Operatic Transversality in Literature in English: Between a Quest for an Ever More Truthful, Humanist Narration and a Poetic Challenge

Nathalie Massoulier

Operatic Transversality in Literature in English: Between a Quest for an Ever More Truthful, Humanist Narration and a Poetic Challenge.

Nathalie MASSOULIER

Operatic Transversality in Literature in English: Between a Quest for an Ever More Truthful, Humanist Narration and a Poetic Challenge.

Nathalie MASSOULIER

Acknowledgments and dedications

First, I would like to thank the following laboratories for their equally active support:

-the C.I.R.P.A.L.L. (Centre Interdisciplinaire de Recherche sur les Patrimoines en Lettres et Langues) of Angers university, France.
-the C.R.P.H.L.L. (Centre de Recherche en Poétique, Histoire Littéraire et Linguistique) of the University of Pau and Pays de l'Adour, France.
-the E.R.I.B.I.A. (Equipe de Recherche Interdisciplinaire sur les Iles Britanniques, l'Irlande et l'Amérique du Nord) of Caen University, France.

Then, I would also like to thank all the nice teachers who kindly supported my candidacy to various university positions throughout the years as this helped me finish this book in good conditions. I also thank Adeline Toniutti's C.A.LY.P. (Centre d'Art Lyrique, Paris), the librarians at the Paris Opera and my various singing and music teachers for enriching my operatic education.

-I have a particular thought for my former art students at Paris 1 Sorbonne University and all my students with whom I could discuss many works of art, including theirs.

This book is dedicated to my mother, my grandmother, my grandfather, the musicians in the family and the musical friends. It is also dedicated to Graham, a never failing friendly support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

PART ONE

Resorting to operatic truthfulness and vocal clarity to deal more transparently with values ?

PART TWO

Beyond the transmission of value, operatic intermediality as being more essentially a necessary human poetic/expressive challenge.

PART THREE

Operatic transversality as destabilizing form and meaning.

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

> While critics and reviewers of the past two hundred years have struggled to find a suitable analogy for *Prometheus Unbound* in literature, it seems possible that Shelley had non-literary models in mind when he was writing what he described to Thomas Love Peacock as "a lyric and classical drama". Indeed, the world of music provides a clear parallel to Shelley's lyrical drama in the form of the Italian opera buffa that so delighted the poet and his friends during the London seasons in 1817 and 1818. Ronald Tetreault remarks that *Prometheus Unbound* is a "lyrical drama whose form derives ultimately from the union of poetry and music in Greek tragedy, but whose closest contemporary equivalent was the opera, especially the musical comedy of Mozart". Taking Tetreault's observation one step further, I would like to argue that the organization of discourse and the specific dramatic arrangement of Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* have strong affinities with the Italian operas of his day, particularly the works of Mozart and Rossini.[1]

> « J'ai simplement rêvé d'un regard pluriel qui offre une vue d'ensemble à mon vertige. »[2]

> « L'opéra que nous avons est l'*opéra culinaire*. Il a été un moyen de jouissance bien avant qu'il fût une marchandise. Il sert à la jouissance, même là où il exige ou transmet de la culture, car il exige ou transmet alors précisément la culture du goût. Il approche lui-même toute matière dans une attitude de jouissance. Il *vit* et il sert de vécu. »[3]

From plays directly derived from the ideal Athenian operatic model to today's feminist or non feminist Brecht-inspired plays, from texts resorting to operatic myths to polyphonic Bakhtinian works, literary fictions seem to bear the aesthetic marks of centuries of operatic experiments. Today, maybe the most operatic trend of literary fictions includes works exemplifying the often noted[4] contemporary tendency to resort to a simple, confessional first person narration (Graham Swift,…) breaking with the extravagant experimentations carried out in previous novels. Thus, it would be possible to assert in the wake of Stephen Benson[5] that after Beckett successfully dismantled the glorious positioning of the I and while composers began dismantling operas -and number operas in particular- as "objets de jouissance", novelists began to return to a more operatic, jubilatory mode of address locating voice and the communication of mundanity at the center of knowledge.

What is more, many contemporary fantasy novels, comics and video games appear grounded in the operatic universe _see how, for example, the character of Loge in *Das Rheingold* becomes Loki again in 1939 *The Avengers* who, in turn, inspires Richard Croft's Loge's costume in the Metropolitan's 2010 production.

When studying both operas and literary texts, one comes quickly to the conclusion that

---

[1]Quote from Jessica Quillin on Graham Henderson's website. The latter reviews Jessica Quillin's book entitled *Shelley's Prometheus Unbound and the Opera Buffa*, 19 December 2016, www.grahamhenderson.ca/interesting-stories/shelley-at-the-opera-jessica-quillin. 19 December 2016, accessed April 2017.
[2]Célestin Monga, *Fragments d'un crépuscule blessé*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1990, 11.
[3] Bertolt Brecht, *Ecrits sur le théâtre*, Paris: L'Arche, Tome 2, 1963-1979, 326.
[4] A.S.Byatt, David Lodge, see Stephen Benson, "Contemporary Fiction and Narratorial Acoustics : Graham Swift's *Tomorrow*." *Textual Practice*, 25.3 (2011): 585-601.
[5]*Ibid.,* 585.

maybe more systematic analyses of the deep relationships between the two arts and their various interpenetrations are needed. By dwelling on the historical evolution of operas, one would necessarily gain insight into a rich history of representation strategies and thematic choices which could not fail to have affected novels and literature in English as well.

Therefore, the main question, central to this book, has to do with the "operatic remains" one can find in literary fiction and what becomes of them throughout literary works. More precisely, I would like to explore what remains of the influential operatic aesthetic evolutions.

Indeed, if it is quite easy to show how literary works were transposed onto the operatic stage, it is maybe a little more demanding to focus on the deep influence of opera as a source of representation for writers, for instance in terms of artistic structure, choice and treatment of important themes… It is this notion of operatic intermediality as common ground between literature and operas, which will guide the diachronic reflexion of this book as well as its comparative analyses. Indeed, operas historically preceding novels, dramatic creations and some forms of literary creations, it is easy to find traces of them and even more than traces, general representational influences.

First here, I will explain what I understand by operatic dramaturgy of literary texts and subtexts and I will try to briefly delineate the problematic of the interactions between the two arts, literature and opera, in relation to the notions of truthfulness on the one hand and that of poetic challenge on the other, both of which will also be clarified. Then, I will dwell on the precise objectives of this work and the perspectives it opens.

Introducing the operatic remains in literary fictions

Definition of the operatic dramaturgy of texts and subtexts. From surfaces to depths.

Operatic inspiration from textual surfaces to depths, structures and subtexts.

This book will cope with cases of partial intervention of opera in literature (allusions) but also with fuller integration patterns of the operatic leading to a hybrid narrative art (see in Angela Carter's "Puss-in-Boots" in *The Bloody Chamber*[6]) with sometimes intense dramatization and metafictional value.

The literary text may contain explicit references to operatic artworks which may be used when characters listen to or sing opera (see in Willa Cather's *The Song of the Lark*). There can also be more or less explicit references to the operatic world in general (see the table next page).

