms and new ones; at the same time, Landstad made on the level of intralingual translation, the “adequate expression of alien code-units or messages” which “cannot be completely identified” with the target message. Landstad’s hymn-book can be considered as the technical “dictionary” of equivalence, solving the problems of “theological” cases with the fixed style of “literary” themes. This means that Landstad’s attitude was against the entrée of the “intersemiotic translation or *transmutation*” meant to modernize the hymn tunes, since the transmutation will create alien ideas and thoughts not filled with his strong passion for anything like the “equivalence in difference” (Jakobson 1959: 233; applied to psalms, Gorfée 2005b: 33–42).

Landstad hymnological method became the standard work for the Norwegian Protestant church. However, his missionary work became strongly criticized in the “struggle for psalms” (*Salmestriden*) with the drive to remodernize the Norwegian hymnals. The “friends of psalms” (*Salmevenner*) (Belsheim 1889[1877]: 96, 119) strongly argued for the poetical, stylistic, and linguistic revision of Landstad’s mainly translated or retranslated hymns. Reformulated into Jakobson’s literary nihilism of accepting the “reported speech” (1959: 233), intertextuality was everywhere in *Landstads Kirkesalmebog* (1869). Written in Dano-Norwegian *bokmål*, the translated hymnbook assimilated Wagner’s poetic style of *Stabreim*, employing the rhyme scheme of alliteration (rhymed consonants) and assonance (rhymed vowels) (Belsheim 1889[1877]: 111–119).

Although Landstad got hold of the wrong end of vocal translation of the Norwegian laity, proposing the sameness of the psalmic melodies with old-fashioned speech (Landstad 1862: 143–192), the countermovement was led by bishop and hymnologist Johannes Nilsson Skaar (1828–1904) (Belsheim 1889[1877]: 119). Born in Lappland in Northern Norway, Bishop Skaar of Tromsø was affectionately called “*sámi bispa*”. In his many works about Norwegian hymnology (for example, Skaar 1879–1880), Skaar defended the provincial dialects of the Norwegian *landsmål* against Landstad’s written language of Danish *bokmål*. Skaar’s transmutation suggested the oral variety of the more familiar speech to the Christian believers: usual speech without official ceremony of literacy and illiteracy.



In Landstad's formal style, Ibsen's new hymn sounded as the metaphrase of old hymns, but maintaining in the text (and also in Grieg's music) the ancient tone of the old-fashioned style. But the style was also different since, instead of "ordinary" church worship, the Pentecostal hymn in *Peer Gynt* was sung for unaccompanied singing and now performed on the dramatic stage. Set outside in the open fields, Ibsen's hymn tune was "hummed offstage, not sung aloud" (Grieg 2000: 391) by the mixed choir of churchgoers (*Kirkefolk*) walking on the forest path. The hymn of salvation was the public prayer of the congregation of Christian believers, within the new Methodist tradition of the Wesley brothers – John (1703–1791) and Charles Wesley (1707–1788). The evangelical style of the Methodist folk preaching suggested open-air preaching of fiery sermons by itinerant ministers. The free will of Christians included the spontaneity of congregational singing without organist or choir conductor. Ibsen's and Grieg's Pentecostal hymn is held in the grip of biblical harmony, but blended and mingled into the simple melody about the coming of the Holy Spirit. Yet the event on stage as a dramatic cantata (Apel 1946: 114–116) became an absolute novelty, because the Whitsun hymn moved freely from formal to informal and back again.

In the Victorian taste, religious chant functioned in the harmony of the church worship, when the gathered congregation joined their voices in the vocalization of the solemn hymn to bring about their own salvation. In Ibsen's and Grieg's Whitsun hymn, church music is now performed on stage as a theatrical performance. Vocal church singing in divine or sacred songs was part of the liturgical tendency of the Protestant "democratization", in which the reformist doctrine inspired the religious imagination of all believers to join into the singing of communal prayer (Gorlée 2005b: 26–32). Although the dramatic performance of psalms, hymns, and sacred music was accepted in oratorio and anthem, vocal entertainment in *religioso* style remained a far cry from the popular music of opera and music hall. This banishment from church worship became in the late 19th century a hot subject of controversy (Pearsall 1973: 138–164; Gorlée 2005b: 22–23). *Peer Gynt* presented the provocative play of sacred and romantic pieces to perform the avant-garde style of Ibsen's and Grieg's time with some irony and wit.

