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OPERA STRIP AS TRANSMEDIA TRANSLATION

Master Thesis

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I have written the Master Thesis myself, independently. All of the other authors' texts, main viewpoints and all data from other resources have been referred to.

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## Introduction

Comic strip is a genre that makes part of popular culture. Despite its popularity among vast audience, its place in culture is still ambiguous. This genre is surrounded by stereotypes that often prevent it from spreading as a “serious” genre – genre that is able to transmit not only entertainment topics. The comics audience is also thought to be composed only from teenagers. In the work we try to prove that such genre as comic strip is capable of conveying important texts, which constitute cultural core.

We will try to bind three notions “culture”, “translation” and “transmediality”. These concepts have been combined together before in the works of several scholars as Juri Lotman (culture and translation) and Peeter Torop (transmediality, culture, translation). The concept of translation binds two other notions together as translation is a core mechanism of transmediality world growth and an important mechanism of culture development. Culture changes by the translation of texts especially from cultural core to peripheral areas or vice versa.

Transmediality is another concept that is important for our work. It is a relatively new term that was born with the development and spread of new media. It is still ambiguous. The methodological base is not well-established. The common attempts are made to analyse transmediality through perspectives of transmedia storytelling (Henry Jenkins, Carlos Alberto Scolari) or transmedia world (Lisbeth Klastrup and Susana Tosca, Maarja Saldre and Peeter Torop).

The aim of the research is focusing on the aspects of transmediality and translation as the popularizing means of “elitist” culture. By elitist culture we mean the core culture and its texts.

The research questions are the following:

1. Characterize the comic strip as intersemiotic translation.
2. Define transmedia translation as the mechanism of information/text preservation in culture
3. Classify and characterise translation techniques
4. Carry out comparative analysis of functions of librettos and comic strips from the point of view of the addresser and the addressee.

The research builds upon the intersection of such disciplines as cultural semiotics (semiotics), linguistics, semiotics of translation and literary studies.

We intentionally turn to the material that is easily accessible on the internet since nowadays it is a powerful tool for information creation, storage, exchange and expansion. It has several positive characteristics. Firstly, it is easily accessible. We will not discuss the problem of certain places where the internet is not accessible or the access is limited for political or other reasons. We analyse texts in such wide-spread languages as English, Italian and German that are accessible to vast audience. Secondly, the content creation and storage is quite easy. In the era of new media the authority of content creation shifted: in present every user can potentially create his/her own texts and easily share them through the internet. The only obstacle may be breaking websites' or governmental laws. The range of possible creators has also changed. Previously the number of people who were able to create texts was limited. They were usually professionals and text creating took longer time. Nowadays practically every person who has an access to the computer, the internet and sometimes other additional devices is able to create some kind of new text and share it with others. The time for creation decreased. Sometimes this tendency may be viewed as leading to quality loss. However, at the same time it allows faster expansion of newly-created texts or existing narratives into different media.

The analysed material is texts that pertain to four famous Western operas: "Tosca", "La Boheme", "Aida" and "Madame Butterfly". The majority of texts is composed in English language, however, several videos include arias in Italian language and one comic strip is created in Italian and German languages.

The first chapter concentrates on opera comic strips and opera librettos. The source texts are European opera librettos. Despite the fact that originally an opera libretto may have been written in different language than English we are going to base our translation process analysis in most cases on the already made English translation. It will enable us to concentrate our attention purely on the intralingual and intersemiotic translation without taking into consideration the interlingual one. The same logic is preserved in the cases when we analyse comic strips in Italian language. In order to avoid possible complications connected with interlingual translation we take libretto in Italian language as a prototext. This classification was proposed by Roman Jakobson in

“On Linguistic Aspects of Translation” where he defined three main types of translation – intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic (transmutation). Intralingual translation can be described as interpretation or rephrasing using the sign systems of the same language; inter-lingual, that is the traditional understanding of translation, is the expression of some idea in different language using another verbal sign system; and intersemiotic translation is the process of interpretation of a sign system with the help of another sign system (Jakobson 1971: 261).

Comic strips are collected from two different sources: the website [sinfinimusic.com](http://sinfinimusic.com) and [operacomix.it](http://operacomix.it). Most of comic strips have been published on the first website<sup>1</sup> since November 2012 (Richard Wagner's Ring Cycle was the first comic strip created by the author). The comics are created by William Elliot. Another source is presented by only one example – “Aida” comic strip. It is a part of the “Operacomix.it” project that was started by German creator Manfred Schwigkofler. They are the only texts in the work that are not written in English but are composed in two languages simultaneously – Italian and German. The comic strips have a combination of verbal and visual elements. The visual part is composed of drawings, whereas inscriptions (words of the narrator) represent the verbal part. The whole spatial composition corresponds to the traditional comic strips’ structure with static picture “shots”. The space on the paper is represented angularly – it is broken to geometrical figures. The picture composition is structured vertically. Different variants of picture composition are possible on one line: for example, only one, two of the same size, three (one big and two small to the right), three horizontally situated pictures on one level.

The second chapter material is more diverse and complicated: the metatexts are different genre texts from various media: verbal summaries, videos, animations. The perspective on prototexts is also slightly altered as in this chapter it is an opera as a combination of libretto and musical part. The sources are Sinfinimusic project, L’Opera Imaginaire and the short movie created in the agency of the Government of Canada – National Film Board of Canada. L’Opera Imaginaire is a 1993 French animated musical film, made for television. It consists of 12 different segments, each one of which is based on popular operas. It is composed of various animation styles. Other sources include such websites as youtube and vimeo.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.sinfinimusic.com/uk/features/series/opera-strip>

In spite of the fact that transmedia translation is not a recent tendency, its place in cultural practice is still not well-defined. It may be viewed as a two-sided process. On the one hand, popularization of culture may be defined as simple turning “elite” culture into popular culture and bringing its value down (turning it into “non-culture” – in this case only cultural core is seen as culture), but, on the other hand, the same practice may be positively evaluated as an attempt to broaden people’s knowledge and make “classical” arts more accessible to bigger amount of people from different backgrounds and make this classical material more interesting and appealing to them. This ambiguous status still allows the researcher to interpret the same cultural process in absolutely different ways. In this paragraph we also bring non-scientific view vast audience opinion that makes it possible using such terms as “non-culture” that is simply a way to define texts that do not pertain to the cultural core, but make part of popular or mass culture. Classical art includes some texts that are recognised as pertaining to cultural core. Even if cultural texts’ collection varies depending on exact cultural traditions, at least in European/Western space there is a number of texts that are accepted as classical in most cultures.

One important aspect that should also be considered is the effect the translated text (comic strip) has on the audience. At this point it is important to distinguish between two groups of receivers with different levels of knowledge of the subject (opera). Firstly, we have audience that is already well-acquainted with the opera content and see the comic strip simply as source of entertainment since they are able to recognize the irony that the author implied. At this level there can be two kinds of reaction: positive and negative. Secondly, there are receivers that still need to get acquainted with the prototext. For them opera comic strips are attractive texts which presents the content in an easy and simplified manner.

It is possible to single out several kinds of multimedia-, transmedia- translation some of which is older, better known and studied. Probably the most translated works are classical literature that are turned into theatrical performances, movies, “lighter” shortened verbal versions or even into comics. The translation of opera librettos into comics represents an interesting case of transmedia translation. It does not seem reasonable to ascribe this kind of translation simply to the case of classical literature. First of all, librettos already often represent translations of classical literary work.

Secondly, they are closely connected with musical part that constitutes together one phenomenon that is widely-known as “opera”.

The analysis of the material is based on the theories worked out by Dirk Delabastita and Anton Popovič. We will appeal to the main concepts of Peeter Torop and A. Popovič in order to map the place of the source and target texts in cultural space. In the analysis we use the translation mechanisms described by D. Delabastita in order to map the core transformational operations that the translator used when creating comics on the basis of the verbal libretto.

The work consists of two chapters. The first chapter deals with the problems of translation of opera libretto into comic strip. A. Popovič’s idea of prototext and metatext division is used to substitute the traditional notions of source and target texts. Moreover, the scheme of communication between the author and the receiver is vital in our work – it helps to explain the way the receiver and the author may be the same person. This chapter also describes the translational techniques worked out by D. Delabastita. On the basis of these translational mechanisms the comic strips are analysed.

The second chapter describes the transmedia world of each opera, it starts with media and transmediality theoretical description. We presume that each opera creates a special transmedia world around it that is constructed of translated texts in different media and genres. The chapter also gives an insight on the idea how the person is able to enter the transmedia world. Transmediality may be a way of spreading important texts in the culture from its core to peripheral areas.

On the basis of this explanation it is logical to start the description of the phenomenon with the definition of the notion “medium” first. The term has multiple understandings and interpretations. We will introduce the definition that is offered by Werner Wolf in his article “(Inter)mediality and the Study of Literature” where he states:

medium, is a conventionally and culturally distinct means of communication, specified not only by particular technical or institutional channels (or one channel) but primarily by the use of one or more semiotic systems in the public transmission of contents that include, but are not restricted to, referential 'messages.' Generally, media make a difference as to what kind of content can be evoked, how these contents are presented, and how they are experienced. (Wolf 2011: 2)



Another concept definition is given by Randy Duncan and Matthew J. Smith in “The power of comics” where they state that “a medium is a channel for communicating, and includes familiar favourites such as radio, television, or the printed page” (Duncan, Smith 2009: 1).

Media involves the conveying or delivering of some content via a tool. In this case different media were used in order to narrate the same story; however, every medium exploits some kind of its unique potential to present the story in a more interesting way. This point is especially important in our case because we focus on the comic strip genre, short videos, cartoons, short verbal summaries.

Transmedia is a phenomenon that transcends media or the boundaries thereof, something that transfers media content, or perhaps a system that crosses the borders of media. Transmedia involves telling a story via several different media platforms.

It may be one story that is retold in different media or the story that develops across media borders so that it is advisable to follow all of them in order to grasp the whole story. Our case deals with the situation when the same story is used across multiple media platforms.

Access to various types of media content is now possible through the one integrated medium. The computer may be viewed as such type of an integrating device that brings and intermingles various media. Material content loses its physical form when converted into a digital file, but the symbols and messages contained in its physical form, be they images, sounds, etc. are recreated in a new world known as digital multimedia.

Transmediality notion is used in different fields such as semiotics, narratology and media studies. However, the research of transmediality lacks the unified methodology. The phenomenon is usually discussed from the perspective of transmedia world (Clastrup and Tosca) or transmedia storytelling (Clüver). Jenkins uses originally the notion of transmedia storytelling in the monograph “Convergence Culture: Where old and new media collide”.

## **1. Intersemiotic translation of opera librettos into comic strips**

This chapter is divided into three subchapters and it deals with two big aspects: comics genre and intersemiotic translation of opera libretto into comic strip. The first subchapter describes the history of comics genre, stereotypes connected with it and defines comic strip from multimodal and multimedial perspectives. The second subchapter describes the prototext-metatextual relations according to Anton Popovič and translational mechanisms worked out by Dirk Delabastita. Since the theory of prototext/metatext was proposed in 1976, it may require some reconsideration. We will offer our modified version of prototext/metatext relations on the basis of whole and parts correlation. The third subchapter concentrates on the actual analysis of libretto translation into comic strip. In order to make the analysed examples various we concentrate on the comic strips composed by two authors. Moreover, the language of comic strips differs too: four comic strips are written in English, one analysed example is bilingual (Italian and German).

### **1.1. Comic strip: genre history and main characteristics**

The present work analyses the comic strips as the metatexts and as texts constituting part of a transmedia world. Comic strips are not a new genre. They have their own audience as every medium. However, as mentioned above the place of comics in culture is dubious because of the stereotypes that surround it. The work discusses several problems that comic genre faces in its usage and perception. Firstly, comic strip is closely bound to the popular culture and this fact makes it dubious to use comics genre in the presentation of core cultural texts. Very often the language of comics is found unsuitable to present difficult and complicated issues. Secondly, as an introduction to “Comics as a Nexus of Cultures” state “comics are not as distinct from the subject matter of the existing disciplines as these are from each other” (Berninger, Ecke, Haberkorn 2010: 1). It means that the scholars are not very eager to recognise comics as a distinct genre but describe it through the more traditional genres. This

allows illustrating the fact that comics are not compared to novels or movies but seeming to occupy the lower position. Since they lie on the intersection of verbal and visual modes scholars and receivers are tempted to describe this particular genre through its similarity to other media.

In the article “Culture and Stigma: Popular Culture and the Case of Comic Books” Paul Lopes shows his concern around biases that surround the genre. He talks about its low status and stigmatisation claiming that “Low status is usually a precondition for the stigmatization of a cultural form. But low status and stigma are not equivalent, even if they might overlap in terms of cultural forms and practitioners” (Lopes 2006: 388). One important idea that became ingrained is “stigmatization of comic books as subliterate and a children’s medium” (Lopes 2006: 389). Stigma is a certain relations between an attribute and a stereotype. The effect of stigma is discreditation of the subject (Lopes 2006: 389-390).