[6] Puss-in-Boots is identified with Figaro and the reader understands that it implies a whole set of identifications with commedia dell'arte precedents to the Beaumarchais/Paisiello/Mozart/Rossini character (Brighella, Arlechino,…). This Figaro character who is all the richer as it has been so variously staged is here to blur the identity of the protagonist and to give a sort of baroque aspect to the narration. The very romantic and colourful aspect of Figaro (he was brought up by gypsies, became a writer, a soldier, travelled a lot on horse across Spain, failed to convince people with his writing, created scandal and settled in Seviglia as a barber, lived at the time of Isabella) is also aesthetically engaging. The magical ubiquity of Puss-in-Boots is suggested by reference to Figaro, the magical factotum ("Figaro here Figaro there" in epigraph of the short story, Angela Carter, "Puss-in-Boots", *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993, 104).

Table of main types of operatic references

Types of references	**Examples in specific works**
Operatic staff and voices	-J.G.Ballard's "Prima Belladonna". -Rushdie's Vina in *The Ground Beneath her Feet.*
Operatic settings	-The wall mastaba in Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake* to represent Vulcan's temple and crypt in *Aida.* -Sylvia in her bath standing for Mozart's Countess being at her window in her room singing "Dove sono i bei momenti" (Graham Swift's *Ever After*[7])
Costumes	-The tessellations on Carter's Puss-in-Boots [8] recalling Arlecchino's coat and the English Harlequinades before the Figaro character. -The reference to Arlecchino's mantle[9] once all the variously colored liquids mix on the floor (also a potential metafictional reference to mise en abîme and operatic intermediality as it suggests the manteau d'Arlequin) in A.S. Byatt's "Medusa's Ankles".
Disguises and mystification of identities	-Princes disguised into servants in theatrical plays echoing the practice on the operatical stage (*La Cenerentola*).
Circulation of objects	-The waiting blade in Graham Swift's "Seraglio"[10] recalling Osmin's saber or whip… in *die Entführung aus dem Serail.*

[7] Graham Swift, *Ever After*, New York: Vintage International, 1993, 24.
[8] Angela Carter, "Puss-in-Boots", *op.cit*., 104.
[9] A.S.Byatt, "Medusa's Ankles", *The Matisse Stories*, New York: Vintage International, 1996, 21.
[10] Graham Swift, "Seraglio", *Learning to Swim and Other Stories*, London: Pan Macmillan, 2012, 13.

Body/vocal gestures in relation to the performative dimension	-The loud voice of Shirley Abramovic[11] recalling melism in 19th century French operas featuring female madness, suicidal urges.

Table of main types of operatic references (continued)

Body gestures of the characters in relation to what is said.	-*Women in Love* (reference to Dalcroze movements[12]). -Eccentric/concentric movements of Sylvia hugging repeatedly Bill or of the ballerinas in *Ever After*[13] potentially revealing Delsarte's dialectics of eccentric (explosive) vs concentric (intense) movements of passion. -In his name containing "shook", Uncle Pumblechook's whole character is summed up to the one preposterous gesture of shaking hands with Pip in a servile way once he understands Pip's prospects are indeed looking up. The scene can be reminiscent of Delsarte's insistence that one must not multiply gestures and that it is better for aesthetic purposes if the two characters's gestures are in opposition.

More often than not, operatic references never being really innocent, the text develops deeper relationships with the performative artworks mentioned or suggested as the latter may contaminate the structure, the esthetics and as well as, to a certain extent, the content of the literary text. A good example would be the use of the wall becoming a mastaba and seeming to

[11] Grace Paley, "The Loudest Voice", *Collected Stories,* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007, 45-52.
[12] D.H. Lawrence, *Women in Love*, New York: Barnes and Noble, 2005, 254.
[13] Graham Swift*, Ever After*, *op.cit*., 22 ("Coming out she would hug me ardently", "would" enhancing the habit, "I could have lived in, lived for that squeeze. […] She might as well have been hugging herself […]" a line further), 27 ("And opening her arms again [eccentric], stooping, but unweeping, she crushed me against that warm, ready bosom […]"[concentric]) among other instances. The ballerinas, extending their arms seem to adopt a more eccentric movement (25), as Bill does when he hurls the toy plane out of fury (71).

introduce an operatic scenographic game from the first chapter of James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* as it plays with *Aida*.

Dramaturgy of operatic texts and subtexts.

It seems necessary to begin by defining what is meant by « a dramaturgy of operatic texts/subtexts » and to think more globally about the operatic legacy in literary texts. Then, I will try to relate the notion of an operatic dramaturgy to the analysis of some subtexts of novels in English. My intuition is, of course, that operas influenced not only the perceptions and representations of action in space but also focalisation and the relationships between author, narrator and character.

The present work relies on a definition of « dramaturgy » loosely inspired by the one found in the *Dictionnaire des termes littéraires*[14]. Moreover, it links it to a relativist conception of art underlying any conception of composition and performance.

« Dramaturgy » coming from the Greek « dramatourgia » once designating the mere composition of a play or opera and its theatrical/operatical performance, is nowadays a synonym for the poetic and technical principles underlying the elaboration of a theatrical play or an opera[15]. I will use both acceptions of the term in this present work.

A good framework as to the (r)evolutions in operatic stagings would be that given by Pierre Flinois's article and Julien Dubruque's[16] which I will shortly sum up and of which I will try to delineate the literary implications. Operatic history begins with the absence of any mises en scène to the benefit of the voice. Singers simply used to move forward to the front of the stage to sing their arias. Subsequently, in the seventeenth century, occurred an inflation of stage effects allowed by the newly created stage machineries, settings and choreographies.

Apart from this, the singer still relied on a small number of stereotyped gestures meant to convey their message and draw attention to the inflections of their singing. The design of a specific mise en scène did not exist as only entrances and exits were marked down and really taken into consideration.

Among the leading figures as far as the elaboration of a specific operatic staging is concerned, one must of course notice Mozart with his theatrical veracity, Weber and Spohr.

---

[14]Van Gorp, Hendrik; Delabatista, Dirk; D'hulst Lieven; Ghesquiere, Rita; Grutman, Rainier and Legros, Georges, *Dictionnaire des termes littéraires*, Paris: Honoré Champion, 2005, entry: "dramaturgy".

[15] *Idem.*

[16]Pierre Flinois, « La mise en scène d'opéra, une perpétuelle révolution. », French Institut National de l'Audiovisuel website, n.d., https://www.fresques.ina.fr/en-scènes/la-mise-en-scène-d'opéra-une-perpétuelle-révolution.html, accessed August 2017.

Julien Dubruque, « Du chef de scène au chef d'orchestre. », *Musique, Images, Instruments*. *Orchestres au dix-huitième et dix-neuvième siècles : Composition, Disposition, Direction, Représentation*, n.12, 2010: 1780-1849.

Under the influence of Adolphe Appia in the nineteenth century, mise en scène thus became the art of projecting into space what was projected into time by the librettist (or playwright if we think in theatrical terms)[17]. The space he (re-)created from as early as 1892 became a ahistorical, practical one, one made of simplified shapes and primary forms such as walls, staircases, slopes on which the interplay of light and darkness allowed the projection of subjectivity and emotivity. This drift away from the anecdotal is a radical revolution. The smooth transitions in the settings and mises en scène ensure a fluid mobility and a spatio-temporal unity as he put an end to the unordered heterogeneity leading to a loss of meaning which used to characteristise early stagings.