### Transmutation in vocal translation

Returning to Jakobson's intersemiotic translation, transmutation includes intralingual translation (rewording and rephrasing in one language) and actual translation (readapting and rearranging in two or more languages). Transmutation aims at a wider audience than "traditional" opera. The opera is pure fiction and can be enhanced over time and space from the single authorship of one composer-librettist into the free co-authorship of postmodern talents, proposing a counterculture in modern

choices (Jencks 1987). Fiction is no truth but resists certain established “truths” by the romanticized quasi-truth of intersemiotic and intertextual transposition including existential emotions. Postmodern co-authorship has become the radical and revisionary critique of orthodox authorship, dismantling the impersonal meaning into the irregular and revolutionary narratives of a plurality of co-authors. If we agree in opera with “*Wort oder Ton?* Reading the Libretto in Contemporary Opera” (Blake 2010) and in oratorio with “Emotional, operatic Bach” (Stauffer 2016), we can apply that the dramatic transmutation of vocal translation is more than the stability of the truth of the singable text (intralingual translation), and more than the libretto in another language (interlingual translation); those preconceived barriers are challenged into the individual transmutation (intersemiotic translation) opening to the grand narrative of the operatic world.

To be understandable, the Norwegian libretto of *Peer Gynt*, set to Grieg’s music, needed the vocal translation of the singable text (Gorrée 2005a) for performance outside Scandinavian countries. *Peer Gynt*’s vocal translation into German, composed by Christian Morgenstern and Wilhelm Henzen, was accepted by Grieg himself, even though he disagreed with finer nuances of what was for him more the ordinary translation rather than a specialized translation for concert use (Gorrée 2002: 176–178). The earlier translations (Akerholt 1980; see Schoonhoven 1988) are merely for reading the intralingual and interlingual translations of *Peer Gynt*’s literary tales, but certainly not adequate for the vocalization of the continuous flow in art song. Both an ordinary and a vocal translations are rule-governed paraphrases of the linguistic and cultural original, but vocal translation is the paradox of the free and more rule-governed metaphrases involving the linguistic-and-cultural recreation of ordinary translation into the dramatic form of artistic transductions (Gorrée 2015a).

Vocal translation has the strictest complex of cultural problems, including the special anatomy of the human voice as well as involving the time and melody of the verse lines. The vocal translation must primarily be composed to fit the language of the musical text and declamations, differing a great deal from ordinary translations. The music of the libretto is untouchable (some liberties are sometimes taken with tone length, never with tone pitch). Besides upshifting the emotional impact of the picaresque and romantic elements of language-and-culture in *Peer Gynt*, the vocal translation of the words and sentences may sometimes be creatively transformed with the intersemiosis of transposition and intercoding into the words of the new language.

The theoretical rules of vocal translation are (1) a fixed length for each phrase, with precisely the right number of syllables; (2) the observance of syllabic prominence (the accented vowels and long syllables must match correspondingly emphasized notes in the music); (3) rhyme, where required; and (4) vowels with appropriate quality for certain emphatic or greatly lengthened notes (Nida 1964: 177). The strong limits

of vocal translation and particularly the emphasis on music and the deemphasis on musical text turn vocal translation into a “simple” version of Apter’s “overall style, dramatic pacing, and characterization through diction” but Apter particularly stressed that the “physical limitations of the vocal apparatus, the metrical rigors of a rigidly pre-set prosody, and the need to match verbal sense to musical color” (Apter 1989: 27) must receive the translator’s love and attention.