However comics have proved to be a serious genre. One of the most demonstrative illustrations is Art Spiegelman’s graphic novel “Maus” that won a special Pulitzer Prize for literature in 1992. The important is the date of Pulitzer Prize that was given to the comic book already in the end of the twentieth century. This fact proves that comics may include serious moral topics and this genre is not just for entertainment. The relatively big interest in comics by scholars has not changed the situation radically. There are still stereotypes and myths surrounding this genre. At the same time in spite of several books that were written on the topic of comics as a genre, the situation has not changed radically for majority of people who are immersed into that particular cultural space. Several books, which we refer to in the work, give the detailed overview of the genre: its history, main features, the comic books’ creation and their consumption. Randy Duncan and Matthew J. Smith’s book “The power of comics” and the collection of articles in the book “Comics as a nexus of cultures” (editors Mark Berninger, Jochen Ecke and Gideon Haberkorn), “Multimodality, translation and comics” by Michał Borodo, “Culture and Stigma: Popular Culture and the Case of Comic Books” by Paul Lopes are some of the basic works that we base the description of the genre in this chapter.

If we consider the history of the genre, we may notice the first myth about genre appearance. Even if there is still no definite answer to this question, there are some

obvious links to the previous texts that may help to trace the genre development to its modern form. R. Duncan and M. J. Smith give a brief introduction into comics history in the book “The power of comics”. They presume that William Hogarth is a direct forerunner of the comic genre. His seven sets of sequential narrative may be considered as a prototype of modern comics (Duncan, Smith 2009: 20). This happened in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and it shows that comics have roots in culture and cannot be named really new genre. As a matter of fact the genre evolved and developed over the time and it acquired its modern form around the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The sequential art history goes back even earlier, around 10.000 – 25.000 years ago. At that period it was mostly sequences of pictures on the cave walls. They already narrated a story, however, there were obviously no verbal part and there were obvious certain differences from the modern comics sequences (Duncan, Smith 2009: 21).

Next genre that seems close to comics genre is a broadsheet, which appeared after the spread of printing. These texts have already combined the visual and verbal aspects. A broadsheet looked like

single large piece of paper with a series of images on it, usually accompanied by text. Although the text was placed above or below the image rather than incorporated into it, the broadsheet manifested the essential form and function of the modern comic strip. (Duncan, Smith 2009: 22)

The popularity of broadsheets happened between 1450 – 1800 in several European countries (France, England, Germany, and Holland).

Scholars also introduce the classification of comics development as a genre. They divided the whole history into eight eras that in total cover the time span from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century till the modern times: era of invention, era of proliferation, era of diversification, era of retrenchment, era of connection, era of independence, era of ambition, era of reiteration (Duncan, Smith 2009: 23-24). The beginning is the exact year – 1842. The father of comic books Rodolphe Töpffer created what he called picture-stories (*la littérature en estampes*). One of his texts arrived to America, was translated and introduced to the audience under the name of “The Adventures of Obadiah Oldbuck”. The important innovation that is introduced by R. Töpffer into the genre is the fact that he was the first author who starts narrating entertaining fictional stories through this medium.

Modern comics have two roots: newspaper comic strips and pulp magazines. The interesting detail is that superheroes were not the first characters of comics instead they were simple young people. The title “comic book” appeared first when the collections of comic strips began to be published. Their form reminded already more comic books as we know them now. “In March 1897, the publication of the Yellow Kid Magazine marked “the first published collection of an American comic strip” (Duncan, Smith 2009: 27).

In the book “The power of comics” R. Duncan and M.J. Smith define comic strip as a sequential art stating that unlike other kinds of art this type deals with some kind of narration (storytelling). “Comics is a useful general term for designating the phenomenon of juxtaposing images in a sequence” (Duncan, Smith 2009: 3). It includes various notions such as comic books, comic strips and even cave paintings make part of it.

The most wide-spread media that compose the general notion of comics are comic books and comic strips. We are going to analyse comic strips. Although the formal differences between these two kinds start to disappear because of the different way of production and distribution, the formal structural composition. R. Duncan and M.J. Smith enumerate the following features as characteristic for comic strip: very few panels, the panel that is the only unit of encapsulation, layout is normally rigid, composition is usually simple. The notion of the page that is traditionally connected with the comic strip-comic book difference cannot be applied in our case since the analysed comic strips are published online. The only comics that has distinct pages is “Aida” created by Operacomix.it.

In the article “Multimodality, translation and comics” Michał Borodo claims:

In a comic book, the visual mode plays the primary role and the verbal mode has a subordinate and complementary role to play, but these two modes constantly interact, at times overlapping in what they communicate and sometimes diverting from each other in the meanings they express. (Borodo 2013: 2)

The same article characterises comic strip as a multimodal genre. According to Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen multimodality is “the use of several semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event” (Kress, Leuven 2001: 20). Mode is defined as “a socially shaped and culturally given resource for making meaning” (Kress

2009: 54). Defining comic strips as multimedia genre is also wide-spread. Multimediality is described as usage of different arts in one medium. The relations between visual and verbal modes in comics are uneven. M. Borodo references the ideas expressed by Radan Martinec and Andrew Salway pertaining to the possible relations of these modes. They are elaboration, extension, and enhancement. In the case of elaboration visual and verbal modes introduce different knowledge. The second kind supposes that “text goes beyond what the image represents, adding new information with regard to the visual”. The last kind is called enhancement and it describes situation when text gives more information than visual mode (Borodo 2013: 2). This classification is helpful in the process of further analysis. “As an art form, a comic book is a volume in which all aspects of the narrative are represented by pictorial and linguistic images encapsulated in a sequence of juxtaposed panels and pages” (Duncan, Smith 2009: 4). The comics are read from left to right or from right to left depending on the reading rules of the country they were printed in.

Claus Clüver brings his classification of genres according to the type of mediality they belong to. He characterizes genres according to general features such as distinctiveness, coherence/self-sufficiency, polytextuality, simultaneous production, simultaneous perception (Clüver 2007: 15).

He concentrates on word/picture relation in several genres. He recognizes comics as a mixed media genre claiming that comics represent combination of media based on co-existence. He claims that first, fourth and fifth features are relevant for mixed media texts. According to C. Clüver comic strip is a mere combination of image and text. This logic of thought should lead to supposition that separate perception of visual and verbal parts should still make sense to the receiver. However, this is not always true. If comic strip text presents only third person narration, the possibility of independent perception is very high. The text that will consist only from the dialogues is also perceivable to some extent. But the visual part taken separately may be less clear to the reader. This makes C. Clüver’s claim about comic strip as pertaining to mixed media doubtful and may require reconsideration. The relation of verbal visual parts may be better described as fusion in the way that sometimes the separation of two media brings to the loss of entire meaning, where partial understanding may still be accomplished. However, there is another opinion on the matter – comics as a

multimedial genre. The book “Comics as a nexus of cultures” states in passing that comics are multimedial by their nature, however, without giving any elaborated explanation.

Comic strip is perceived as a single text by the receiver. The process of production may be more complicated as sometimes visual and verbal parts are created by different people. So simultaneity of two modes production is rather relative. At the same time the final product is printed at the same time as one text, so there are no cases when the receiver first gets only visual or verbal part as a separate text.

The aim of translating classical literature into different genre of comics is well-described in the article “Novel-based comics” by Paul Ferstl:

comic adaptations may contribute to the reception of a known work of literature by illustrating certain parts or even a complete series of novels in order to introduce new readers to the original novel or add further interest for those already familiar with the book. (Ferstl 2010: 64)

According to Juri Lotman and Boris Uspensky texts strive towards two absolutely opposite tendencies: integration and disintegration. The source text of opera is broken up to pieces, each of which may become an independent text on its own and together they contribute to construct a bigger realm (text) (Lotman, Uspensky 1978: 216). Both tendencies may be illustrated in our work: limitless intersemiotic translation and birth of transmedia world.

Translation is another important notion in the work. We may face some confusion of terms trying to combine the apparatus of translation theory and the concepts driven from cultural semiotics. On the one hand, translation studies usually pertain to the traditional dichotomy of source text and target text. On the other hand, several scholars in semiotics were rather operating with the notions of prototext and metatext. In no way we claim them to be interchangeable in every context. However, in the present analysis we are dealing with the case of translation when the opera libretto as a source text is translated into some other genre (comics, video, cartoon, etc). This makes it possible to apply the notions stating the libretto to be a source text and translations to be target texts. However, the same logics work for the prototext/metatext. Opera libretto or more generalized opera is also a prototext for all other evolved texts that constitute the metalevel.

In his several works such as “Universe of the mind”, “Semiosphere”, “Culture and explosion” J. Lotman describes the structure of culture (semiosphere) and its internal organization. The main dichotomy is the division into core and periphery. Core is composed of the most important texts in culture. The core structure is usually more rigid and less prone to changes.

Asymmetry is apparent in the relationship between the centre of the semiosphere and its periphery. At the centre of the semiosphere are formed the most developed and structurally organized languages, and in first place the natural language of that culture. (Lotman 1990: 127)

However, culture is constantly changing and the translation is a cultural mechanism that is responsible for the change and spreading of texts in culture. “We have already discussed the process whereby the periphery of culture moves into the centre, and the centre is pushed out to the periphery” (Lotman 1990: 141).

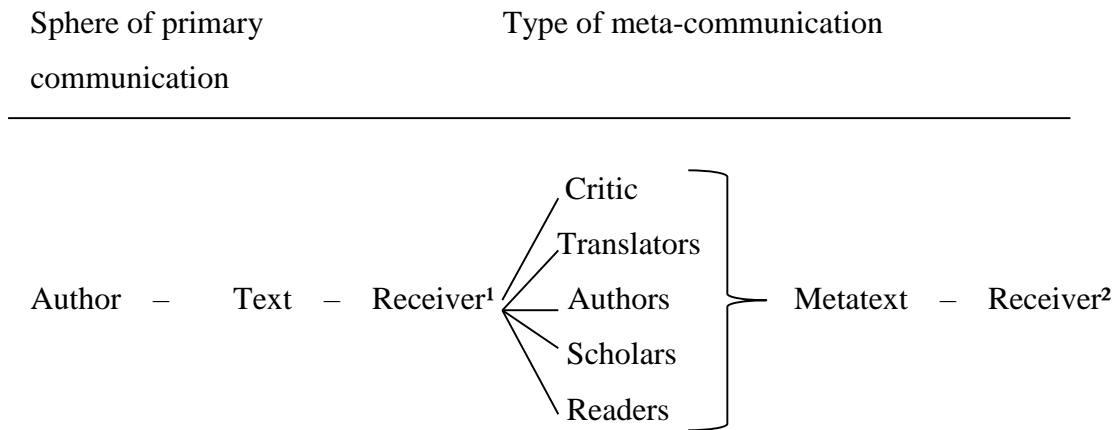
Tartu-Moscow semiotic scholars and J. Lotman in particularity had the description of such important notions as “culture”, “text”, “center-periphery” as one of their main goals. These terms are highly important and valuable for our research. J. Lotman speaks a lot about the notion of culture and its mechanisms. In the article “Culture and Information” he describes culture as following:

It is an extremely complex mechanism which preserves information while constantly working out the most efficient means to do this; it receives new information, encodes and decodes communications and translates them from one sign system into another. Culture is a versatile and highly organized mechanism of cognition” (Lotman 1976: 215).

We bring two schemes in the work: the model of literary communication by A. Popovič and the cultural structure by J. Lotman. A. Popovič works out the system of literary communication (see Scheme 1). Each text has its author and each text has its own audience. These receivers may construct their secondary texts on the basis of the primary texts. The secondary texts get their own audience that may be different or the same as a primary text (Popovič 1976: 226). Then the receiver of the first level may become the authors of the metatexts. The authors of the opera metatexts are people who have been the receivers of the prototext previously. However, the receivers of the second level are not obligatory acquainted with the prototext. Such metatexts as

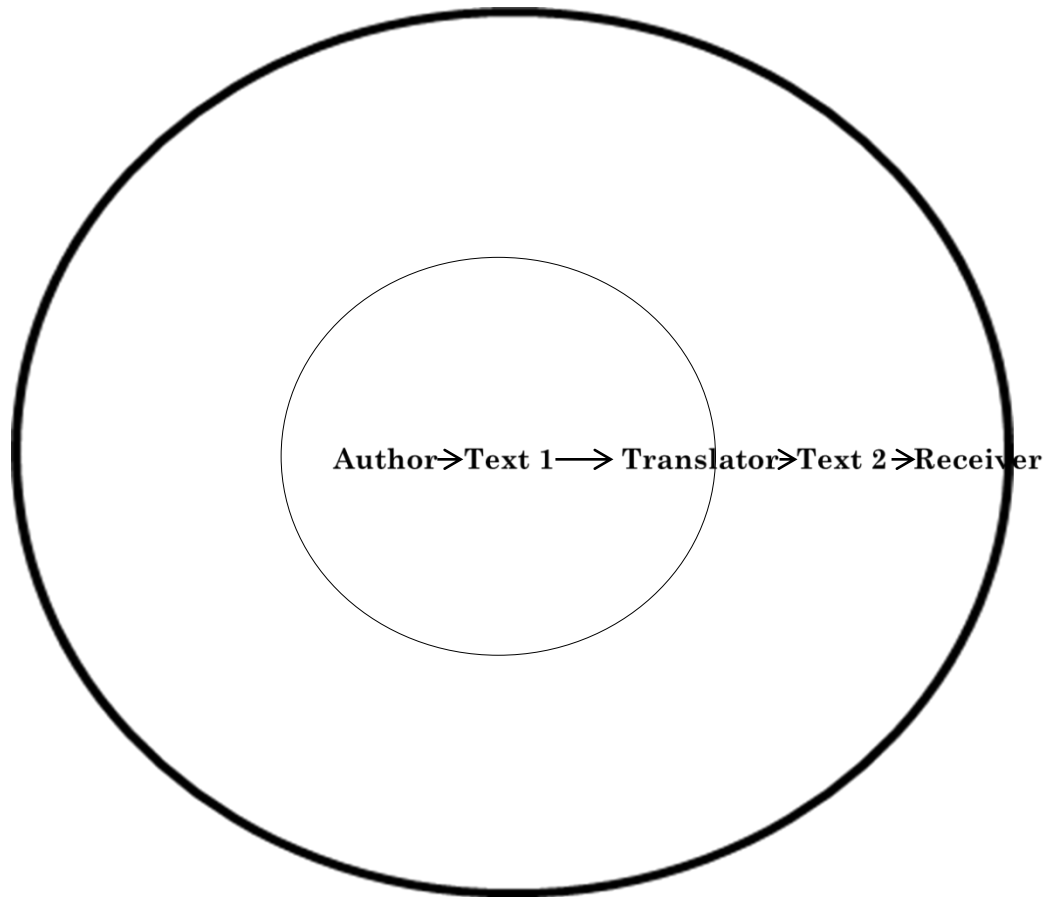


summaries or comic strips may be aimed at both groups: receivers that are already acquainted with the prototext or the receivers that do not have knowledge about the prototext content.