Adolphe Appia evolved from a two-dimensional setting to a three-dimensional, almost bare one thanks to his use of light. He created a theatre of shadows and his mises en scène were made to spring from the ever-changing, evocative musical dynamics and the main character's inner evolutions. It was the beginning of operatic focalisation as the whole reception of the opera was somehow filtered. The mise en scène restricted the spectator's point of view to that of the main character's. One may imagine that together with the influence of cubism, Appia's operatic mise en scène could not help to contribute to the literary reflection on narrativity and focalisation.

In the early twentieth century, Edward Gordon Craig began to reelaborate the theatrical and operatic space by sometimes completely opening it, refusing the anecdotal, the historicist and the realistic so as to give its full value to the singer's expression in Appia's wake. As Appia too, he played with colours, lights and shapes. He also gave prominence to gestures over words while devising a dramaturgy springing from the fusion of the various performance arts and revolving around symbolism[18].

However, his true originality lies in his conception of the singer as a super-puppet somehow announcing a re-thinking of the role of the stage director and that of the playwright in the creation of the performance.

Edward Gordon Craig assigned a kind of divinity to the super-puppet, a perfect creation able to supplant the all too human and all too emotional actor[19]. The actor-singer then tried to emulate the puppet so that their acting could fully adhere to the stage director's instructions. Rather than embodying a character and using his own emotions which could have destroyed the whole dramatic undertaking, the singer had to perform what had been designed for him to perform.

One can see connections between this Petrushka-like conception of a super puppet[20] and the relationships of characters with author, acting both as a traditional author and sometimes as the

[17] Pierre Flinois, « La mise en scène d'opéra, une perpétuelle révolution », *op.cit.*
[18] « Craig et la marionnette », dossier de presse BnF, French national library website, 2009, http://www.bnf.fr/documents/dp_craig.pdf, 3, accessed August 2017.
[19] *Idem.*
[20] Petrushka, finally slaughtered by the Moor, is punished for having experienced human feelings.

stage director to his characters in his fiction. For Michael Holquist, the author is "a ventriloquist who tries out and even exploits the voices of others in order to express his true intentions, the particular message of truth […] he wishes to communicate."[21] Of course, like the stage director in Edward Gordon Craig's view, he more often than not disappears from the stage. Additionally, for François Cooren, "making characters and figures speak allows the author to create a distance (and a form of undecidability) between what is affirmed in the text and what she or he is supposed to believe or think (in a way similar to what happens in irony)."[22]

For David Carroll:

> In Holquist's interpretation of ventriloquism, the other is simply a way back to the self; all voices are made to serve the authority and intentions of the master-author-ventriloquist. If this is dialogism at all -and there are moments of Bakhtin's texts that tend to support such a view- it is a weak form of dialogism, one that is more an appropriation of the other than an opening to or an affirmation of alterity. I would agree with Holquist that for Bakhtin, "all utterance is ventriloquism", but I would argue that a much more radical view of ventriloquism must be taken than the one he puts forth: one in which the intentions of the ventriloquist himself cannot be given a special status outside and preceding the dialogue of voices, where the ventriloquist himself must be seen as ventriloquated as much as ventriloquating.[23]

Expressionism, symbolism and New Objectivity were among the trends presiding over both novel and opera before traditional operatic stagings, waiting to be renewed by Brecht, became out of fashion.

According to the dictionary, since Bertolt Brecht's theories, the meaning of the term "dramaturgy" has been expanded to embrace a conjunction of esthetic and ideological principles resulting in the choice and mastery of a particular form to define and express a vision of the world[24]. *In fine*, this conjunction also regulates the representation of the real onstage even if the latter does not correspond to a mimetic reflection of the world[25]. After the next evolution towards emotional truthfulness promoted by Constantin Stanislavski and then towards more naturalism in acting, nowadays, « dramaturgy » has come to encapsulate the conception of the dramaturgical choices envisaged in a relativist perspective.

Operatic transversality, esthetic truthfulness, poetic challenge: objectives and perspectives.

The first objective of this study is to help redefine the literary project by proposing a

---

[21] David Carroll, "The Alterity of Discourse: Form, History, and the Question of the Political in M. M. Bakhtin", *Diacritics*, 13:2 (1983): 65-83 cited in François Cooren*, Action and Agency in Dialogue: Passion, Incarnation and Ventriloquism*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2010, 8.
[22] *Idem.*
[23] *Idem.*
[24] Van Gorp, Hendrik ; Delabatista, Dirk ; D'hulst Lieven ; Ghesquiere, Rita ; Grutman, Rainier and Legros, Georges, *Dictionnaire des termes littéraires*, *op.cit.,* entry: "dramaturgy".
[25] *Idem.*

reflexion about the inherent use of operatic material of all sort that has for historical or more idiosyncratic reasons -depending on authorial strategies and choices- posed challenges in the elaboration of the literary fiction. I felt that attention had to be drawn to the variety of the operatic influence on literature.

This monograph works in conjunction with a series of articles written by the same author and focusing on precise analyses of the operatic influence in specific literary fictions by such authors as James Joyce, A.S. Byatt or Graham Swift. A certain need for some return to a more general and conceptual approach was felt, after the writing of these first analyses contained in articles, both justifying them and gathering some conclusions drawn from them. Indeed, if we except Timothée Picard's works, there exists only very few theoretical or general overview of operatic intermediality in fictions and more particularly fictions in English.

This project is to be understood within the context of my wish to teach literature in English in a more intermedial way, while focusing on the linking of literature and operas. It follows lessons I gave on particular literary works and their operatic adaptations and provides some background for my own teaching practices with the aim, I hope, of possibly helping others. This would enrich a personal reflexion begun while teaching English applied to the arts to student artists from various disciplines at Paris 1 Sorbonne and even while using music to improve my students's pronunciation of English in the wake of Carolyn Graham's work.

My way of seeing teaching literature in English for English as well as French speakers involves a more direct relation and exposition to the arts. Investigating literature from the point of view of (operatic) intermediality permits to envisage the other artistic fields involved in literary fiction because dialoguing with it. It permits to open the students's and our literary perspectives to the history of representations and expressivity and to the main works of art still dominating the art world nowadays and influencing the quality of writing. By exploring and fostering bold dialogues between literary fictions and performance/performing arts, I hope to enrich the reading -especially its socio-cultural aspect, involving the knowledge of aesthetic norms- of literary texts. Opening the interpretation of the literary fiction to the interpretation of other artistic fictions also means benefiting from various pathways to communicate and enrich understanding of complex literary concepts especially as far as tropology, characterology, gestural behaviour and staging are concerned.

My way of proceeding involves tending towards generalisation as this book is meant to justify operatic approaches to specific literary works in English published in articles by myself.

Paradoxically, it is also meant to give an insight into particular authors' approaches. The purpose of this book is to delineate a deep structural, poetic common ground between opera and literature.

The work sometimes follows a chronological progression as it traces back the dual operatic/literary origins of characterology. In spite of all the aesthetic transformations induced by ideological purposes, the study of both poetic disruptions and of characterology justify a comparatist perspective on the deep structural level, disruptions as being a dynamic principle conditioning creation and characterology as another dynamic principle conditioning the representation of human nature.

The interaction of literature in English with operatic intermediality seems to me to represent a quest for esthetic truthfulness on the one hand and a mere art for art sake poetic challenge or fantasy on the other. Operatic literary endeavours seem to aim at finding a sense of balance between the two.