Ibsen’s beautiful, but highly economical, style of writing has recently been translated into Beryl Foster’s vocal translation (2011) representing the first “literal English translation” of the libretto into the singable play *Peer Gynt*. Foster’s strategy has avoided, for reasons of modernized accuracy, Ibsen’s line-lengths and rhyme schemes of Wagnerian verse. Her contemporary translation abandoned the old-fashioned effort of the rhyming words in the last vowels to press the last vowel into a forced rhyme. However, Foster’s *Literally Grieg* (2011) presented the literally translated text for the faithful and cautious singability of the diction and declamation of the arias and songs. The vocal translations are provided with rhythmical poetry and prose, but without the Wagner-like repetition of English rhyme, thereby avoiding the poetic pronunciation characteristic of Ibsen’s libretto. Usually, the final syllable is left without rhymed ornament to make the sound correspondence necessarily the same; but Foster’s modernization means that the vocal effort is partly without any rhyme. We can suggest that Foster’s vocal translation of *Peer Gynt* has been simplified into Jakobson’s rewording and rephrased (intralingual and interlingual translations) generating a prosaic style, easier to pursue in singing today.

In theory, transmutation of opera means redramatization and resemiotizing of the singable text. The words and sentences can be reworded and rephrased, then readapted and rearranged, but the radical innovation of the modernist and postmodernist search for new subjects and new frontiers could subsequently be creatively transmuted into the reconstructed or refashioned libretto of Jakobson’s intersemiotic translation.

In practice, Ibsen’s charming, burlesque, and sophisticated libretto combines the picaresque aspects with the romantic end, as discussed before. Yet the melodramatic combination of cultural emotions needs to be accurately followed in both the dramatic images and the poetic metaphors of the translated versions. To mediate Ibsen’s archaic style of 150 years ago, in the transposition to clear English for singing on stage, some comments may be in order to attempt more opportunities to make cultural transmutations. The forced style drives more relentlessly into the bittersweet quality for the playful performance of the modern culture of *Peer Gynt*’s libretto, in three features in the local culture.

First, the elevated diction, fashionable in Ibsen’s days, makes the translation into modern vocabulary and more informal terminology something like the picaresque adventure. For example, in the scene with the herd-girls, Ibsen’s line “*Min kaldte mig*

*både for Kjærest og Frænke*”, internally rhyming with “æ” and externally rhyming with “Enke” (widow) on the following line (Grieg 1988: 41) is literally rendered as “Mine called me both dearest and kinswoman” (trans. Foster 2011: 75). The emotional line from *piano* to *forte* deserves the more dramatized version to avoid the end of the verse in the archaic word “kinswoman”, but at the same time the final words must keep the rhythm and the alliteration of the humorous verse in a modern sense today. “Mine called me dearest and lady” would be the more formal version, while more informal versions could range from: “Mine called me darling and mistress”, “Mine called me dear mistress mine”, and “Mine called me dearest bride-to-be”. Personally, I would suggest the free and rather foxy versions, such as “Mine called me a golden girl”, “Mine called me lovely Lorelei”, “Mine called me *femme fatale*”, “Mine called me *enfant terrible*”, “He calls me Number One lady”, or “He calls me the sexy stripper” (my translation, D. G.). These picaresque translations geared from the classic effect to the sentimentality of melodramatic effect, rephrasing this line with a rather picaresque parody of Ibsen’s text.

Second, by understanding the folk colloquialisms in Ibsen’s libretto, the translator engages with the folkloristic or mythological discourse on the function of the vision, its significance as the reference source to be rightly understood and translated. For example, the *piano* to *forte* verse sounding “*Som Barneøje fra svarteste Tjernet*” (Grieg 1988: 50), vocally translated by Foster as “Like a trout from the blackest tarn!” tries to explain Ibsen’s “babies’ eyes” in a footnote (trans. Foster 2011: 75). Instead of the reference to the stream of the trout fishing (Aaraas 1995: 56–57), the image of fighting the trout in the dark of the deep river in this line must be associated to the previous line “*Han gnister og sprutter some glohete Jernet*” (Grieg 1988: 50), translated for singing as “He flashes and sparks like red-hot iron” (trans. Foster 2011: 75). My vocal translation would be “Like evil eye from blackest fire” (my trans., D. G.) associating the Christian battle against the sacred divination in Norwegian witchcraft. Indeed, the witches’ sabbath practiced pagan practices of sorcery, bewitching by devilish charms, omens, and incantations anyone to whom they bear the “evil eye” of my vocal translation.