*Scheme 1. The model of literary communication by A. Popovič*

Their combination leads to the scheme that is introduced below (see Scheme 2). It illustrates the way the text that occupies the place in cultural core may be translated into the genre occupying cultural periphery. This expands the potential receivers' scale. The translator is usually situated on the border. This scheme explains the situation when the opera libretto (cultural core) moves into the peripheral genres as comics. There is obviously a possibility that the translated text will stay in the cultural core if it is translated into the opera performance that occupies also the place in cultural core.



*Scheme 2. Translation from cultural core to periphery.*

Comics pertain to the popular culture whereas opera libretto constitutes the core. In the cultural space we notice the shift of core texts of opera into peripheral genres such as comics. However, this translation may function as a way to bring more receivers to get acquainted with the cultural core texts.

## **1.2. Translational mechanisms**

This section describes comic strips that were based on the opera texts. The comics that are used in the analysis are created by different authors. They are available only on the internet or both can be bought in the form of the printed version and are free on the internet websites and social networks. There exist two approaches towards translating the source text (prototext): the first type strives to preserve the content and style to the source and the second kind gives more freedom to the translator's individual interpretation and style.

Western opera is considered to belong to a dramatic art form and that explains the structural composition of a libretto as a genre. It has an act/scene structure. The main structural elements are dialogues of the main characters in the form of verses, playwright remarks and stage directions. Being a drama, a libretto begins traditionally with the enumeration of all characters. The only difference from a conventional dramatic text is that it does not contain descriptions of character appearances; instead it provides types of singer voices that are to perform the roles.

The theories that are used in order to describe prototext/metatext relations are suggested by A. Popovič and P. Torop. In order to describe the features of the comics as a special kind of metatext A. Popovič's article "Aspects of Metatext" is seen as a relevant source. He defines two text types: prototext and metatext. "Prototext is a text which serves as an object of inter-textual continuity" (Popovič 1976: 226). The metatext can be defined as a model of a prototext. We will describe the libretto as a prototext and the comics as a metatext and characterize the certain transformational ways through which libretto was turned into comics.

First of all, A. Popovič distinguishes two types of a prototext to a metatext connection by scope: using the whole text or just its certain parts. In this case it seems

that we are dealing with the translation of the whole text since the metatext preserves the core plot line even if in the compressed manner. However, Popovič includes all kinds of mediated ‘readings’ and summaries into the case of partial transference of a prototext into a metatext. The way of texts’ linking is affirmative because we cannot trace any obvious negative attitude of translators towards the prototext that is expressed in the metatext. Other linguistic elements do not bring any connotative colouring. The last parameter that Popovič separates is apparent or concealed way of linking prototext to metatext. Metatext authors openly state the titles of operas and also refer to composers (Popovič 1976: 232).

However, in the light of developments that occur in the media, the scheme of A. Popovič may be altered. He makes one of classifications on the basis of the prototext amount that is reflected in the metatext. He describes only two options: translation of the full text and translation of elements or levels of the text. Our classification consists of three types. The first type is the translation of the full prototext into metatext. This does not mean that the word-for-word translation but the core plot elements are preserved (summaries). The second kind pertains to the translation of prototext part. The third type illustrates the situation where the prototext parts are rearranged.

Peeter Torop in his book “Total Translation” describes the main kinds of the translation process: textual, metatextual, in- and intertextual and extratextual. In the case of opera comics we are dealing with a text that has entered the target culture some time ago – this fact is proven by the already existing English translations. In temporal dimension we observe the primary appearance of the interlingual translations (text in the Italian is translated into the text in English with the maximal possible preservation of the target text structure and form) and secondary intersemiotic translation that is based already on the English text.

If we consider translation types’ classification worked out by P. Torop we notice the difference from the system suggested by A. Popovič. In this case metatextual translation occurs only as one type in the group of four. Traditionally understood literary translation is not defined as metatextual but constitutes its own group of textual translation. Applying this classification we occur in some kind of ambiguous situation. P. Torop seems to base his theory on the previous ideas expressed by A. Popovič however he changes the previous theory. P. Torop brings examples of what

transformations prototext can undergo in the metatext. One of it is totally suitable to our case that is reducing – compression of the prototext (Torop 1995: 112). The comics text is shortened: in comparison to the libretto text, most details of a prototext are eliminated and the core plot line is only retold.

The structural organization of the text is also altered. The prototext is composed by the rules of a drama as it was mentioned previously, whereas the structure of the metatext is subordinated to the general rules of comics composition. Every comics picture is accompanied by one or several sentences in a bubble that narrate the story. The description of characters as it is given in the libretto is eliminated completely in the comics. It is included directly into narration alongside with their connection to each other. One of the shared features between libretto and comics is the way they state the place and time of the action beforehand. The inscription in italics in libretto turns into the first bubble of a comics story. However, since we are dealing with compressed retold version of the story in the comics there is also reduction of place and time stating. In the comics text the place and the time of action is announced in the beginning of the narration in one phrase or short sentence. However, during the narration the reader may meet some other time or place markers if the story depicts some other place or the time period is omitted. The actions of the characters that are usually described in brackets in libretto are translated into visual form in the comics.

On the other hand, it seems that in a way this case of intersemiotic translation can partially serve as an illustration of extratextual translation. As P. Torop writes about it as a text transmission in natural language with the help of various verbal and non-verbal codes (Torop 1995: 14). In our case of translation the pure verbal text is translated into a new text which already attends to visual means that can be seen as a non-verbal code. Adding pictures may be possibly interpreted as an expansion of the existing text. We will provide more elaborated analysis pertaining to the verbal and visual parts in the following subchapter.

The main mechanisms and levels of translation are well-described in the book “There is a double tongue” by Dirk Delabastita. First of all, the scholar defines the process of translation “as a triple recoding process (on the linguistic, cultural, and

<i>Code</i>	<b>S.ling.code</b> → <b>T.ling.code</b>	<b>S.cult.code</b> → <b>T.cult.code</b>	<b>S.text.code</b> → <b>T.cult.code</b>
<i>Operation</i>			
<b>Substitution</b>	higher or lower degree of (approximate) linguistic equivalence	Naturalization modernization topicalization nationalization	systemic, acceptable text (potentially conservative) adaptation
<b>Repetition</b>	total: non-translation, copy partial: calque, literal translation, word-for-word translation	Exotization historization (through the mere intervention of time-place distance)	non-systemic, non-acceptable text (potentially innovative)
<b>Deletion</b>	reductive translation abridged version undertranslation expressive reduction	Universalization dehistorization (through the removal of foreign cultural signs)	T.T. is a less typical specimen of a (target) text-type neutralization of stylistic or generic peculiarities
<b>Addition</b>	paraphrastic translation more explicit text overtranslation expressive amplification	Exoticization historization (through the positive addition of foreign cultural signs)	T.T. is a more typical specimen of a (target) text-type introduction of stylistic or generic markers
<b>Permutation</b>	(metatextual) compensation	(metatextual) Compensation	(metatextual) Compensation

*Table 1. The translational mechanisms by D. Delabastita.*

textual-rhetorical plane), which requires the making of choices both because the source and target codes are asymmetric, and because texts tend to be complexly organized” (Delabastita 1993: 1). The main transformational categories are substitution, repetition, deletion, addition and permutation (see Table 1). Substitution is an operation when the source text element is replaced by an element from the target text that has bigger or lesser degree of equality. Repetition can be characterized as a situation when the element of the source text is simply repeated in the target text. Deletion is an operation when one of the source text elements is not transferred into the target text. In addition the signs are added in the target text that has no parallel form in the source text. Finally, permutation is seen as a category where the source text element is reflected in the target text but these elements have different relational position in the texts. On the basis of these levels and the transformational categories he elaborates a model in which he combines these parameters in order to describe translation types.

Writing about translators D. Delabastita expresses the following idea: “Thus, they are able to replace a message in the source code by a message in the target code, in which transfer process they are expected to carry over a certain minimum core of 'invariant' meaning” (Delabastita 1993: 2). The point that is of a particular interest to us in relation to the present analysis is “a certain minimum core of 'invariant' meaning”. The source text (libretto) and the target text (comics) do not have a lot of similarities on the structural and formal level. However, the translator preserved some core elements so that the reader is still able to recognize the source. In the case of the present analysis it seems that the minimum core of “invariant” meaning is the plot of the libretto – the preservation of the plot line development (Delabastita 1993: 33-39).

### **1.3. The analysis of translation**

In further analysis we will use the translation types’ model worked out by D. Delabastita in order to map the core transformational operations that the translator used when creating comics on the basis of the verbal libretto. We concentrate on translation of four operas: “Aida”, “La Boheme”, “Tosca” and “Madame Butterfly”.

First example is an intersemiotic translation of opera libretto “Aida” into comic strip. The source text is an opera “Aida” composed by Giuseppe Verdi in the second half of the 19th century. The libretto was written by Antonio Ghislanzoni who followed a scenario of the French Egyptologist Auguste Mariette or an Italian opera composer and librettist Temistocle Solera<sup>2</sup>.

The target text is the opera strip “Aida” that was published on the web-site of [sinfinimusic.com](http://sinfinimusic.com) on the 5th October 2015<sup>3</sup>. The comics are created by William Elliot. These comics have a combination of verbal and visual elements. The visual part is composed of drawings, whereas inscriptions (words of the narrator) represent the verbal part. The whole spatial composition corresponds to the traditional comics’ book structure with static picture “shots”. The space on the paper is represented angularly – it is broken to geometrical figures. The picture composition is structured vertically. Different variants of picture composition are possible on one line: for example, only one, two of the same size, three (one big and two small to the right), three horizontally situated pictures on one level.

The mechanisms that are suggested by D. Delabastita work on three levels: linguistic code, cultural code and textual code. On the level of a linguistic code translation we obviously see deletion. This case is possible to call “abridged translation” in the terms of the scholar himself (Delabastita 1993: 39). As this is an intralingual translation translator used paraphrasing. Being a summary it requires deletion of certain text parts or compression and summarizing. The linguistic code that is used in the target text differs from the source text. It does not only paraphrase and summarize the text but also modernizes it by using linguistic elements that are well-familiar to the reader of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Linguistic aspect is very important in this case of translation. First of all, if we briefly describe the linguistic characteristics of the source text – the libretto itself, we should state that we are dealing with an already translated text. A. Ghislanzoni wrote the text of libretto in the 19<sup>th</sup> century so obviously for modern reader the language seems outdated and difficult to perceive. The libretto translation into English that we base our analysis on preserves the “historicity” – stylization to the language of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://opera.stanford.edu/Verdi/Aida/libretto\\_e.html](http://opera.stanford.edu/Verdi/Aida/libretto_e.html)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.sinfinimusic.com/uk/features/series/opera-strip/verdi-aida-synopsis-october-2015>



The most obvious examples can be “thou”, “thee”, “o’er”. In general, if we consider the sentence structure the text is composed mostly of complex sentences.

At the same time the comic genre demands modern spoken language that will be easily perceived and will not require special efforts during the process of reading from a person. So it is usually written in prose, the text includes colloquial phrases and expressions. The following examples can illustrate the linguistic means that are used in comics text: “break down”, “bumper”, “pump Radames for information”, “sell out”. The text is composed from simple sentences that may even be broken to parts and included in different bubbles, for example, “as he describes their escape route, he lets slip the location of the Egyptian troops / at which Amonasro leaps out and reveals his identity”. The appearance of questions is rare as comics represent retelling and in two cases when the translator uses questions they are incomplete: “His wish?” and “His sentence?”