Developing its operatic quality allows literature to strengthen the sensual engagement of the readers and thus reach truthfulness. Establishing a sort of theatrical proximity from the start of the literary endeavour is indeed a very common practice. Multiple examples of *captatio benevolentiae* such as Thomas De Quincey's in *Confessions of an Opium-Eater*[26] are dramatic and can remind the reader of operatic prologues also meant to attract the goodwill of the audience. This seems to go hand in hand with the elaboration of a sort of ideal mode of communication which would aim at saying the truth with artistic integrity and achieving its communicative purpose.

A.S. Byatt's world in the very operatic "Medusa's Ankles" is multilingual (references to the operatic Italian), multimedia as the progression of the short story is a sonorous musical one climaxing in the end when the diva character's image breaks into pieces. Thus, the author seems to be looking for a more truthful and more communicative art as if she implicitly agreed with Peter Sellars when he states:

> Par sa dimension multilingue, multiculturelle, multimédia, par son aspect diachronique, dialogique, dialectique, par cette étrange délectation qu'il provoque, [l'opéra] est la seule forme capable d'évoquer et de représenter la simultanéité des événements, leur confusion, leur juxtaposition, l'amère tragédie du monde – bref, tout le chaos qui constitue la trame de l'histoire contemporaine[27]

However, more generally, by resorting to devices which I would identify as operatic, literature seems merely to aspire to the dramatic, delicate esthetic power of opera.

---

[26] Thomas De Quincey, *Confessions of an Opium-Eater*, London: Macdonald, 1956.

[27] Peter Sellars, 9 (forgotten reference, see errata to come).

In A.S. Byatt's "Medusa's Ankles", the author's subtext constantly seems to re-direct us to the esthetic world of the Figaro operas which it apparently sets as its aim to emulate. Through references to Rosina (the rosy nude) and Susannah (the main character apparently standing for A.S. Byatt) but also to Figaro (the character of Lucian, the hairdresser), the short story echoes the sensual, corporeal operatic level as if it were the easiest way of dealing with a poeticized and well-informed sense of *eros*. Indeed, historically, operatic plots mostly recapitulate man's erring relations with sex, emotions and the senses but also constitute a constant questioning of woman, her corporeality and her place in society (Semele, Lakmé).

A synesthetic invitation to the reader who has to listen to the short story while layers of references to Matisse's painting engage him visually, the story, puts him biblically in the position of a voyeur (peeping on the Rosy Nude and on the aging Susannah), maybe a new sort of "artistic voyeur" who has to look at things slowly, as A.S. Byatt herself was taught to do according to the epigraph to the short story collection. Questioning the relationships between operas and literature thus comes up to questioning the notions of beauty, of the extremes of refinement and of taste in literature.

Background and definitions.

Two main historical periods to the interpenetrations opera/ literature.

As Peter Conrad underlines it, it is epic and romance as found in operas which more or less successively preluded to the creation of the novel. More particularly, the hero gradually transforming into an individual or sometimes a wayfarer sinking into erotic pursuits (Jason, Scipione, Caesar, Orlando, Jove, Castor and Pollux, Maometto, Siegfried, Parsifal) seems to provide the prototype for the main character in novels[28]. Retrieving characters from mythologizing drama, librettists also set out to undertake to write for more and more novelistic operas, centering on psychological changes and no longer on achievements[29]. Psychological novels and literary allegory then influenced operas in their turn. These are the major historical turning points which can serve as a background to our intermedial approach.

This broad, caricatural approach though useful of course needs to be qualified if one looks

[28] Peter Conrad, *Romantic Opera and Literary Form*, *op.cit.,*6.
For a full explanation of the historical relationships between epic, romance and literary art, see *Ibid*., 9-42.
[29]*Ibid.*, 122.

for a thorough approach of historical evolutions (Orlando is all psychology mad though a "eroe sagace", Wagner's Parsifal is partly an epic hero…).

General definition of the literary and operatic fictions used.

As Emmanuel Reibel underlines it[30], opera as a transdisciplinary art having strong relationships with literature defies the comfortable categories of university research and teaching programmes. It is only very recently that comparative literature could frankly begin freeing itself from the rigorous divisions of expertise to address the interrelationships between the two arts. This motivated my radical impulse of decompartmentalizing the analysis and trying to contribute to a common art history of literature in English/opera doing away with the frontiers -between epochs, between literary and operatic artforms- and going beyond the separate historicity of the two artistic practices.

Even if I will more often than not deal with novels, I will enlarge here my perspective to try to deal with literature in English in all its genres be they likely to be staged or not. As far as operatic performances are concerned, I will base my work on Rainer Zaiser's acception of the French term "représentation"[31], as likely to contain drama, ballet, opera (this includes machine plays and machine operas), court ceremonial embracing speech, music, gestuality, dance, setting, costumes, the spectator's reception and all the devices which are used to produce appearances, role play and play on masks, disguises, trompe-l'oeil, show, the teatro mundi topos[32].

Underlying this work, one can find the division into several great chronological periods of what could be called operatic modern literature (works that include the influence of operas either in their thematic material or in their esthetic ressources).These periods each represent a different approach to the development of dramatic art, literature and operatic intermediality.

The interoperatic dimension is to be found very early on in the history of literature, as the

---

[30] Emmanuel Reibel, « Musique et littérature : plaidoyer pour la création d'un *champ disciplinaire* par-delà les disciplines. », *Fabula-LhT*, n. 8, « Le partage des disciplines », May 2011, http://www.fabula.org/lht/8/reibel.html, accessed 27 July 2018.

[31] Rainer Zaiser, *L'âge de la représentation : l'art du spectacle au XVIIe siècle : actes du IXe colloque du Centre International de Rencontres sur le XVIIe siècle*, Kiel, 16-18 March 2006, Tübingen: Günther Narr Verlag, 17.

[32] *Idem*.

genre of literary drama and that of musical drama were more or less intertwined. Strangely enough, everything seems to indicate that no literary characterology would have been possible without the presence of music as no declamation or poetic advancement would have been possible without the advancement of the musical lore. In fact, it is also very important to replace the origins of the novel among other literary genres in the evolution of the sentiment from its illustration in early restoration court spectacles.

In a first period, such Renaissance authors as William Shakespeare or Ben Jonson drawing on epics by Tasso or Ariosto, permitted literature and dramatic art in all its variety to evolve from ancient musical characterology -I would argue that Greek tragedies were musical shows- and thematic approaches of humanity by re-shaping and refining characters and literary/dramatic material. Be it through their perception of masculinity, power relationships, of madness, of all sorts of mythified crusades or the re-invention of the comedy of humours and of festive comedies, Renaissance playwrights gave a new impulse to interartistic dramatic practices. The subversion of archetypes and of genres such as the pastoral, the development of tropes gradually gave birth to both a more realistic and a more artistic image of man and art in transition.

The softer restoration drama, which could be said to constitute a crux in the advancement of operatic intermediality coincided with the rise of John Dryden's heroic drama meant to be deprived of Shakespearian horrors and to illustrate virtue and valour. Shakespeare did not invent (or re-invent as it could be said to be present in ancient stories) this genre, but it soon became vital for operas and then for operatic intermediality. What is more, John Dryden's heroic drama, could not go without music and the period saw an evolution from the genre of the masque to more clearly operatic masterpieces, essentially thanks to the William Davenant's literary/operatic artistic endeavours giving splendour to court spectacles and sentiments of national myths. Indeed, the development of restoration drama went hand in hand with the rise of stage machinery.