Finally, the great feature of the drama of *Peer Gynt* is the social and ethnic (almost racial) existence of the Norwegian trolls regarded as supernatural and devilish beings, living in the quasi-reality between humans and animals. Derived from old Norse mythology – Asbjørnsen and Moe’s fairytales and Wagner’s *Ring of the Nibelungen* – the kitschy mythopoeia of the trolls figures them as big giants or dwarfish spirits with large glass eyes (Dasent 1856: 72–74; Logeman 1917: 232). The trollish world recalled Darwin’s metempsychosis of human souls into malignant animals. To disguise the hidden myth of the evil life they lead, trolls work as craftsmen such as lumberjacks, poachers, or blacksmiths. Troll is a neuter noun in the Norwegian language; female trolls (as seen in *Peer Gynt*) can be fairies, farm girls, witches, or hags. The trolls hide

themselves in the wild forest and dark caves of the rocks. In their isolation, the trolls became in social memory “some hostile race, who gradually retired into the natural fastnesses of the land, and speedily became mythic” beings (Dasent 1856: 75).

The troll’s natural and mythological situation recalled the ancient populations living on the outskirts of Norway, known in the folklore of the 19th century for the evil

[...] infamy of sorcery [which] has clung to the Finns and Lapps [...] Between this outcast nomad race, which wandered from forest to forest, and from fell to fell, without a fixed place of abode, and the old natural powers and Frost Giants, the minds of the race which adores Odin and the Æsir soon engendered a monstrous man-eating crossbreed of supernatural beings, who fled from contact with the intruders as soon as the first great struggle was over, abhorred the light of day, and looked upon agriculture and tillage as a dangerous innovation which destroyed their hunting fields, and was destined finally to root them out from off the face of the earth. (Dasent 1856: 75)

The “savage” invasion of Gypsies (Chandler 1907: 481–486) was in the Scandinavia of Ibsen and Grieg associated with the nomadic and unsettled population of Saami (or Laplanders) in Northern Norway. In the fragment of *Peer Gynt*, the text song “Mine met a gypsy wench up north on the mountain” followed by “Now the two are tramping the gypsy path” mentioned the mythological trollish world as the Gypsy race as invaders. Both singing lines charged the Nordic atmosphere populated with genuine vagabond tinkers, braziers, metalworkers, and other skilled artificers; the gypsy women were known as mystical fortune-tellers. Like trolls, Gypsies are said to have the power of black magic and to be wizards.

The Gypsies, reaching Scandinavia in the 18th century and after, were given the alien denomination of ‘Tartars’ (from Tartar in central Romania) or ‘Finns’ (from *Finner*) (Clébert 1970[1967]: 57). Because of their black hair and brown eyes, the Gypsies were confused with Saami, Huns, Slavs, or Jewish people. The Gypsies were endorsed with racist humour and alien ideas to engage in some “mysterious ceremonies of a character visibly devilish, in the course of which they fell into an ecstasy [...] of a Shamanist order” (Clébert 1970[1967]: 109). Cursed and expelled, the Romany magic was in Scandinavian countries regarded as transmitting the “bad” pagan evil-eye against the “good” Christian beliefs.

Following the picaresque or informal nature of exclamations and subhuman interjections from the herd-girls, the Whitsun hymn starts with the opposite, the canonical and romantic formality of the lyrical poetry in church hymns. The vocal translation, composed by Foster, reflects the well-formed and singable version:

Blessed morning, when tongues from God's real realm	<i>Velsignede morgen, da Gudsrigets</i>
Struck the earth like flaming steel.	<i>traf Jorden som flammende Stål. / Tunger</i>
From the earth to the citadel his heirs now sing	<i>Fra Jorden mod Borgen nu Arvingen</i>
In the language of God's realm.	<i>på Gudsrigets Tungemål / sjunger</i>

(Grieg 1988: 261, trans. Foster 2011: 78)

Foster's version is the formal version imitating the psalm into an old-fashioned paraphrase – although Norwegian 'Borgen' does not derive not from Luther's 'Burg' ('rock', 'citadel') but from 'Bürge' ('security', 'bail') (Landstad 1862: 98–99; Gorlée 2005b: 68–70). However, Foster's vocal translation obscures the text of the biblical hymn for the actual singing performance. At this time, the Protestant church hymnals of the late 19th century underwent a striking change. The modern (even early postmodern) thought of the Wesley brothers had rediscovered the popularity of religious worship with questioning changes to the text. The intertextuality of Ibsen's hymn reflects the learned formality of the Pentecostal text with the biblical images, but Grieg's music feels folk music in the unlearned informality of singing in open fields, without clergy. Grieg's intertextual mood of the Holy Spirit inspires the open judgment of the free democratization of the Christian laity.