The second layer of codes is the translation of cultural code. Two main mechanisms of translation are dominant: repetition and substitution. First of all, as it was described earlier linguistic code of the target text underwent big changes during the process of translation and the translator chose to modernize the linguistic code of original language of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Visual images that are originally missing from libretto (since visual means are available to the viewer traditionally only in the opera performance) are added to the target text of comics. So along with the modernization of linguistic code the pictorial part tries to preserve the correct visual representation of the characters and the epoch. Without special further investigations the reader of the target text may recognize typical costumes of that historical epoch due to certain common knowledge or acquaintance with pharaoh and ancient Egyptian representation of that time. Thus, the reader may notice time period discrepancy between the verbal and visual elements. However, even in the quite accurate visual representation there is one small exception. We do not assert that it is a conscious intention of the translator. The visual image of the main character Radames differs in small details from the representation of other characters. He is still depicted in the clothes of that epoch; however, the face features resemble more the main characters of the modern romantic Western movies. The haircut is modern and

fashionable. This character represents the merge of modern handsome main character and the traditions of Egyptian style.

The third level deals with the translation of the textual code. In this layer we focus on the generic characteristics and the way they are transferred into the target text. This translation represents especially interesting case since the genre of the source text and the genre of the target text are different. So we may describe it as simultaneous deletion and addition of text code, since we observe deletion of drama genre characteristics and simultaneous addition of visual parts and genre characteristics of comics genre. The deleted parts of the source text are versified form of libretto, enumeration of characters, playwright remarks and stage directions. The target text (comics) is not arranged either as a conversation (chain of dialogues and polylogues). On the other hand, we see the reorganization of a target text in accordance with comics structure. Thus, there is a translation from one genre into another and reorganization of a target text in accordance with new generic rules. On the higher level it may be probably described as a substitution – genre substitution.

Another comic strip “Aida” is also published on the Internet. It is also possible to be bought in the printed version. Operacomix.it is a project launched by Manfred Schwigkofler. The comics are drawn by Michele Cavosi. They published the comic strips in a printed version. On their website there is a short description of the project where they present the description of the main principles of the opera comics. Firstly, the first feature is the fact that the verbal part is not translated but is intentionally left in the original language of the libretto. The creators claim that the source text for translation is libretto and not opera performance. Secondly, the language is intentionally preserved without modifications in its literary archaic form with archaic structures.

Unlike the previous comic strip, these comics were translated from “Aida” opera libretto into Italian language. So the prototext is an original untranslated opera libretto. The metatext is a comic strip that is available both in the printed version and online. Comics translate the whole plot of libretto, however, according to A. Popovič every summary is a translation of elements or levels of a prototext. However, according to the classification that was developed in the work, we may state that comic strip “Aida” is a translation of the whole prototext into metatext only in a compressed manner. The translator of comics states explicitly (apparent translation) that it is a translation by

putting the title and the composer on the front page of the comics strip “Opera in quattro atti di Giuseppe Verdi “Aida” (An opera in four acts “Aida” by Giuseppe Verdi)”. The attitude of the translator is rather affirmative – he tries to preserve language and cultural peculiarities of the prototext and avoided any modernization.

The translation is analyzed on three levels: linguistic, cultural and textual codes. On the level of linguistic code, the situation is complicated. On the one hand, there was no interlingual translation – the prototext and the metatext are both written in Italian. On the other hand, the metatext is written in two languages parallel: Italian and German – the secondary interlingual translation happens only in the comics. The important mechanisms that function on the linguistic code level are deletion and addition. One of translational mechanisms is deletion (abridged version). At the same time verbal part in German was added. The sentences are taken straight from the opera libretto: “corre voce che l'Etiopie ardisca sfidarci ancora” (Ramfis – the first sentence in the dialogue), “La sacra Iside consultasti?” (Radames – first act), “Fra breve un messo recherà il ver” (Ramfis – first act), “Ohimè! di guerra fremere l'atroce grido io sento...” (Aida in conversation with Amneris – first act), “Trema, o rea schiava” (Amneris – first act), “guai se (l'arcano affetto a noi) leggesse in cor” (Radames – first act), “o fidi egizii”, “dal confin d'Etiópia un messaggiero”, “il messaggier si avanzi” (Re – first act), “Il re!” (all present characters), “il sacro suolo dell'Egitto è invaso dai barbari Etiópi ~ i nostri campi (fur) devastati... (arse le messi... e baldi della facil vittoria) i predatori già marciano su Tebe...”, “Un guerriero indomabile, feroce, li conduce ~ Amonasro.” (messenger – first act), “spezzami il cor ~ fammi morir!” (Aida), “noi ti invociamo!” (priestesses). Sentences, which give the summary and narration remarks, are added. Moreover, the universalization is noted in the narration remarks. They are written in a rather neutral style without slangy words. However, the language of the prototext is full of obsolete words (“nomare”, “soave”).

Textual code level helps to describe similarity or difference between the source text (prototext) and target text (metatext). The prototext genre is libretto and metatext is a comic strip. Opera libretto has formal characteristics of a drama. Libretto consists of several parts. It starts with the enumeration of characters (“personaggi”). The narration is divided into 4 acts (“atti”). Each act starts with the notes about the place where the events take place. Each dialogue is preceded by the enumeration of characters that take

part in conversation. During the conversation the stage remarks are also stated (“esce”, “solo”). The dialogue represents the direct speech and varies in length. The sentences are often interrupted (pauses) that graphically are represented by three dots (“Né un altro sogno mai più gentil... più soave... al cuore ti parlò?...”). The speech is full of question and exclamation marks too (“Della sua schiava il nome mi lesse nel pensier!”, “Sventurata! che dissi?... e l'amor mio?...dunque scordar poss'io questo fervido amor che oppressa e schiava come raggio di sol qui mi beava?”). The whole text is rhythmically arranged in order for it to be fitted to music.

The metatext is structured by the rules of comics genre. It consists of verbal and visual parts. The picture frames organization varies from one single picture on the whole page to several frames in a line. The verbal part is composed from the short summary, characters' descriptions, narration and dialogues. The verbal mode in the comics usually has several forms: characters' direct speech or thoughts. The verbal part is organized in four different ways: the square represents the narration, the bubbles contain speech, thoughts, and special bubbles are shaped for emotional speech (exclamations). The narration remarks are presented in squares inside the comics plot; dialogue bubbles contain the direct speech of the characters. The initial summary reminds of the short summaries for the movies when they are represented in the description in TV-programs or cinema leaflets: there is the main conflict presented and the summary ends with a number of rhetoric questions that supposed to trigger audience's attention (“Per quale delle due donne batte il cuore di Radames?”). The comics have several features that remind of the opera libretto structure: a separate introduction of characters and division by acts and scenes.

On the level of cultural code two elements are important in the comics: visual representation and the language use. The visual parts represent the place and characters. The action takes place in Egypt and the creator tries to reproduce the atmosphere of the epoch as close and exact as possible. The audience that is familiar with Egyptian culture of that period at least to a certain degree is able to recognize the clothing and environment. Firstly, there are pyramids and typical Egyptian buildings of the epoch that are easily recognizable. Secondly, the clothes are revealing for the epoch. The depiction of men, women and pharaoh clothes is the most remarkable. According to the tradition the clothes of that epoch were loose and simple. Men wore some kind of tunic.

Being half naked was a normal way to dress for men too. Men and women had head decorations or simply a headscarf. Bracelets and necklaces were usual both among women and men. Obviously, the richer was the person, the richer and the more complicated his clothing and jewelry was. Being a slave Aida has the simplest outfit – green simple dress and the hair fillet. The pharaoh is dressed solemnly. He is recognized by the head decoration. Interesting fact is that blue-yellow neck decoration – uskh that is supposed to be worn by Pharaoh is worn by Radames in the comic strip.

Next analysis case is the comics strip “Tosca”. It is a translation of a prototext – opera “Tosca” By Giacomo Puccini. “Tosca” is an opera in three acts by Giacomo Puccini to an Italian libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa. It can also be seen as an already translated text because the work is based on Victorien Sardou's 1887 French-language dramatic play “La Tosca”. However, in the present analysis we do not put an aim of finding the initial source since it can be also complicated if not impossible task regarding the way culture and text in culture develops and transforms. The metatext is a comic strip “Tosca”. The comic strip is produced by William Elliot and was published on [sinfinimusic.com](http://sinfinimusic.com). It is also available some other websites as [pinterest.com](http://pinterest.com).

According to our new classification the comic strip represents the translation of the whole opera libretto in a compressed manner as the main elements of the plot are preserved. The main plot line and events are preserved: the exposition, climax and denouement are the same events as in the libretto. According to A. Popovič classification the comic strip is a case of an apparent translation – William Elliot explicitly links his creation to the opera by naming the comic strip “Tosca” and names the composer (Giacomo Puccini).

On the level of linguistic code we track obvious modernization of the language. Comic genre usually requires easily perceivable language: most creators use colloquial words and slang, W. Elliot was not an exception. The examples of colloquial, expressive language are “girlfriend”, “suddenly who should burst in but”, “on the run”, “make tracks”, “lay in to her boyfriend”, “takes some calming down”, “sneak out”, “shack up with”, “steam off”, “does his bit”, “sell out”. On the other hand, the language of the opera libretto is full of obsolete words such as “wrought”, The entire style is literary and elevated: “It is the time of the full moon, when the heart is drunk with the nightly fragrance of the flowers.”

On the level of cultural code the modernization is not noticeable since the creator seems to make visual as close as possible to the historical epoch. Firstly, the comic strip reader may spot two real places – Church of Saint’Andrea della Valle (in the beginning) and Castel Sant’Angelo (in the end) – both are situated in Rome. Both places are presented only partially however, the picture is very detailed and realistic. Other places are unrecognizable or not connected to any spot. The costumes are also depicted according to the fashion and style of the epoch.

The textual level is supposed to represent the genre differences or similarities between the source and target texts or in our case prototext and metatext. The prototext is an opera libretto that is similar drama genre by its formal characteristics. The drama genre is strictly verbal without visual level unlike the comic strip where the verbal and visual parts both play an important role in storyline delivering. In this particular case the drama language is strictly formal and archaic and since there is no any other information channels verbal text should be understandable on its own that is why omissions and shortenings are not possible. On the other hand, the comic strip is a genre that uses visual and verbal levels on the storytelling process and gives the possibility for the verbal part be mere complementary.

The next comic strip to analyze is the comic strip “Madame Butterfly”. The metatext is a comic strip created by William Elliot initially published on the website [sinfimusic.com](http://sinfimusic.com). At present it spread in other websites and social networks as Pinterest. The prototext is an opera libretto of “Madama Butterfly” that is an opera in three acts (originally two) by Giacomo Puccini, with an Italian libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa. The opera is based in part on the short story “Madame Butterfly” by John Luther Long, which in turn was based partially on stories told to Long by his sister Jennie Correll and partially on the semi-autobiographical 1887 French novel *Madame Chrysanthème* by Pierre Loti. According to A. Popovič classification, the elements or levels of the prototext are translated since comics is a summarized version of the libretto, however, bringing the altered classification scheme we prove that it is still translation of the whole text in a compressed manner. The way of linking two texts is apparent since William Elliot states the composer Giacomo Puccini and the opera title “Madame Butterfly”.

The linguistic code is modernized during the translation. The slang words and spoken expressions like a “sucker for a man in uniform”, shrugs off are present in the summary. The prototext’s linguistic code is an archaic form of English as we analyze the libretto translated already into English. In order to describe correctly the prototext linguistic code we should bear in mind that dialogues or direct speech constitutes the major verbal part of libretto. It means that questions, exclamations, unfinished and broken sentences are common. The language of opera libretto is more elaborated and expressive (“You priceless pearl of a marriage-broker!”, “Laughter is fruit and flower.”). It also includes a lot of exclamations and questions in order to transmit characters’ emotions.

The second layer is the translation of the cultural code: repetition and deletion mechanisms. The visual part transmits the cultural code in the most obvious way. Two features that may give an indication to the audience about the epoch and country are the depiction of the background and the representation of the characters especially their clothes. William Elliot uses the audience’s encyclopedic knowledge about Japan nature, traditional clothes and buildings in order to reproduce the cultural features and the atmosphere of the epoch. Receivers may notice the blossoming sakura in every scene where he places the characters outside or near the window. The scene of marriage is illuminated by traditional Japanese lanterns (*chōchin*). The traditional red gate may be also noticed in the scene of marriage. The walls of Madame Butterfly’s place are decorated by the paintings with Japanese inscriptions on them.

The character appearance is also revealing. In this story and comics line two cultures clash: United State of America and Asian (Japanese). Pinkerton, Sharpless and Kate represent the European culture whereas Madame Butterfly, her uncle and her maiden Suzuki are dressed in oriental style. Pinkerton wears white naval suit, Sharpless is an official representative that is why his clothes are civil. Madame Butterfly and Suzuki wear kimonos: Madame Butterfly wears red noticeable kimono and Suzuki has a kimono of more restrained colour – grey. The Madame Butterfly’s uncle has a black kimono. The hair dress of Madame Butterfly and Suzuki is made in traditional Japanese style – hair is up in a bun fixed with sticks and Butterfly’s hair is decorated with flowers. Kate’s clothes are simple long black dress.

On the textual level the drama genre is substituted with comic strip genre in the process of translation. Comic strip “Madame Butterfly” has all important features of comics genre. The comic strip is composed as one large picture. It consists of two modes: verbal and visual. Picture frames are of regular shape: minimum is one picture in a line and three pictures are maximum in a row. The narration is divided into two parts in accordance with opera libretto division into acts. The verbal part consists of plot summary divided into several parts and framed in squares. The main colours used in the creation of comics are grey, black, white, red and pink (see Illustration 1 and Illustration 2).