Moreover, from another point of view, around that time, Aphra Behn's liberation of female speech also rendered possible to identify drama and subsequent operas with a vehicle for subsequent velleities of emancipation. Her way of having females explore conjugal but also corporeal and sexual considerations, of equating the figure of woman with that of the strategist par nécessité, of relying on female wit gave a female coloration to the advancement of the comedy of manners. The progress in the reflexion on society was also marked by William Congreve's *Way of the World* similarly exploring new ways of living and distilling a new sense of equality in the universal relationships between men and women.

After an operatic period characterized by the exploration of magical transformations, operatic desire (Jacopo Peri, Rovettino, Francesco Cavalli's early operas), troubling stories about kings and queens made more ordinary as they peopled mad scenes (Francesco Cavalli's Medea for instance), the second period, the eighteenth century, could then see the rise of the novel, as authored by Daniel Defoe, Jonathan Swift, Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding or Laurence Sterne, partly dedicated to psychological and political intricacies of another style. However, prose fiction, focussing on the problems of the day, addressed a wider, increasingly female readership. Professional writers began to appear in the midst of widespread illiteracy, observing their social environment and promoting values be it directly or through the use of satire.

They wrote narratives that were realistic in essence, revolving on ordinary everymen living their lives, often real life stories, in real geographical settings. Novelists started to covet an intimate closeness with readers they wanted to share their point of view on the world.

In fact, the novel began to prove the exceptional means of communication it now is in the hands of such contemporary writers as Graham Swift. Strange as it may seem, one could find Jack, Vince and Brenda's ancestors in Moll Flanders, in the all too real sailor Robinson Crusoe or in a variety of now world-famous real *and* fictional prostitutes or thieves. Defoe's character is not so much of the hero as the working-class hero Graham Swift will later refine. Robinson as the industrious and resilient puritan embodies and dialogues with the reader seen as a practical-minded, resourceful and religious puritan.

Jonathan Swift's satire in *Gulliver's Travels* added to the novel an instinct to ignite social change. A truly political source of inspiration, it evidenced the necessity for any writer to convey the truth and make things evolve. An eighteenth century source for the contemporary novel and opera could be found in the psychological studies penned by Samuel Richardson in defence of vulnerable women suffering at the hands of rich men employing them, paving the way for Pierre Beaumarchais and Mozart's *Nozze di Figaro*'s Susanna.

A comic counterpart inevitably complementing the documentation of the role of psychology in human relationship was provided by the burlesque Henry Fielding whose comic and mock epic parodies marked another great turning point in the history of the novel and of representation at large. One could compare his parodies of female virtue and purity to Gioachino Rossini's later debunking of idealized versions of femininity in the creation of assertive contralto women. Opposing courage, loyalty and generosity to the ideal of sexual purity, Henry Fielding truly imbued the epic and the novel with the notion of true values.

The presence of Laurence Sterne among the other eighteenth century novelists seems like an anachronism as his radical experimentations with form -digressions, experimentations with the

stream of consciousness and clear distinction between the time of the clock and the time of the mind- made him an unconventional *avant la lettre* modernist rather than a realist. His modernist style, his contribution to the development of the notion of "sentiment" and also, by derivation to the history of literary emotions, and of feelings in melodrama could not help chime with evolutions in operatic narrations. Eighteenth century operas are all digressions, asides, and operatic time follows the intern rhythm of sentiments. Lawrence Sterne's work can also be compared with Geoge Eliot's in the fashioning of novel as a tool for the sympathetic act of imagination.

A third period, that of the nineteenth century was characterized by the creation of new turqueries[33] and Harem operas/ literary pieces in which the sensuousness of the West was explored from other facets, mostly for pornographic use. Beauty, the fascination and the horror that it could provoke, the emancipation of reason and the concomitant liberation of the pulsions provided a rich transartistic and synesthetic material that could ensure further artistic developments. One finds traces of the turquerie in Thomas De Quincey's *Confessions of an Opium-Eater*.

Nonetheless, if the nineteenth century saw the liberation of the male writer it also coincided with a new form of feminism developed in novels. The new treatment of gender prejudices, the female author creating female "literary" doubles within their fictions permitted deep considerations on the functioning of the patriarchal society. Another brand of social criticism emanated from Charles Dickens who began his writing career by creating an opera but who also creatively drew on the theme of the fear of progress and of mechanization. His social novels, like other writers' in the wake of the 1832 Reform Act, explored the problematic aftermath of growing industrialization and urbanization, which could be seen to slightly precede Giuseppe Verdi's social operas such as *La Traviata*.

Charles Dickens's deeply disturbing characterization blurring the boundaries between men and machines introduced a new form of realism which would later be exploited in operas. Among his other literary inventions, one may list his own contribution to development of the sentiment, otherwise explored in the eighteenth century and which would prelude to both operatic and literary evolutions. The novel thanks to this journalist began to be associated with emotionalism and sensationalism in particular when the novelist recorded the death of some key character.

The American nineteenth century also saw the thematic development of the unconscious and of the pulsions, especially thanks to the fantasies created by Edgar Allan Poe. The idea of saying what cannot be said found new advocates in Henry James (*The Turn of the Screw*) or in Oscar

[33] Of course, the genre of the turquerie is a very old one, taking its roots in the sixteenth century.

Wilde, who both wrote works that were adapted into most brilliant operas. Certain works often questioned death and its relationships to life in the context of a gradual mistrust towards the divinities.

Industrialization and its consequences on people (country girls leaving the countryside to become prostitutes in the city,…) also left its marks on American social literature. This social material was found sublimed in operatic works such as *Sister Carrie* (a novel adapted to the operatic stage). Then, the deep contemplation of nature combined with the idea of self-reliance and of the inherent goodness of man came to be opposed to over-simplistic unitarian theories though this position was also ultimately to be qualified. Transcendentalism and various reactions to transcendentalism as formulated and staged in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* strongly affected literature as a matrix for later operatic works (Jake Heggie's *Moby Dick*,…)

Both satire and social criticism appear in the works by Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914), the author of *The Devil's Dictionary* who also dealt most often with the civil war and its dreadful human consequences. Around the same time, the emerging portrayals of the Westerner as the rough man of the West or the cow-boy developed under Mark Twain's pen and became the strong identifying myth of a nation. Americans truly found their literary but also operatic voice. Such black opera composers as John Thomas Douglass, Harry Lawrence Freeman, nicknamed "the black Wagner" or Scott Joplin, the composer of *Treemonisha* (1911) began to introduce jazz elements (pre-blues music, a call-response pattern evoking the communication between a preacher and its congregation, ragtime rhythms) and black narrations in the operatic form. The progressist narrations one can find in these operas and which would lead to Ulysses Kay's *Jubilee* (1976) can be compared with the progressist impulse animating Southern gothic writers such as Sherwood Anderson.

A fourth period, from modernism to postmodernism leading to today's operas and novels reveals the resilience of both literary and operatic forms which though displaying all sorts of innovative alterations and distortions always adapt to contemporary issues. Experiences with the stream of consciousness, optical organisations, use of heterogeneous materials in the wake of collage practices, variously deconstructed timelines or insertions of multiple voices and multiple points view characterised this last period. German expressionistic dramatic techniques inspired the authors as a gradual progression from abstruse systems of cultural references (T.S.Eliot) to the invention of opalescent transparencies (Graham Swift) took place. Whether resorting to science fiction or to more realistic material, narration now deeply assumes its intermediality in an age associated with the proliferation of media.