Ibsen's hymn followed the old-fashioned model of Landstad's textual refrains of Pentecostal hymns (Landstad 1869: 369–407 [First Pentecostal Day], 407–414 [Second Pentecostal Day]). Ibsen's hymn is his own verse-text, composed by himself and different from Landstad's Pentecostal psalms with numbers 428–438 and 429–446. Ibsen's hymn does not lose the words of the conventional prayer (Gorlée 2005a, 2005b), but proposes my vocal translation stylized in the "modern" sensibility of the church idiom in the late 19th century (and beyond) (Grieg 1988: 261; my vocal translation, D. G.):

O blessed morning, God's speaking tongues	<i>Velsignede morgen, da Gudsrigets Tunger</i>
kindle earth with flaming fire.	<i>traf Jorden som flammende Stål</i>
From earth to God's throne now your children sing	<i>Fra Jorden mod Borgen nu Arvingen sjunger</i>
the Spirit of heav'nly tongue.	<i>på Gudsrigets Tungemål</i>

Form, rhythm, and emotional impact of language, as well as the metaphor and image are taken from the King James Bible. The nice and civil characterizations stem from the biblical phrases of Pentecost (Acts 2: 1–4; Rom. 8: 26–39; 1 Cor. 14), but with a new meaning. They signify the prophetic change of the inward agency of the Christian believers to listen to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and approximate themselves as lays to the presence of God.

The biblical intertexts are the formal elements, romanticized on stage in hymnal sentiments. The angels bring the "flame of fire" to escape "thy voice of thunder" (Ps. 103:

3–7), while God “will have his angels be like the winds, the servants that wait on him like a flame of fire” (Heb. 1: 7). The biblical play of chiasmic reversals of the heavenly light, water, clouds, wind, storm, and lighting troubled man’s existence on earth. The psalm ends with the key theme about the commandment of love transforming the sons and daughters of Christ from God’s “servants and handmaids” (Acts 2: 18) into His “children’s children” or “friends” (John 15: 13–16) “so that they will prophesy” (Acts 2: 18; Joel 2: 29). As final comment, instead of translating “*Arvinger*” into God’s children (Rom. 8: 17), the glory of Christ concerns the task of angels to bring the Holy Spirit to the “children’s children” in God’s love inflaming the “adopted children through Jesus Christ” (Eph. 1: 5; Ps. 103: 4).

After giving these anecdotal examples of *Peer Gynt*, we can weigh the substantial amount marshalled by the danger of heresy in the entrée of Jakobson’s transmutation into the dramatization of intersemiotic translation. The transmutation did not happen in Ibsen’s lyrical refrain, but perhaps a nuance of popular informality can be found in Grieg’s music. In the refrain, the loudness of the *crescendo* tone of the flaming fire is alternated with the opposite, the personal *diminuendo* tone, sung by the mixed chorus. Both are temporary transmutations of singing referring to the picaresque crusade against the heathens of the first acts in *Peer Gynt*. It seems clear that more extreme cases of transmutation, in whole episodes, fragments, and scenes, can provoke in reactionaries strong conflicts about aesthetic opinion or taste. One realizes that there is no settled opinion of equivalent or same meaning in the gripping drama of kitschy transmutations.