The fourth example is the comic strip “La Boheme”. The metatext is a comic strip that was created by William Elliot for the website [www.sinfinimusic.com](http://www.sinfinimusic.com). The prototext is an opera libretto “La Boheme” in English. It is an opera in four acts that is composed by Giacomo Puccini. The Italian libretto is written by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, who based it on *Scènes de la vie de bohème* by Henri Murger. The prototext present the summary of the metatext, however, the prototext as a whole is translated into the metatext. The way of linking a text to a text is affirmative and apparent.

The linguistic code level shows how the verbal part is translated from the prototext into the metatext. As in all comic strips that William Elliot created, the verbal language is modernized, the summary is written in the informal language, it contains slangy words and phrases: “falling head over heels in love”, “rest of the gang”, “drama is never far away”, “strolls up”, “sugar daddy”, “pick up the bill”, “dumped her”, “turns her last legs”.





*Illustration 1 and Illustration 2 represent the structural organisation of visual mode in comic strip "Madame Butterfly" created by W. Elliot*

The cultural code sees differences between the representation of historical and cultural features in the prototext and the metatext. From libretto the receiver gets the information about the place and the time: around 1830 in Paris. The comic strip stays the same information just in fewer details: Paris, 19th century. The comic strip has the visual part that is why the depiction of the scenery and characters appearance is very important. The house interior is drawn as that in poor neighborhood. The stove, candles, writing with a feather show the historic epoch. The clothing is outdated. Women wear long dresses and hat that reminds of a mob cap. Men are dressed in a shirt with everpresent vest, tie and top hat.

The textual level describes the similarities and differences between prototext and metatext. In this case the genre difference is obvious: the prototext is an opera libretto (drama) and the metatext is comic strip. The structure of comic strip is rather simple. There are three types of picture sequence arrangement: two elements in a line, a picture in the center of a line and a picture that occupies the whole line space. The comic strip is divided into two parts: one tells about the meeting of Mimi and Rodolfo, the reuniting of Musetta and Marcello and the second part where love between couples finishes tragically. There is a time gap between two parts. The structural arrangement of the second part is a little different from the first one. Such arrangement may be an indication of more intense activity that is happening in the plot. The first part is an introduction of characters and the happy beginning of love; the second part is full of negative emotions: unhappy love, quarreling, sadness and death. The entire colour of the comic strip is violet shades and black. The edges between pictures are left white. Last scene is mostly black as if highlighting the death and desperation. The only light enters from the window and lights up the desperate Rodolfo and dying Mimi.

The analysis shows the simplification of the verbal mode in most cases. The addition of visual part makes it easier for the receiver to get the story. The verbal and visual modes are not equal and the verbal mode usually extends the information provided in the visual part.

During the analysis of comic strips from two different creators two translational systems are noticed. First type is represented by the comic strips created by William Elliot. He modernizes the language as much as possible. The entire text acquires the tone of irony. In his translations his personal style overrules the initial style of libretto.

On the other hand, comic strips published in the project “Operacomix.it” strive to preserve the style close to the prototext and to the style of the libretto’s author. The changes are minimal and are made only because the genre of comic strips requires certain features. When a translator chooses to make his personal style of translation dominant over the prototext author’s style, he usually makes bigger changes in the metatext. William Elliot’s goal is to give simply a summary and make the receiver get acquainted with the opera content. It may be viewed as prototext simplification and turning metatext into a more entertaining text. However, when the prototext author’s style prevails, the translator tries to transmit the prototext features as precise as possible. In our case the mood and style of the opera “Aida” are preserved through quotations from opera libretto. Operacomix.it project is aimed at people who have already some experience with “Aida” opera. As the creator Manfred Schwigkofler uses direct quotes the comic strip is not perceived as easily as comic strips produced by William Elliot.

To sum it up, comic strips are multimodal and multimedia texts that consist of verbal and visual parts. It has a quite long history which proves its ability to transmit important topics and texts. The analysis results in a conclusion that deletion, addition, substitution are core mechanisms that appear in the process of intersemiotic translation. Each analyzed example demonstrated that the comic strip creators translated the whole prototext in a compressed manner and made their translation apparent and affirmative. Two translational techniques serve different purposes – they allow the first acquaintance with the plot or transmit the style and tone of prototext making the audience closer to cultural core. The comic strip genre occupies place in popular culture and the translation of cultural core texts into peripheral genres allows texts’ preservation through expansion of potential audience.

## **2. Transmedia opera worlds.**

The present chapter is dedicated to the question of transmediality and the way transmedia world birth is described. The first subchapter deals with the general characterization of the notion and different points of view on the phenomenon. The second subchapter describes transmedia worlds of four operas: “Aida”, “Tosca”, “La Boheme” and “Madame Butterfly”. The intersemiotic translation is analysed on the basis of translational mechanisms worked out by Dirk Delabastita and the prototext-metatext relation theory by Anton Popovič. The third subchapter concentrates on the way different texts connect together and become one transmedia world.

### **2.1. What is transmediality**

Transmediality is a relatively new notion that began spreading with the era of new media. In this chapter, firstly, we connect the notion of transmediality with intersemiotic translation where intersemiotic translation is viewed as a mechanism that creates transmedia world. Secondly, transmediality is one of culture phenomena that allows the preservation of important texts and these texts’ spreading too.

The initial idea is that intersemiotic translation can be a way to gain more receivers to the transmedia world. The canonic texts (classical literature, classical musical pieces, and classical musical performances) constitute the cultural core. However, the culture is in a constant change and alteration. The text may be only “alive” in cultural space if it gains metatexts which proves that a text circulates in culture.

H. Jenkins introduces the notion of “transmediality” for the first time and claims that “a transmedia story unfolds across multiple media platforms, with each new text making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole” (Jenkins 2006: 95-96).

In the article “Transmedial Worlds – Rethinking Cyberworld Design” Lisbeth Klastrup and Susana Tosca define transmedial worlds as “abstract content systems from which a repertoire of fictional stories and characters can be actualized or derived across

a variety of media forms” (Klastrup, Tosca 2004: 1). One of the main characteristics is that in order to be a part of transmedia world text should be recognized as such by receivers who should be able to correlate the text’s characters or exact plot with exact transmedia world, in other words, the intertextual connections should be perceivable and obvious.

Transmediality is sometimes equaled to intermediality that is a wrong comparison. We may state that they function on different organizational levels. Intermedia is a hybrid of two or more media. In the article “(Inter)mediality and the Study of Literature” Werner Wolf shows:

intermediality [...] applies to any transgression of boundaries between conventionally distinct media [...] and thus comprises both “intra-” and “extra-compositional” relations between different media. (Wolf 2011: 3)

However, transmediality is a combination of independent media texts. We may still encounter texts in transmedia world that may be intermedial. But in general, transmediality and intermediality are phenomena that occupy different levels.

In the basis of each transmedia world lies one basic foundational story that is fully or partially transmitted through different media. In some cases the deletion of the prototext is more obvious whereas in other translation cases the text is shortened in the form of a summary that presents the whole plot but usually omitting several small details. Metatext may concentrate only on one character and develop certain plot line. The information may be added during the translation process. One of the frequent situations is the creation of texts that concentrate on some minor character of the prototext and turn him/her into the main character in the metatext.

We may define three main aims that metatext tries to achieve. Firstly, it may be a complete replacement of prototext by metatext. The metatext creator makes his creation as independent as possible so the audience perceives his/her new text and does not have to turn to prototext. Secondly, the creator of the metatext may have a goal to bring the audience closer to prototext through their acquaintance with metatext. Thirdly, metatext may be complementary, for example, film or book reviews or explanatory texts. These texts should be perceived together with prototext – metatext is usually auxiliary in prototext interpretation process.

Transmedia word is potentially limitless and expands constantly. The speed of expansion may be connected to the interest that surrounds transmedia world. In the article “Transmediality of cultural autocommunication” Peeter Torop and Maarja Ojamaa connect the notion of transmedia world with the autocommunication in culture. The main attention is paid to the way a text travels in cultural space: the ways it changes and the functions these alterations play in culture. Two main functions that are singled out by scholars are mnemonic and creative (Ojamaa, Torop, 2015: 61). Firstly, the core cultural texts are preserved and spread in cultural space (mnemonic function). Secondly, each translation alters the prototext which means that each metatext brings something new in culture (creative function).

In the present work we bind two big notions of transmediality and translation. The translation that we are analyzing is intersemiotic (according to the classification by Roman Jakobson). The intersemiotic translation may be a translation between different sign systems, discourses or media. In the case of transmedia the translation happens between media. However, medium is a specific sign system that leads to conclusion that transmedia translation is also translation between different sign systems.

At the same time we may define transmedia as a kind of translation where prototext is translated into the infinite number of metatexts. In intersemiotic translation one sign system is translated into another sign systems. Transmedia world is composed of texts in different media, that means in different sign systems. The conclusion is that transmediality has an intersemiotic translation in its basis.

According to the definition of transmediality, the narrative is to be expanded into other media. It may undergo expansion or contraction, the point of view may be changed, but there is still an invariant minimum that allows the receiver recognize the text as belonging to a certain narrative and as a part of a certain transmedia world. “Every new segment of the whole essentially repeats a certain invariant of the whole and – in accordance with the specificity of a given medium – creatively varies the rest” (Ojamaa, Torop 2015: 62). P. Torop and M. Ojamaa view repetition of a text as a mechanism for knowledge acquisition and preservation. Even if we do not concentrate on pedagogical ideas strictly speaking and do not use pedagogical terms in the present work, however, the expansion of the audience may be viewed as an educating point in culture. Thus a transmedial repetition bears an important mnemonic function, but it

simultaneously also alters the prototext and introduces new elements into metatext that are new to the prototext.

We can trace this mechanism more generally in culture, where stories and symbols that are considered important are repeated in different media in order to keep them active in cultural memory and integrate them with culture's contemporaneity. (Ojamaa, Torop 2015: 63)

In our case the creation of opera transmedia world leads not only to the preservation of important texts in culture, but also to the expansion of the potential audience due to the expansion of involved media. Involvement of different other media and genres inevitably leads to the potential participation of different audience. If we consider that every genre or media has its own receivers, then we can see that not only the text itself matter and define the type of future receiver, but the medium the text is transmitted through is also important. For example, for the majority of young population that is not involved into the musical studies or does not show special interest in musical studies, the involvement of such genres as comics, summaries or videos will rouse the wish to get acquainted with prototexts.

As one of the objectives of transmedia storytelling is to increase the number of consumers and target different groups, a semiotic reflection on the textual construction of consumers is pertinent. (Scolari 2009: 592)

The summary is to present the story plot, mostly simply the facts, introduce characters and their actions. It may include subjective attitude to some point: it may be told in a serious/formal, ironic tone can be presented in a highly informal way (slang, jargon).

On the other hand, other elements of transmedia world that we analyze (cartoon, puppet video, comics, other videos) are composed both from verbal and visual parts that gives additional possibility for the creator to express his attitude towards the story plot and characters. The choice of all or several plot lines, omission of the characters (sometimes even adding new characters), choice of the point of view alters the initial prototext perspective on the story and becomes a creative element.

If we consider every opera and metatexts as an independent transmedia world then we inevitably come with the question how the receiver entered the transmedia world. There should be a primary text that the receiver got acquainted with on the first

place. The situation with opera transmedia world may be a little bit different. Operas constitute cultural core. It may be basic knowledge for people in the majority of cases, and educated people have usually at least have heard some main titles, maybe sometimes they know the composer or some characters' names. However, the closer acquaintance with the opera content may happen in different ways.

However, several texts such as puppet video of *Madame Butterfly* that we analyze may not be helpful in learning more about the opera content since this video is an example of a secondary text.

Another point to be discussed is the minimum number of protagonists and plot lines that still allows the receiver to recognize the text as belonging to a particular transmedia world. We analyze texts belonging to four different opera transmedia worlds. This question is discussed in the third subchapter.

It is obvious that we are not analyzing every element that enters the transmedia world since it is a very difficult task to find every text that makes its part. In addition, it is very unlikely that the receiver is acquainted with every single possible text unless he is a big fan who follows every new release that is connected in some way to this particular transmedia world. The analysis includes texts from different media and genre.

## **2.2. Texts that constitute opera transmedia worlds**

This part of the work is dedicated to other texts that make part of the transmedia world. There are two possibilities for drawing the border of a transmedia world. One of the possibilities is to consider all opera dedicated texts as one big opera transmedia world. Another way is to recognize separate transmedia worlds for each separate opera. Our primary interest is the descriptions of the transmedia world of each opera (see Table 2). The prototext for each translation is an opera that is constituted from libretto and musical part. We do not concentrate on concrete theatrical performances as prototexts since they are very diverse and choosing only one would have been analysis simplification. We will not describe each prototext in details since prototexts were characterized in the comic strip analysis.