Major critical landmarks in the field, literature review.

As far as the relationships between operas and literary fictions are concerned, the critical legacy I am relying on includes analyses such as Peter Conrad's work, *Romantic Opera and Literary Form*[34] and Pierre Brunel's studies of Balzac's operatic short stories[35]. I also used studies by baritone and operatic literature specialist Michael Halliwell and was interested by his treatment of operatic adaptations (*Opera and Literature: Comtemporary Operatic Adaptation of Twentieth-Century Drama and Novels, Words to Music: Contemporary American Operatic Adaptation of Seminal American Literary Works*), of novels by Emily Brontë[36], Henry James (*Opera and the Novel: the case of Henry James*, *The Presence of the Past: Henry James's "The Last of the Valerii" as Opera*), William Styron, Francis Scott Fitzgerald[37], J.M. Coetzee[38] or Peter Carey[39].

I also read works by musicologists such as Laurent Feneyrou's writings on Bernd Alois Zimmermann, Jean Barraqué or Helmut Lachenmann or dealing with the relationships between music and dramaturgy[40].

I was also inspired by Michael and Linda Hutcheon's collaborative works as I read Michael Hutcheon's articles on operas and medicine[41].

---

[34] Peter Conrad, *Romantic Opera and Literary Form, op.cit.*

[35] Pierre Brunel (ed.), Honoré de Balzac (author), *Sarrasine, Gambara, Massimilla Doni*, Paris: Gallimard, 2015.

[36] "From Novel into Film into Opera: Multiple Transformations of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*.", David Francis Urrows (eds.), *Essays on World/Music Adaptation and on Surveying the Field*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008, 29-57.

[37] "Her Throat, Full of Aching, Grieving Beauty": Reflections on Voice in the Operatic Adaptations of *The Great Gatsby* and *Sophie's Choice.*", Walter Bernhart, Lawrence Kramer (eds.), *On Voice*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2014, 1-27.

[38]Michael Halliwell, "Singing from the Margins": Postcolonial Themes in *Voss* and *Waiting for the Barbarians.*", Pamela Karantonis and Dylan Robinson (eds.), *Opera Indigene: Re/presenting First Nations and Indigenous Cultures*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2011, 45-67.
Michael Halliwell, "Vocal Embodiment and Performing Language in *Waiting for the Barbarians*: Philip Glass's Adaptation of J. M. Coetzee's Novel.", Walter Bernhart and Michael Halliwell (eds.), *Word and Music Studies: Essays on Performativity and on Surveying the Field*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2011, 173-189.

[39]Michael Halliwell, "Operatic Mythmaking and *Bliss*: Peter Carey's Novel as Film and Opera.", *Musicology Australia*, 34.2 (2012): 233-257, "*Bliss*: from Novel to Libretto to Opera.", *Australian Music Centre*, 18 March 2010.

[40] Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et dramaturgie, esthétique de la representation au vingtième siècle*, *op.cit*.

[41] "Melodies and Maladies.", *Opera Canada*, Winter 1995, 14-15.
"Sexuality, Sin and the Social Order: Richard Wagner's *Parsifal*.", *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 7.3 (1995): 261-75.

"Famous Last Breaths: The Consumptive Heroine in Opera.", *Parallax* (U.K.), 2 (1996): 1-22.
"Arias, Anxieties and Epidemics," *Canadian Medical Association Journal* , 157.12 (December 1997): 1734-5.
"'Alles was ist, endet': Living with the Knowledge of Death in Richard Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*." *University of Toronto Quarterly,* 67.4 (1998): 789-811.

PART ONE

Resorting to operatic truthfulness and vocal clarity to deal more transparently with values?

Chapter 1-Elusive, transparent narrative operatic voices. A dramaturgy of evanescence and responsibility in the context of the interpretation of the world.

For Bruno Clément, voice in *Le lys dans la vallée*[42] (1835) and more generally any staging of voice symbolises the essential contradiction of life and expression as well as the necessary avoidance of faillible flesh. The image of Félix unable to grasp Blanche's soulful breath somehow captures the aporetic attempts at rendering lifelike stories and emotions in the novel.

In Grace Paley's "The Loudest Voice" (1959)[43], Shirley, at least partly standing for Grace Paley, becomes aware of the possibilities of her voice, symbolising blunt creative power and the faculty of transforming the negative experience of having to adapt to the American culture into art. The loud voice ironically is the forever unreachable, elusive entity necessary to the elaboration of literary fiction. In J.G. Ballard's "Prima Belladonna"[44], the competing voices of Jane Ciraclydes's and the Arachnid's endowed with a fantasmatically wide coloratura tessitura reflect -in an operatic world dreamt anew- J.G. Ballard's new aspirations for writing and its possibilities. Coping with voice, cannibalisation, relationships between man, the vegetal and the animal, literature and music, woman's poisonous beauty, could also permit to think creatively about the future of a posthumanity endlessly reshaping itself, human art and human vocality at large.

In the wake of Clément and Hegel, voice also has to be apprehended as plural, in a sort of archeological perspective, recapitulating its animal, primeval origins and eventually leading to human consciousness and thought. Torn between unity and diversity, thought and voice have parallel developments, as Graham Swift's polyphonic and musical *Last Orders*[45] illustrates. In the

---

[42] Honoré de Balzac, *Le Lys dans la vallée*, Paris: Garnier Flammarion, 2010, 68-69:
Le souffle de son âme se déployait dans le repli des syllabes, comme le son se divise sous les clefs d'une flûte ; il expirait onduleusement à l'oreille, d'où il précipitait l'action du sang. Sa façon de dire les terminaisons en *i* faisait croire à quelque chant d'oiseau ; le *ch* prononcé par elle était comme une caresse, et la manière dont elle attaquait les *t* accusait le despotisme du cœur. Elle étendait ainsi, sans le savoir, le sens des mots, et vous entraînait l'âme dans un monde surhumain. Combien de fois n'ai-je pas laissé continuer une discussion que je pouvais finir, combien de fois ne me suis-je pas fait injustement gronder pour écouter ces concerts de voix humaine, pour aspirer l'air qui sortait de sa lèvre chargé de son âme, pour étreindre cette lumière parlée avec l'ardeur que j'aurais mise à serrer la marquise sur mon sein ! Quel chant d'hirondelle joyeuse, quand elle pouvait rire ! mais quelle voix de cygne appelant ses compagnes quand elle parlait de ses chagrins ! L'inattention de la comtesse me permit de l'examiner. Mon regard se régalait en glissant sur la belle parleuse, il pressait sa taille, baisait ses pieds, et se jouait dans les boucles de sa chevelure. Cependant j'étais en proie à une terreur que comprendront ceux qui, dans leur vie, ont éprouvé les joies illimitées d'une passion vraie. J'avais peur qu'elle ne me surprit les yeux attachés à la place de ses épaules que j'avais si ardemment embrassées
[43] Grace Paley, "The Loudest Voice", *Collected Stories,* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007, 45-52.
[44] J.G. Ballard, "Prima Belladonna", *The Complete Short Stories*, London: Flamingo, 2002, 1-11.
[45] *Last Orders* is composed of the thoughts of different characters who sometimes break into songs, a frequent method

author's polyphonic novels, humans are often animalised (see the obsessive comparison and the sometimes zoophiliac confusion of man and meat, man and animals throughout the Swiftian corpus), maybe so that readers can have a better idea of what is typical of humanity.