When intersemiotic translation grows from “late modern” from “early modern” to “postmodern” production, non-orthodoxy had the liberty to be freely “adopted without self-consciousness and irony” (Jencks 1987: 7). The information explosion takes chances with these updated transmutations: some are considered practical advice, some are really appreciated as mastery of beauty, and some are strongly protested as kitsch. Applied to opera, the libretto projects the hybrid concatenation of internal emotions in illusions, hopes, and horrors, meant in metafiction to persuade the mind and heart of the audience. The indeterminate idea of the linguistic-and-cultural articulation of “outer” intersemiosis and “inner” intertextuality of the content have as artful result the renewed opera with a loss of identity or of distinctness of characters or of clearness of events. The reconstructed and refashioned opera suggests the novelty away from the archaic opera to the postmodern production, justified by the linguistic-and-cultural gap between the time and space of the original opera and the “same” but “different” kind of performance.

The final thoughts about the vocal translation of libretti show that the strict rules of the poetic script have been redramatized with the artistic and non-artistic concoction of the proverbial “devilry” of Ibsen’s libretto and Grieg’s musical and choral arrangements.

In the vocal translation of *Peer Gynt*, we follow the mythological background as well as the poetic license of the Wagner-cult, fashionable in the late 19th century. Today, however, the “picaresque” and “romantic” emotions are highlighted in the prominent parts on stage, but the levels of emotionality must be correctly and freely translated for the mixed chorus portraying our current cultural situation. 150 years after the debut of *Peer Gynt*, the vocal translator needs for the translator special skills of new culture, such as personal sensitivity and collective knowledge of the classic and rock-‘n-roll trends of modern ideas, opposite to old and conventional thoughts. These political and ethical views give modern and late-modern emphasis to the reconstruction of the old-fashioned Norwegian piece fitting in with the inward and external signs of emotions for our postmodern times.

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### Интерсемиотичность и интертекстуальность: плутовской роман и романтика в опере

Интерсемиотичность в смысле Романа Якобсона генерирует культурно-лингвистические элементы интерсемиозиса (извне), кристаллизуя мифологию и символику архетипов, а также генерирует и интертекстуальность (изнутри), анализируя человеческие эмоции в музыкальных и языковых аспектах. Например, «Пер Гюнт» Ибсена (1867) интертекстуализировал культурные тенденции Скандинавии. Григ переложил на музыку литературный сценарий, выразив его содержание в форме оперы. После «плутовских» приключений «Пер Гюнт» завершается «романтической» картиной. Музыка Грига перефразировала литературный сценарий в музыкальный стих и ритм, используя интертекстуально скандинавскую народную музыку и модные оперы Вагнера. Текст

Ибсена был с тех пор переведен («перевод в прямом смысле» у Якобсона) на множество других языков. Спустя 150 лет оперный текст нуждается в «интерсемиотическом переводе или трансмутации», чтобы модернизировать переведенный текст и привлечь современных зрителей.

### **Intersemiootilisus ja intertekstuaalsus: pikaresk ja romanss ooperis**

Jakobson võttis kasutusele intersemiootilisuse mõiste tähistamaks verbaalsete märkide transmutatsiooni mitteverbaalseteks märgisüsteemideks (1959). Intersemiootilisus Jakobsoni tähenduses genereerib intersemioosi keelelis-kultuurilisi elemente (väljastpoolt), kristalliseerides mütoloogiat ja arhetüüpset sümbolismi, ning intertekstuaalsust (seestpoolt), analüüsides inimemotsioone kultuuriolukorra keelelistes ja muusikalistes aspektides. Ooperinäide, Ibseni “Peer Gynt” (1867) intertekstualiseeris kultuurisuundumusi Skandinaavias. Kirjandusliku stsenaariumi helindas Grieg, kes andis sellele ooperliku väljenduse. Pärast “pikareskseid” seiklusi lõpeb “Peer Gynt” “romantilise” ilmutusega. Griegi muusika sõnastas stsenaariumi ümber ja fraseeris uuesti muusikalises värsis ja rütmis, järgides intertekstuaalsusena Põhjala rahvamuusikat ning Wagneri moekaid oopereid. Ibseni “Peer Gynt” on hiljem tõlgitud Jakobsoni “tegeliku tõlkena” teistesse keeltesse. Pärast 150 aasta möödumist vajab ooperiteksti hääleline tõlge “intersemiootilist tõlget ehk transmutatsiooni”, et tõlgitud teksti moderniseerida ning nüüdisaegset publikut ligi tõmmata.