	Short summary	Comic strip	Cartoon	Other video
Aida	+	2		
Tosca	+	+	+	
Madame Butterfly		+	2	+
La Boheme	+	+		+

*Table 2. Texts that constitute opera transmedia worlds.*

### ***Transmedia world “Aida”***

The subtexts are short verbal summary and two comic strips. The “Aida” summary is taken from the website that publishes opera summaries in three minutes<sup>4</sup>. The creator is Kamiki Yusuke who has studied music and is the author of two books that help the beginners to understand opera. The prototext is traditionally an opera libretto in English, the metatext is an English short summary. According to new classification summary is a translation of the whole prototext in a compressed manner. Metatext covers the main characters and plot line of the prototext. It is an affirmative and apparent way of linking a text to text. The summary author states the opera author and its title.

As the prototext has already been described earlier, we turn to characterizing metatext – summary itself. The summary consists of the following parts: the composer and the opera title, the brief details concerning the opera, the summary itself divided into acts and the last commentary on the opera. The characters are not introduced separately as they are introduced in the libretto. The introduction gives information about years of composition, first performance, the libretto author and the original text libretto was derived from.

The summary is divided into parts: each part retells one act. “Aida” opera has 4 parts. On the level of linguistic code the translating mechanism is deletion (the metatext is an abridged version of the prototext). Cultural code level is translated with the help of deletion too: dehistoricization and universalization seem to be laying in the basis of the translation. The sentences are as simple as possible without subordinate clauses. There are no exclamations and questions. The summary presents the mixture of styles: the

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<sup>4</sup> [www.geocities.jp/wakaru\\_opera/englishhome.html](http://www.geocities.jp/wakaru_opera/englishhome.html)

bookish words (“deeply conflicted about”) and formal solemn (“bestowing Amneris on him”) are combined with spoken style (“she has snuck into the grave”). In combination the entire style becomes rather neutral. Textual codes translation deals with the genre difference between the prototext and metatext. The prototext is an opera libretto. The metatext is a summary of a libretto. It has similar structure to a libretto: the text is divided into 4 acts that is the number of libretto acts. The enumeration of the characters is substituted by the short introductory note (the libretto author, year of the first performance, years of creation). In the end the commentary to the opera is published. It is information for the reader about the composer, his ideas, some features of the opera.

### ***“Tosca” transmedia world***

Tosca transmedia world consists of short verbal summary, comic strip (that is analysed in the first chapter) and a cartoon. These examples are chosen because texts pertain to different media and genres. We do not mean that only these above-mentioned texts constitute the world – the real number of texts is much higher.

The first text in the transmedia world is the short summary of “Tosca” opera in “Opera Synopsis”. In general, there are a lot of different verbal summaries of opera contents. They occur in different forms: several opera summaries published as one book, opera summary leaflet as guidance to the understanding of some exact opera for the audience members, internet summaries and many others. The language of the summary is usually made neutral or modernized that explains the aim of summaries – giving brief overview of the content. The summary usually consists of simple and uncomplicated sentences.

According to Popovič it is a translation of elements or levels of the opera libretto (summary). However, if we consider the prototext/metatext relations in this translation case we may state that the comic strip uses the whole plot line of the opera libretto in a compressed manner. The link to the prototext is stated clearly as the title of the comic strip states the opera name and the composer. So the comic strip presents a short summary of original libretto.

The translation is affirmative and apparent – the title of the opera and the composer (Puccini, G. (1858-1924) Tosca) are stated in the headline of the summary.

“Tosca” opera in 3 minutes is published on the internet<sup>5</sup>. So its formal structure resembles the structure of “Aida” summary. The difference is noted in the text summary body as it is divided into three acts according to the traditional act division in “Tosca” libretto.

On the linguistic code level the deletion translational mechanism is obvious. The style of summary is rather neutral. The sentences are rarely complicated and complex. The contracted forms (can’t) in a written language are usually an indication of informal spoken form.

On the textual level we notice substitution: the prototext and the metatext belong to different genres (opera libretto and verbal summary). The abridged version of translation omits the details and follows the main plot line. The prototext genre has been described in the section dedicated to the translation of opera libretto into comic strip. The metatext is a simple verbal summary. The main differences are in the structural organization. The summary does not have the enumeration of the characters in the beginning. Moreover, the direct speech of the opera libretto is turned into the indirect third person narration in the summary.

Another metatext is a part of a cartoon that included several operas. The video “L’opera Imaginaire – Tosca” is a cartoon part that is based on the original plot of the libretto. The metatext presents partial translation of the prototext. The video introduces only the second half of the original libretto plot. The cartoon starts with already captured Cavaradossi. Angelotti plot line is omitted, the creator bases narration on imprisoned Cavaradossi, his execution and Tosca’s killing of Scarpia. Characters (Cesare Angelotti, Sacristan, Sciarrone, a Jailer, a Shepherd boy, altar boys, noblemen and women, townsfolk, artisans) that are present in the libretto do not appear in the video. The plot line that is depicted in the cartoon presents Floria Tosca, Mario Cavaradossi, Baron Scarpia, soldiers, police officers and maybe Spoletta. However, the creator of the cartoon added one additional character – the Death that appears in the very beginning and towards the end. The prototext is linked to the metatext affirmative. There is no explicit link to the opera during the cartoon. However, since we deal with the video that is published in the Youtube website and is only the part of the initial

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<sup>5</sup> [www.geocities.jp/wakaru\\_opera/english/tosca.html](http://www.geocities.jp/wakaru_opera/english/tosca.html).

cartoon, we cannot state that the cartoon creator has not shown links with operas. The video on the internet has the file name that states “L’opera Imaginaire - Tosca”.

At the same time it is not openly stated that Cavaradossi and Tosca are somehow connected. The omission of part of source text and the fact that it is difficult to understand the connection between the characters and motives of their actions make new text difficult to interpret without any prior knowledge of the source text.

Cultural level represents the historical features, cultural characteristics of the prototext and whether they are preserved, modified or eliminated in the metatext. The place and the time are also very schematic or even unrecognizable (universalization). The only particular clothes are the soldier uniforms. Some elements also exhibit the idea that the epoch is not modern: no electric lights (candles and torches), furniture pieces in Scarpia cabinet, soldiers’ armory and guns. Other characters are universalized and their clothes seem to be irrelevant for the creator. Instead the main emphasis is laid on the emotions of the characters and the additional figures are introduced that do not make part of the prototext but have symbolic significance. One of the figures that is new – death – is easily identifiable by its appearance (white skull instead of face and wings). It wears clothes that remind of the soldier uniform, at least its upper part, and a long skirt. Its symbolic meaning is ambiguous.

On the linguistic level, the verbal part is eliminated completely (deletion). The plot line is presented on the nonverbal level. One of the added elements is the aria performed by Cavaradossi. The original language of the aria – Italian – is preserved.

On the textual level, the genre of the prototext and the genre of the metatext are different. The libretto is translated into the genre of cartoon. The metatext consists of two modes: verbal and visual where the visual part is much more important for the storytelling whereas verbal part (aria) creates the mood of the cartoon and links the video to the opera. One of the main features of the video is montage. The close-ups are used in order to show the characters feelings.

The ambiguity of colour usage by the creator is notable. On the one hand, colours are important in producing a certain impression on the viewer: the prison that is depicted with grey, brown, dark colours makes an impression of a sad place, where people are deprived of any hope. At the same time we see very relative character clothes and appearance colouring: blue face colour, monochromatic outfit.

### ***Transmedia world “Madame Butterfly”***

The following texts make part of the transmedia world “Madame Butterfly”. The texts that we analyse are comic strip, animation, cartoon and two puppet videos.

The cartoon is a segment from “L’Opera Imaginaire” – 1993 collection of animated short cartoons based on opera arias. The metatext is based on the part of the prototext. The cartoon represents the mixture of the memories, dreams of the main character Madame Butterfly. The core storyline with her love to Pinkerton is preserved but its elements are rearranged. However, the cartoon finishes in the same way as the original libretto. The shift is made on the emotions of Madame Butterfly. Only two characters are preserved from the original plot line: Madame Butterfly and Pinkerton.

In principle the cartoon can be perceived as an independent text without required previous knowledge. However, since the prototext is presented only partially in the metatext the previous acquaintance with the prototext may be helpful. The receiver of the metatext may not reconstruct the omitted parts, but at the same time the metatext can be perceived and understood independently.

On the level of linguistic code we observe the complete elimination of the original verbal text. The only verbal part of a cartoon is the aria “Un bel di vedremo” that is sung in Italian and does not help to understand the content. According to D. Delabastita classification, the deletion mechanism was applied in the process of translation. The repetition case is the aria that is used as a soundtrack for the cartoon.

During the translation of the cultural code the creator preserved many recognizable traces of the Japanese culture. The background is an imitation of Japanese paper that is beige and seems to be transparent. The characters (things) that are drawn on it seem to be lit from the back. The whole impression is that there is a candle behind this paper. The style of the cartoon combines the recognizable Japanese motives and modern drawings, but in general the style reminds of Japanese culture. One important detail is the butterfly that appears in every scene and seems to link main characters dreams. In the end of the cartoon it merges with Madame Butterfly. The dead main character in the kimono transforms into the one butterfly of the collection. The interpretation may vary. One of the possible ways of interpretation is that Madame Butterfly is one of the girls that fell in love and was rejected (lied to). Another

explanation may be connected with the figure of Pinkerton and Madame Butterfly may be seen as one of his collections of girls.

The textual code is bind to the difference of prototext and metatext genres. The prototext is an opera, the metatext is a cartoon. The metatext is a video where the characters are not played by actors but are drawn. The feature that becomes the most important is the characteristics of time. It brings cartoons and other videos close. However, the fact that cartoon is drawn allows more freedom. Transforming figures, the process of drawing that develops in front of the receiver are the features that occur in this cartoon.

Another interesting example is the video that animated the previously analysed comic strip. It is also published on the website [sinfinimusic.com](http://sinfinimusic.com) or available on Vimeo. The aim of the animation is promotion since it was also shown at the Royal Opera House during their staging of Puccini's "Madame Butterfly".

The animation represents a translation of the comic strip. The linguistic and cultural code levels are remained mostly unchanged except the cases when the text in the animation is shortened compared to the comic strip (deletion): "For Pinkerton, the marriage is just a way to pass time on shore leave. He hopes to one day find a wife back home in America" (comic strip) and "For Pinkerton, the marriage is just a way to pass time. He hopes to one day find a wife back home in America" (animation). The additional element of the animation is an aria "Un bel di" as a soundtrack.

The textual features' translation is more important. The metatext has main characteristics of the video: close ups, montage. The sense of movement is created by the way the comics are shoot. The animation creators try to bring the time dimension into the normally static pictures. Some elements of the comic strip that are obviously static in the picture are animated in the metatext. The cross is sparkling on Madame Butterfly's neck. In the final comic strip picture the receiver sees only desperate Pinkerton and the hand of dead Butterfly, however, in the animation the blood spreads on the floor making an impression of the time dimension. The camera moves from one panel to another making close ups on the characters' faces.

The other subtexts of this transmedia world is a puppet video "Mura "Sockie" Performs Madama Butterfly" where a Madame Butterfly made from a white sock performs the aria "Un bel di vedremo". The creators are Rebecca Croft and Jon Croft.

The video is published on Youtube. The prototext is the opera “Madame Butterfly”: libretto and the musical part.

The metatext represents the translation of a prototext part. It concentrates only on the exact aria of the opera eliminating other content elements. The link of metatext to prototext may be described as apparent since “Madama Butterfly” title is present in the title. However, it also mentions the actor name (Mura “Sockie” – the sock itself). The descriptive note after the video states that the puppet Mura “Sockie” is based on a Japanese noblewoman, Lady Murasaki Shikibu, author of the first novel “The Tale of Genji”. There is no link to the composer in the video or in the video title. So the link may be described as semi-apparent. The prototext/metatext relation is affirmative. Even if the performer (the sock) is rather untraditional, the creator tries to keep the general mood of love and despair of Madame Butterfly.

According to D. Delabastita classification the deletion and substitution seem to be the core translational mechanisms. On the level of linguistic code translation the main mechanism is deletion: the most of verbal part is eliminated and only one verbal aria lyrics are left. The aria is in Italian and it is transported from the prototext into metatext without any changes (repetition).

The cultural code translation may be also described through deletion – the video rather universalized the opera. There are several elements that may give a slight hint about the character belonging to some Oriental culture. The walls are covered with some beige fabric and the picture on the wall slightly resembles black ink Japanese drawings. However, the traces are so weak that it is practically impossible to connect the character with Japan. The character has no particular features: special clothes or facial characteristics. The singer has long black hair, white skin and big red lips.

On the level of textual code translation the genres are different. The metatext is a puppet performance recorded on the video. The performance is preceded by the introduction titles where the title of the video is stated. It is a simple a black background with white inscription in the center. The next scene is a flower meadow with a butterfly. In the end the same style the creator’s, filming person’s name and dedication are marked. The entire filming technique is usual for the shooting actor movies. The montage is mostly represented by the close-ups on the sock-performers face. It is may be seen as compensation for rather static face of the sock – the only part of the face that

moves is mouth. However, the change of shooting angle brings the dynamics and makes the video more alive.

The last text that we analyse in the transmedia world “Madame Butterfly” is the puppet cartoon “Aria”. It is a 10-minute video that is produced in 2001. It is accessible both on the official website of “National film board of Canada” and youtube.com. The producer is National film board of Canada. The creator is Pjotr Sapegin.