In *Thaetetus*[46], thought implies the plurality of voices, exchanges and disagreement. For Socrates, thinking corresponds to the purifying process of progressing from the diversity of opinions to a single position which retains an invisible trace of the debates from which it emerged[47]. It appears to find an illustration in Grace Paley's 1959 "The Loudest Voice" where Shirley feeling a "happy chorus" in her "inside self"[48] seems to speak up for and against the others. It is as if her voice implicitly opposed both her mother's pessimistic view of integration and the American attempts at assimilating the Jews. Her voice permits her to bridge the cultural gap and find a proper place for her free self. Grace Paley seems to situate the authorial thought very near voice in this short story.

Assigned to express the life of the spirit, voice mostly evokes the terrifying prospect of dying. For Agamben, voice is interrupted by language as desire is interrupted by work and it may therefore symbolise negativity and death[49].

However, in Grace Paley's *The Loudest Voice*, humans have to speak up for intercultural peaceful communion so that their message is understood[50]. Thus, Shirley and her father's usage of their loud voices is explicitly connected with the happy absence of death ("Ah, Mr. Bialik," my mother replies, "if you say to her or her father 'Ssh,' they say, 'In the grave it will be quiet.'"[51]), the successful escape and liberation from European pogroms and tyrants, or from potential Arab murderers. Shirley's father even hopes that learning how to speak up will allow his daughter to have a better future than he has working in a shop.

Conversely, when voice is not used to convey a particular message, the character seems on the verge of dying. To reveal to the reader that her mother was still alive at the time of the narrated events, the narrator equates life with the capacity of breathing in an operatic or theatrical way ("My own mother is still as full of breathing as me"[52]). It seems that Shirley/Grace assimilates her mother's faculties to hers as though to suggest that she, too, could act or sing and escape the

---

in Graham Swift, probably partly inherited from William Faulkner.

[46]Plato, "Thaetetus", *Dialogues of Plato*, Boston: MobileReference, 2003-2008, 2292.

[47] *Ibid.*, 2298.

[48] Grace Paley, "The Loudest Voice", *op.cit.*, 45.

[49]Giorgio Agamben, *Language and Death. The Place of Negativity*, Oxford, Minneapolis: the University of Minnesota Press, 2006, 33.

[50] "Be quiet," the grocer says, "the labels are coming off." seems to evoke in a literal way Shirley's voice's ability to undo the cultural cleavage and firm labelling of people. Jews, Europeans, Anglo-Americans could now be perceived on same footing, which common people may see as dangerous. Grace Paley, "The Loudest Voice", *op.cit.,* 45.

[51]*Idem.*

[52] Grace Paley, "The Loudest Voice", *op.cit.*, 45.

negativity of forced cultural integration. However, the maternal chest full of unsung, unused breath can be seen as the symbol of death by lack of esthetic communication.

Among the common points shared by operas and intermedial operatic fictions is the elaboration of a voice and voices, the use of voice as a tool whose characteristics, often analysed in specialised works, will be shortly recapitulated here. First, voice, giving flesh to the body of the word, was understood by Pascal Lécroart as transcending simple breath[53]. As such, in fictions it sometimes retains its hallucinogenic power: though one does not see Vince or Lenny, and still less Jack in Graham Swift's *Last Orders*, hearing them, one does, which adds some ghosts to the central one.

Added to its mere linguistic and verbal functions, voice possesses an ethical and esthetic value. The constitution of the voice, a fundamental stage in the constitution of the subject, requires two subjects answering one another, an inherent vocal schism or fragmentation, an impossible wholeness to which polyphonic narrations such as Graham Swift's *Last Orders* may allude. This may also cause the difficulty to hear and accept oneself as a subject. At a certain level, as Pascal Lécroart underlines, conscience and literary writing are impossible without man's best voice engaging their responsibility and permitting an inner dialogue connecting him to other voices and the universality of a general voice. The refinement of voices in the novel thus coincides with the emergence of a dramaturgy of responsibility.

In the wake of Pascal Lécroart, part of this study will aim at highlighting the process implied by the passage from sonorous voice to silence and literary music central to literature and the refining/redefining of voice. The novelists studied in this work seem to illustrate the break from a period when singing was the natural way of delivering poetry and belong to a sort of post-adamic period when singing one's literary voice has become a priviledged way of self-fashioning one's interiority.

The writer, conceived by Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida as the mysterious listening speaker, listens to themselves in order to open to the world. Material voice and the most intense form of human presence it signals being not semantically interesting as far as literary creations are concerned, they are simultaneously erased and recorded. In the wake of Barthes, Agamben, Lécroart and Derrida, the literary voice silently unfolds in the reader's mind, it is enriched by the latter's inner voice and, from its intimate locus, weaves a relationships between death, hearsay, what a voice can and mean to say and what it leaves unsaid. Once voice is divested of its fleshy incarnation and auditory dimension, it becomes a tool to interpret the world.

---

[53] Pascal Lécroart, Frédérique Toudoire-Surlapierre (eds), *Eclats de voix : l'expression de la voix en littérature et en musique*, Paris: Improviste, 2005, 273.

According to Henri Meschonnic[54], voice understood as the affect of living composing a spatial and temporal art is the prosodic expression of the whole body. Detached from the person who possesses it, like the poem, it has a performative and gestural value as it links bodies together. For Gérard Desson, the singing voice is always related to the male quest of the mother's lost voice, through a certain way of imagining women. The lyric voice always tends to be bombastic, it is also subverted to express a sort of essential poetry originating in the inexpressible expression of the self.

The lyric existence of the subject is to be found in the multiplication of vocal effects. Writing begins with the emotional voicelessnesss of the subject. Valéry used to identify the act of crying out and of writing about the self as what characterized voice (Valéry, *Cahiers*,...)

How do modernists and postmodernists posit voice in relation to the imagination, how do the bodily, spiritual and intellectual dimensions of voice pointed out by Roland Barthes interact, how does literary voice convey the whole sensations (tactile, sonorous, visual,...) and gather them meaningfully, which physical and fantasmagoric voice is created by the imagination? are the questions raised by Pascal Lécroart and which we will try to answer.

These questions are linked to the Blaise Cendrars's conception of writing as "the sonorous book", a sonorous book made dynamic by the irrational voice of affections and afflictions as well as the attempts at calling (a preliminary to singing), addressing, identifying oneself as being the bearer of such and such a thought, affections or idea. Writing can also be seen as the endeavour to give the illusion of voice in the complete absence of physical voice.

Nowadays, more and more authors use voice or allude to it in their narratives probably less to create a poetic music of the words, what is often thought of as "musication"[55] than to undermine the convictions springing from written texts and deconstruct their works. This is Graham Swift's case. More than merely focusing on the crafting of a neatly organised language, a "pure resonating futility"[56], authors like transgressing the possibility to efficiently grasp any meaning. Voice as a literary esthetic device permits the author to bridge the gap between meaningful text and a so-called meaningless musical game.