The metatext is a translation of the whole prototext in a compressed manner. The number of the characters is compressed to the number of four main participants: Madame Butterfly, B.F. Pinkerton, Kate Pinkerton, Madame Butterfly’s child. The other characters that appear in the video are other illegitimate children of Pinkerton. And the entire narrative point of view is changed so that the focus lies on the Madame Butterfly and her love story. The link of metatext and prototext is affirmative, however, it is not quite apparent since the video title does not connect it to openly to the opera. The description of the video in the website describes the connection. Without the descriptive message the receiver may make the connection himself/herself if he/she has enough encyclopedic knowledge about the opera.

The linguistic level is translated through deletion and repetition. All verbal text is deleted except one aria “Un bel di vedremo” that serves as a soundtrack for the whole video. The aria is performed in Italian. In general the characters do not speak during the whole action.

The cultural level translation is mostly represented through deletion – universalization of cultural traits. The Japanese cultural features number is decreased. The appearance of the main characters is contrasted. The receiver without sufficient encyclopedic knowledge is not able to link each of them to a particular cultural and geographical background. The only general fact that may be noticed comes through the appearance of the puppet: the woman originates from some Orient place and the man may be from any non-Oriental country: most probably from some Northern country considering his blond hair. The uniform also presupposes him being a navy officer (sailor). One thing that is brought from man’s culture is gramophone which he leaves to the woman. The only record that she has is the aria that is a part of the opera. In general, the place where the woman lives does not bear any distinctive features. It seems to be a very small island without any visible houses on it.



The translation of the textual code is performed by substitution of the prototext genre to the metatext genre. The metatext is represented by the puppet performance video. Its structural composition is built in accordance with movie rules. The framing is opening and closing credits where the producing company, the film title and the creators are stated. The puppet video consists of two contrasting tendencies: some ways of representing events bring it close to the realistic movies with people-actors; others tend to highlight the difference between this puppet video and other movies – these parts are intentionally symbolic and divorced from reality. The sex scene resembles the scenes that appear in the movies the characters are played by actors. However, the way Madame Butterfly pregnancy, the bond with her child and her death is illustrated is more symbolic. An aquarium with a small violet fish constitutes her pregnant belly. The child is connected to Madame Butterfly with a strand that represents the bond between mother and child. Madame Butterfly or a child constantly levitates in the air. The last scene (the death of Madame Butterfly) is also very symbolic. The characters are simplified – at least Kate and B.F. Pinkerton are represented as heartless people that do not care about other people’s feelings. The last scene where Pinkerton returns for Madame Butterfly in remorse is deleted at all.

### ***Transmedia world “La Boheme”***

Another transmedia world is the world of “La Boheme” opera. It consists of the verbal summary and explanatory video. The comic strip is analysed in the previous chapter.

The verbal summary is also published “Opera Synopsis”. Summary presents a translation of a whole prototext (opera libretto) in a compressed manner. It is apparent (the opera title and the composer are stated by the summary author) and affirmative.

The linguistic code is translated with the help of two mechanisms: deletion and addition. The narration body is abridged (deletion) whereas some information concerning the opera creation and its first performance is added. On cultural code level the text consists of only one mode – verbal. The summary creator decided to universalize the language (deletion). The text is written in neutral style. The sentences are simple with rare complex ones. They are constructed in a way that the receiver does not spend much effort in understanding the text. The most important part of the text is

its content and that is the reason why the form is made as simple as possible. The textual code level is a translation of genre. The genres of prototext and metatext are different: the drama is translated into verbal summary. The genre of prototext has been described earlier. The metatext is constructed comparably alike to other summaries that have been analysed. The direct speech is changed into the third person narration. The narration is divided according to opera acts' number into four parts.

Another element of this transmedia world is the explanatory video. The video is published in [sinfinimusic.com](http://sinfinimusic.com). It is a video, where Rolando Vilazon gives the summary of famous operas and draws illustrations. The video consists of the following parts: the beginning where Rolando Vilazon introduces himself and explains what opera he will summarize, that is proceeded by a short part where his hand is shown in the process of drawing and finally the summary itself is continued. The summary is divided into acts. Except the content Rolando Vilazon gives several commentaries on the musical opera parts too. This point can be described as a permutation (metatextual commentary).

On the level of linguistic code the verbal part may be divided in two. Firstly, it is the retelling of the opera content by the singer. As all summaries that were analyzed previously the deletion is obvious. Addition is observable only in the introductory note by Rolando Vilazon – it is not the part of the prototext. The language is modernized and it presents the example of how a person usually retells and narrates: Rolando Vilazon uses modern spoken language. However, two groups of verbal text possess several differences. One of the most obvious is the simplification of language since two types apply to different senses: visual and auditory. Secondly, the music accompanying the last scene is added to the video as a soundtrack during the whole summary (addition). The aria is performed in the original language – Italian. It creates the atmosphere and introduces the most important aria.

Cultural code is also modified – the deletion is the main mechanism in translation. There are no peculiarities pertaining to the epoch and culture – the creator (Rolando Vilazon) uses universalization in the process of his translation. The only two features that prove the scene is not settled in modern time: candles and a top hat.

### *Transmedia texts creators and functions*

The last example of explanatory video by R. Vilazon illustrates the fuzzy border between the receiver and the author. The situation with text creators and receivers is complicated in the age of new media. We are dealing with metatexts (prototexts that were translated into different media) and it brings the confusion in exact naming translators and receivers. The translator is the receiver of a prototext and after that he/she may become the creator of a new text in the process of translation. New translated text has its new potential audience.

Nowadays opera becomes the part of a bigger transmedia world that not only includes an opera libretto text and theatrical performance staging but also short summary videos, short texts, cartoons, comics that may illustrate the whole text or just its part. The aims of these metatexts are also different. The text summaries, some cartoons and comics are created in order to introduce the original narrative to the receiver in the easiest, shortest and most interesting way. It does not mean that text qualified readers (receivers) are not interested in these texts or unable to enjoy them, but the primary function still stays that of a primary acquaintance. Thus the target receiver is the person who was not engaged with the text before.

But another group of metatexts ask for some primary source text competency implying that interpretation the metatext may not be complete or may not happen at all without the primary knowledge of the narrative. These metatexts are built only on some part of a prototext.

In this work we only analyse cases where the connection to the prototext is openly stated by the creator. That is why we may state that such translation widens the possible audience range through metatexts. The prototext combined with its metatexts produces a transmedia world that can be entered by the receiver through the prototext or any of the possible metatexts. At the same time the receiver's reaction may vary. Very often when the receiver is not satisfied with the first text that he gets acquainted with, he/she is not eager to continue exploring other texts from this particular world. On the other hand, if he is impressed by the first impression he is likely to continue the acquaintance with other texts. Even if we state that every media has its potential audience, however, the person interested in the exact narration (plot line or exact story characters) itself may also move from one medium to other medium in order to follow

the storyline that he finds interesting. At the same time the receiver of one text may be a fan of a particular medium, for example, the person who liked comic strip based on the particular opera narrative may not be interested in watching opera performance or reading libretto.

Comic strip, opera performance and videos based on the opera have both visual and verbal parts that usually make the perception easier for the audience. The proportion between verbal and visual languages varies depending on the medium and genre. Comic strip as a genre is easier to perceive compared to opera performance. Firstly, it requires less time since comic strip is a summarized version of the opera performance that normally lasts over two hours depending on the staging. Secondly, the receiver will obviously choose the comic strip in the language that he is familiar with. There is a possibility to try to interpret the comic strip taking only the visual aspect into consideration however, it requires more efforts from the receiver that most likely he is not ready to make if his aim is to learn about the content. Moreover, the language in the opera performance stays the original as a rule. Since most of famous operas are composed in Italian or more rarely in German, the receiver is not able to get the verbal part unless he is familiar with the language. New possibilities and equipment that some theaters use allow providing subtitles for operas but it is not a world-wide practice. Finally, opera performance has also very important aspect – music. It is a soundtrack to the plot line, but it also allows binding all elements into one text and makes smooth connection because the narration goes by two ways: visual and verbal. The viewer sees the action of the characters and their emotions, however, all direct speech is brought through the musical part. The opera music is named classical and it constitutes the cultural core texts. However, the person who is not interested in musical part but instead would like to learn the plot of the opera will turn to comic strips, short summaries, some kind of short videos, cartoons that present the plot in a more explicit, compressed manner. Other genres include visual and verbal elements are videos, cartoons. However, in the majority of the analysed examples visual part is more important.

Another genre that was discussed above is summary. They lack visual elements; however, verbal part gives enough insight into the plot and actions that take place in the narrative. It may be called brief (introduction into) acquaintance with facts and characters.

Libretto is a detailed plot of the opera. The verbal language is not usually modern, but it is often archaic. During the translation the language style is preserved. The receiver gets information about the plot however he may spend more effort and time reading the whole libretto than the short summary. Two factors that complicate the task are the archaic language and the big sized text.

We may retrace two text functions that are relevant for receiver: informational and aesthetic. The first function is connected to the acquaintance with the plot. The text provides the knowledge about the content. The second function demonstrates that sometimes the information is not as important as the way of its representation. They may be complementary. However, according to the receiver's aim one of the functions is more important at the exact moment of reading the text than the other even if it does not eliminate another one completely.

Another important question concerns what should be considered as a text in transmedia world. Does it consist of some number of independent texts or is it possible to say that these texts are so intertwined that they constitute a new text on the higher metalevel? We may state that the perception of the receiver is crucial, because he may be acquainted with only one text that makes part of a transmedia world. In this case the receiver may be unaware of the transmedia world existence. However, the transmedia world constitutes one text the elements of which are interconnected and the world consists one mental construction.

Another possibility that we discussed earlier is that the person knows several texts from the transmedia world. He may be a big fan who is following the new releases of texts pertaining to this particular transmedia world. In this case he is interested in the characters and events that happen in the texts with the characters. He stops perceiving them as independent text but constructs connections and then the transmedia world becomes a text that is complex.

### **2.3. What do they share in common?**

Linda Hutcheon and Michael Hutcheon state in their book "Opera. The Art of Dying" that two most powerful topics in librettos are love and death (Hutchenson,

Hutchenson 2004: 1). All operas that are analyzed in the present work deal with these topics.

The opera librettos that we discussed earlier have several common traits:

1. They contain a love plot line.
2. This love is unhappy and each time finishes tragically.
3. There are some external circumstances that intervene with the love of the couple or one person suffers from the one-way love.

Even if this narration takes place in earlier centuries and different countries, the idea that lies in the center is a universal love story: faithfulness, betrayal, “broken heart”, suffering for an unhappy love. The details differ and sometimes they are culture-dependent, however, on the basis these topics refer to the basic feelings that a lot of people share across the world.

Transmedia story is supposed to have an invariant part that binds all texts together and allow receivers to recognize the texts as pertaining to one exact transmedia story. We stated earlier that a transmedia story is constructed on the basis of intersemiotic translation (using the notion of R. Jakobson). At the same time in order to be recognized as a translation of a certain source text, target text should also have some invariant: a minimum of elements that are not changed (shared between the source and target texts) in order for the receiver to recognize a new text as translation. Characters and plot lines are important elements that constitute narration. However, the invariant is a very abstract and relative criterion since as we will indicate in the further analysis that it is impossible to see it in such strict terms – instead in most cases attribution of texts depends on the audience (or separate individuals).

At the same time we will describe the common elements that a prototext and metatexts share. It may be a little simplistic way of describing transmedia stories common ground; however, it seems reasonable in order to move to another (more abstract) analysis level. In the following paragraphs each opera transmedia world is analyzed on the basis of two criteria: common characters and common plot lines (narrative structures).

In the analysed texts (two comic strips, libretto and a verbal summary) that make part of “Aida” transmedia story the biggest number of characters are in opera libretto (7 characters) and William Elliot comics has only five: Aida, Radames, Amneris,

Pharaone, Amonasro. Another comic strip created by Manfred Schwigkofler includes six characters (Aida, Radames, Amneris, Ramfis, il Pharaone, Amonasro). The plot line about love between Aida and Radames, jealousy of Amneris is preserved in each metatext. Another topic that is present in all texts is Aida's choice that she has to do between two people who she loves: Radames and her father Amonasro.

“Tosca” transmedia story consists of opera libretto, comic strip, cartoon, verbal summary and a puppet video. The opera libretto contains the following characters: Floria Tosca, Mario Cavaradossi, Baron Scarpia, Cesare Angelotti, A Sacristan, Spoletta, Sciarrone, a Jaile, a Shepherd boy, some minor characters: soldiers, police agents, altar boys, noblemen and women, townsfolk, artisans. As one kind of summary the comic strip retains only the most important characters: Floria Tosca, Mario Cavaradossi, Baron Scarpia, Cesare Angelotti, Sacristan. The line of Angelotti is weakened whereas Tosca, Cavaradossi and Scarpia love triangle is emphasized. The cartoon has even lessened the number of characters that appear in the video: Tosca, Cavaradossi and Scarpia and probably Spoletta. Several soldiers that appear in the cartoon are not so important for the plot line development. The verbal summary includes four main characters: Scarpia, Angelotti, Cavaradossi, Tosca and minor characters as Scarpia's subordinates. Each text depicts several plot events that are present in the original prototext: the love of Tosca and Cavaradossi, the imprisonment of Cavaradossi and his later execution, the obsession of Scarpia by Tosca, her attempt to save the loved man, the murder of Scarpia and finally Tosca's suicide. The line of Angelotti is eliminated from the cartoon. Cartoon represents only half of the opera narrative; however, it seems that the creator chose the most famous plot lines and translated only characters' relations that are most widely known.

The transmedia story of “Madame Butterfly” presents an interesting case since one of the puppet videos that has been analyzed contains one character only – Madame Butterfly. There is no plot line (actions and events from the opera libretto). The receiver may recognize the video as pertaining to exact prototext or story by knowing the aria. Other texts are more elaborated. The original libretto includes such characters as Cio-Cio San (Madame Butterfly), Suzuki, her maid, B. F. Pinkerton, Sharpless, Goro, Prince Yamadori, The Bonze, Yakuside, The Imperial Commissioner, The Official Registrar, Cio-Cio San's mother, the aunt, the cousin, Kate Pinkerton, Dolore (“Sorrow”), Cio-Cio

San's relations, friends and servants. The number of characters present in the comic strip is seven: Madame Butterfly, Pinkerton, Sharpless, Suzuki, Madame Butterfly's uncle, Kate and Madame Butterfly's son. The same number of characters is in the animation since it is completely based on the comic strip. In the cartoon only two characters are preserved: Madame Butterfly and Pinkerton. The puppet cartoon has four characters (Madame Butterfly, Pinkerton, Kate and Madame Butterfly's child), if we do not count illegitimate children of Pinkerton. The minimum elements of the plot are the love of Madame Butterfly to Pinkerton, his later betrayal of this love – marriage to another woman and Madame Butterfly's suicide.

The last transmedial story is the story of “La Boheme” opera. It consists of the opera libretto, comic strip, the explanatory video and a short verbal summary. The full list of the characters in opera libretto are Rodolfo, Schaunard, Benoît, Mimì, Marcello, Colline, Alcindoro, Musetta, Parpignol, customs officer. Comic strip preserves seven main characters – Rodolfo, Marcello, Colline, Schaunard, Mimi, Musetta, Alicindoro. The explanatory video includes Mimi, Rodolfo, Colline, Schaunard, Marcello, Musetta, rich man. The verbal summary mentions Mimi, Rodolfo, Colline, Schaunard, Marcello and Musetta. It seems that two love stories are parallel and important: Mimi – Rodolfo and Musetta – Marcello. They are closely interwoven and develop parallel. Every plot includes the meeting of Rodolfo and Mimi, the party, the reunion of Marcello and Musetta, the attempt of Rodolfo to break up with Mimi after he learns that she is sick and final scene where Mimi returns to die near her beloved Rodolfo.

However, it seems that characters and plot lines are not the only way to link texts into a transmedia story. Several signs that are exploited in several texts of the same transmedia world also make it possible for the reader to link texts. A butterfly in “Madame Butterfly” world is one of such elements. It occurs in the comic strip, the video based on the comic strip, puppet video, puppet cartoon and the cartoon.

These are formal characteristics that may be viewed as forced or artificial. The real birth of a transmedia world happens in the receiver's mind: it depends on two main criteria – his encyclopedia (background knowledge) and his ability to discover (disclose) intertextual links.



Transmediality phenomenon has been treated in most cases as a combination of prototext and n-numbered metatexts. The most attention by scholars (C.A. Scolari, H. Jenkins) was on the way prototext is translated into metatexts (intersemiotic translation): the similar and distinctive elements. The analysis on the basis of such methodology has been hold in the previous subchapter. However, the question that is more interesting is the way texts link together and turn into some bigger organized structure in receiver's mind. What makes the receiver recognize a particular text as belonging to particular transmedia world?

This question is particularly difficult and leads us to the sphere of more abstract analysis. Firstly, world becomes a unique abstract text that is stored in the receiver's memory. The texts of the transmedia world may be found from different sources. Nowadays internet represents one of the biggest text and information storages. In the internet they are just a simple collection of texts that may be stored on the different platforms. They may become the transmedia world only through the receiver's realization of it. The idea is that different texts enter the receiver's mind and merge into one structure – mental text. It is an abstract organization and depends on the receiver's perception. Each transmedia world differs and each receiver has his/her own number of texts getting into his memory. "Thesis on the Semiotic Study of Cultures" makes a point that one message may function as a text or a part of some bigger text depending on the point of view (Lotman 1973: 57). This idea confirms that the realization of a transmedia world is relative.

New media era and ease of spreading made it less complicated for the metatexts' number to grow and expand the transmedia world. However, the same tendency turned the analysis to be more complicated. And we state that the inability to trace all texts of the transmedia world does not prevent from analysis since the individual transmedia worlds differ. Henry Jenkins states in the introduction to "Convergence Culture. Where old and new media collide":

to fully experience any fictional world, consumers must assume the role of hunters and gatherers, chasing down bits of the story across media channels, comparing notes with each other via online discussion groups, and collaborating. (Jenkins 2006: 21)

However, the texts, which we analyzed in the present work, are not so well advertised yet as other commercial projects and it makes opera transmedia world more difficult to reach. The texts may be discovered by chance.

Maarja Saldre and Peeter Torop describe transmediality from the point of view of space in “Transmedia Space”. They write that the reader who is familiar with different subtexts that constitute the transmedia world cannot “distinguish which aspects of the mental whole originate in which particular subtext” (Saldre, Torop 2012: 31).

According to Umberto Eco each person possesses unique combination of knowledge that helps him/her to make sense of the received texts and disclose hidden connections between them. Eco calls this knowledge encyclopedic that consists of “contextual and circumstantial selections, frames, and any other type of overcoding” (Eco 1981: 17). The same encyclopedic knowledge allows disclosing non-apparent links between prototext and metatexts in the described-above cases where the creator of a secondary text – metatext – does not make a clear connection between texts.

In order to ascribe a text to a certain transmedia world the receiver should be able to make an intertextual link recognizing two or more texts as related to some extent. If it does not happen then the text is detached from that transmedia world. So it is possible to state that there is no definite answer to the question whether the definite text is recognized as a part of a certain transmedia world.

To sum it up, transmedia world is formed by different texts in different genres and from various media. This chapter was dedicated to analysis of such phenomenon as transmediality. The opera transmediality was described from two perspectives: as transmedia story and transmedia world. In the first case we attempt to find the minimum number of elements through which the receiver recognizes texts as pertaining to one prototext. The second case illustrates the idea that transmedia phenomenon is a more complicated mental text in the receiver’s mind. The recognition of its subtexts depends on receiver’s encyclopedic knowledge and intertextual link recognition.

## **Conclusions:**

The work deals with the questions of intersemiotic translation and transmediality. Main focuses of the work are opera libretto translation into comic strips, the way transmedia world is composed and recognized as such.

Present thesis first part described the comic strip genre, the theories of A. Popovič and D. Delabastita that were used during the analysis and the way four opera librettos were translated into comic strips. Comic strips and comic books are not new genres. Nowadays they are attributed to popular culture. The stigmatization of genre prevents from using comic strip potentials. The entertainment tag that genre has received limits the number of narratives and topics that receivers are prepared to see. Comic strips are recognized as multimodal and multimedia genre. We altered C. Clüver's idea that comic strip is mixed media by bringing arguments that define it as multimedia genre. On the basis of Anton Popovič's scope of prototext and metatext linking we suggest a new altered model consisting of three possible variants: the translation of the whole prototext, translation of the whole prototext but with a new arrangement of the plot elements and translation of the prototext parts. The translational mechanisms that were most common during the translation are deletion, substitution and addition. Repetition is rarer.

Every translation may be organized in two opposite ways. The translator may try to preserve the unique style of the author and make his/her modifications less visible. Another way is a decision of the translator to make his/her personal translator's style dominant over the author's one.

A receiver of the text may be simultaneously a creator of metatext. In the case of opera libretto translation into comic strips the translator (receiver=creator) occupies the borderline position between cultural core (elitist culture) and more peripheral zones (popular culture). In this situation translator is familiar with texts and rules of text creation of both groups. Usually translator is familiar with texts from elitist culture and translates them with the help of popular culture genre rules. So knowledge of source and target texts' genre rules is crucial for a successful translation.

The second part of the thesis is dedicated to problems of transmedia world definition, description of its features, analysis of transmedia world texts with the help of the same theories that have been used in the first chapter and definition of transmedia world as a unified mental text. The transmedia world is constructed on the basis of intersemiotic translation. Intersemiotic translation has two main functions: mnemonic – text preservation and creative – each metatext brings a new creative element through simple altering the prototext. Transmediality is viewed in the present work as a mechanism for text preservation in culture. Translation of a text from cultural core into cultural periphery with the help of “peripheral” genres allows expanding of the potential audience. Each text in new medium has supposedly its audience. The translation of significant texts into other media allows their spreading.

As a relatively new phenomenon transmediality has no precise unified methodology for its analysis. The most common way is to look at each case of prototext-metatext translation separately. Another perspective is to describe transmediality from narrative point of view when texts constituting transmedia story possess unchangeable minimum which allows receivers to connect texts. However, our idea is that it is not suffice if the researcher wants to understand transmedia world functioning, because transmedia world is not a simple collection of texts. It actualizes only through receiver’s perception. Culture may contain all texts that can be attributed to a certain transmedia world; however, transmedia world is some kind of abstract mental text that that is unique for each receiver and is stored in his/her memory. Its size depends on receiver’s encyclopedic knowledge and ability to recognize intertextual connections between texts.

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Ooperikoomiks kui transmeedialine tõlge

Käesoleva magistritöö eesmärk on uurida transmeedialisust ja tõlkimist kui „elitaarse“ kultuuri (ehk tuumkultuuri ja selle tekstide) populariseerimise vahendit. Töö keskendub kahele peamisele küsimusele: semiootiline analüüs ooperilibreto tõlkimisest koomiksileks ja nelja ooperi transmeedialiste maailmade kirjeldus. Ooperiteks on Aida, Tosca, La Bohema ja Madame Butterfly. Analüüsiks kasutatud materjalid on saadavad Internetis. Analüüsi aluseks olevateks keskseteks teooriateks on Anton Popoviči metakommunikatsiooni teooria (prototeksti-metateksti suhted) ja Dirk Delabastita loodud tõlkemeetodite mudel.

Esimene peatükk „Ooperilibreto intersemiootiline tõlge koomiksileks“ tegeleb koomiksiga kui žanri peamiste omadustega ja antud žanriga seotud stereotüüpidega. Samas peatükis analüüsitakse koomikseid eelmainitud nelja ooperi näidetes. Materjal on kogutud kahest erinevast allikast, milledeks on internetileheküljed [sinfimusic.com](http://sinfimusic.com) ja [comix.it](http://comix.it). Peamised mehhanismid, mida prototeksti-metateksti tõlgendustes välja tuuakse, on asendamine ja väljajätmine, uue informatsiooni lisamine on täheldatav vaid mõnes näites. Tõlkimises ilmneb kaks erinevat tendentsi: tõlkija isikliku stiili domineerimine ning püüd säilitada autori isiklikku stiili. Esimene tendents annab lihtsa kokkuvõtte libreto sisust ning teise eesmärk on tuua vaataja metateksti kaudu prototekstile lähemale.

Koomiksid meediumina kuuluvad populaarkultuuri sfääri, kuid ooper on osa kõrgkultuurist. Tõlkija asub piirialal ning omab teadmisi kultuuri tuuma moodustavatest tekstidest ja samas ka populaarkultuuri žanrireeglitest. Iga tõlge täidab kaht funktsiooni: ta säilitab tekstid kultuurimäluks, viies need laiemale publikule (mnemooniline funktsioon) ja teisalt muudab neid tekste intersemiootilise tõlke käigus (loominguline funktsioon).

Teises peatükis „Transmeedia ooperimaailmad“ kirjeldatakse transmeedialisust eraldi nähtusena. Antud peatükis tegeletakse ka teiste transmeedialise maailma moodustavate metatekstide analüüsiga. Transmeedialisus on suhteliselt uus mõiste ja sel pole veel kindlat metodoloogilist piiritlemist. Transmeedialine maailm on tihedalt seotud intersemiootilise tõlke, mis moodustab tema põhimehhanismi, mõistega. See on potentsiaalne maailm, mis koosneb lugematust hulgast tekstidest. Maailm aktualiseerub aga vaid läbi individuaalse vastuvõtja taju, mistõttu on iga transmeedialine maailm unikaalne. Koos vormiliste omadustega, nagu korduvad tegelased ja sisuelemendid, mis



seovad tekstid üheks tansmeediamaailmaks, on kõige olulisemaks elemendiks vastuvõtja äratundmisvõime. On oluline, et vastuvõtja mõistaks, et tegu on transmeedialise maailmaga. Töös väidan, et mida laiem on indiviidi entsüklopeediline teadmine, seda suurem on võimalus, et ta tunneb ära teksti kui millegi, mis kuulub mingisugusesse kindlasse transmeedialisse maailma.

Kokkuvõtteks, tekstide intersemiootiline tõlkimine tuumkultuurist perifeeriažanrisse võimaldab tekstidel kultuuriruumis säilida ja tekitada sidusust kõrgkultuuri ja populaarkultuuri vahel. Nii ooperil kui ooperikoomiksil on oma tõlgenduslik ning esteetiline väärtus ning mõlemal on oma koht kultuuris.

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