The interplay between music and literature has to do with how artists wish to play on the value of silence, meaning. Music does not say and therefore is often a far deeper language than words. Stephen Benson opposes the limited attempt for language to refashion itself along musical

[54]Henri Meschonnic, « Le théâtre dans la voix. », Gérard Dessons (dir.), *Penser la voix*, *chant-communication-linguistique clinique-littérature-musique-peinture-psychanalyse-théâtre,* Poitiers: la licorne, 1997, 25-39, 25.
[55] Françoise Escal, *Contretemps musique et littérature,* Paris: Méridiens Klincksieck, 1990, 9, 70.
[56] *Ibid*., 9.

lines to the limitless possibilities of music to transform language into operas or other creations[57]. This can be criticized if one takes into account the emotional musical potential of literary narrations of the Swiftian type. Musical and operatic intermedialities cannot only be the "additional icing of literature"[58] as the creation of a language giving full strength to the words beneath the words cannot be underestimated.

Chapter 2-From the operatic stage to literature: a common quest for purity of expression.

The pursuit of pre-adamic harmony between language and meaning guiding all literary endeavours found a new impetus in the revival of the Orphic theme in Monteverdi's *Orfeo* and in the birth of operatic forms. Many opera critics linked the mythically perfect musician Orfeo's quest for Euridice beyond death, to operatic nostalgia for the utterly lost pure forms of Greek sung drama. Indeed, at the time of Monteverdi, composers ventured to retrieve that strongly idealised Greek model from the past. Thus doing, they somehow reenacted Orfeo's tragedy which, taken as a whole, even to Nietzsche, staged the intellectual intuition trying to reach a sort of dyonisiac wisdom found in music, the representation of the Absolute[59].

If operas and literary forms share a same dynamic and idealistic attempt to bridge the gap between what truth composers and authors meant to convey and the actual truth their means of expression could produce, one can say in the wake of Heidegger's philosophy that to achieve their ends they also came to share a same primeval and alethic sense of muthos. As Laurent Feneyrou notes it[60], soon operatic and literary narrations could only take the shape of the alethic truth of life lived for death's sake. This alethic truth, like any aletheia, reveals itself while covering the very process of its unveiling.

Life in *Orfeo* just like the operatic re-creation of life in general, is more often than not lived as an intimation of mortality paradoxically procrastinating death. Marital imbroglios and unions, ordeals testing the hero's valour, sudden deaths like Pompeo's, or the people massacred in Turandot prior to the discovery of Calaf's name, the pressing necessity of swearing one's allegiance before it is too late (Pamyra finally deciding to die with her father instead of

[57]Stephen Benson, *Literary Music.Writing Music in Contemporary Fiction*, Aldershot, Burlington: Ashgate, 2006, 13.
[58] *Ibid.,* 14.
[59] Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et dramaturgie: esthétique de la représentation au XXe siècle*, Paris: publications de la Sorbonne, 2003, 39.
[60] *Idem.*

treacherously uniting with her lover in *The Siege of Corinth*), all emphasize the urgency of living one's life to the full.

Whatever truth they try to reach, literature and operas are both concerned with the relationships between true story and fiction. They both came to question truth in their own ways.

The strong operatic muthos _the problematic veracity of muthos was anyway addressed by Plato- seriously began to deliquesce under the influence of Wagner whose retrospective and psychoanalytic quest for origins undermined any attempt at a straightforward linear plot. This, added to previous eighteenth century literary attempts such as *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* announced the expressionist music of the Viennese school as well as the definitive erosion of straightforward diegesis some twenty years later by modernist authors such as D.H.Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, or William Faulkner in the 1930s writing what the blood feels and is always true or encoding Woolfian myriads of impressions. The advent of expressionism in literature and operas put an end to straightforward muthos substituting the logics of feelings and emotions to that of a chronologically unfolding drama.

However, more generally, operas have always tended to disrupt plot through the unbounded expression of feelings and impressions in arias. Even if this was radicalised under the influence of Heidegger insisting that nothing much really happens in tragedies apart from the acceptation by the character of his/her Being for death. One could argue that muthos and diegeses have always been more or less "ontologized".

Nearer our end of the time line, radical operatic experiments -like the number opera *To be Sung* by Pascal Dusapin (1993)- challenge the treatment of emotions and aesthetic beauty only to invite us to definitively reject reason in favour of emotional introspection. Here, the break with traditional operatic reception is all the more intense as the overall work has to be envisaged as one would "a picture by Rothko", evading at once all possibility of plot and of reading meaning into what "happens". The true meaning of the work can only be experienced by letting oneself be carried away by the experience.

Under the influence of Gestalt thinking, Salvatore Sciarrino [61] with his timbric experimentations, harmonic continuums, subversive techniques and play on sonorous silence as an alternative to sound substitutes the spatial progression of complex musical wholes (maybe in the wake of György Ligeti's variable density continuums) to traditional musical narration. His reworking of the frontier between presence and absence through his creation of ethereal sonorous material involves a focus on the natural phenomena of speaking, breathing[62] perceived in a wider

[61] Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et dramaturgie: esthétique de la représentation au XXe siècle*, *op.cit*., 814.
[62] Marta Grabocz, « Entre naturalisme sonore et synthèse en temps réel : images et formes expressives dans la

context of atmospheric natural phenomena. Aspirations to muthos understood as the traditional development of motifs and themes as well as any aesthetic pretentions are systematically deflated by a transposition of man "inside nature, inside matter" and the creation of a mystical void.

The evolution in the conception of operatic and novelistic muthos globally led to a new sort of irrational and mythological expressionism. Lukacs associates expressionism with pathetic and vacuous declamation, with the pretence at surface activism[63], with solipsism. Its endeavour to represent the whole living network of relationships composing reality would be doomed to failure. The realism which should emanate from the expressionist work of art would be but an illusion.

Jorge Luis Borges's garden of forking paths among other more dynamic interactions between readers and authors, reception and creation characterising the postmodern world maybe finds its echo in highly collaborative operatic works, such as Anne Lebaron's hyperoperas (*Cellphonia: WET*).

---

musique contemporaines », *Archives contemporaines*, 4 November 2013, 8 (for the use of natural phenomena and natural models in music).

[63] Georg Lukács, "Expressionism: Its Significance and Decline.", 3, mariabuszek.com, n.d., mariabuszek.com/mariabuszek/kcai/Expressionism/Readings/LkcsDecline.pdf, accessed March 2018.

Chapter 3-An early interartistic characterology and sense of staged action marked by the shaping of values and heroes, from ancient operatic tragedies to Restoration operatic drama.

TABLES FOR A COMPARATIVE APPROACH OF EARLY OPERAS AND LITERARY DRAMA IN ENGLISH

TABLES RELATING SCENIC DEVELOPMENTS, OPERATIC AND LITERARY WORKS

STAGING AND SCENERY DEVELOPMENTS TOWARDS LIFE IN 3D	**OPERATIC WORKS**	**LITERARY WORKS**
		-Around -2100 BC: *The Epic of Gilgamesh.*
		-850-750 BC: Homer, *Iliad.*
	-Before 600 BC and before: Thepsis who created the speaking "hypocrite" (speaking actor): Drama was sung throughout at the Dyonisia. It was composed of songs dedicated to Dyonisus.	**-480-406 BC:** Euripides.
		-342/341BC-c.290BC: Menander's first attempts at ancient "comedies of manners".
		-8 BC-2AC: *Bible.*
		-4BC to 1 April 65AC : Seneca.
-Around 1415: Filippo Brunelleschi, goldsmith, sculptor and architect discovers the secret of linear perspective, how to create the illusion of space and distance on a flat surface.[64]		
		-1516: Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso.*
	-1517: Tromboncino, ottava from *Orlando.*	
	-**From 1517 to around 1645:** Madrigals, songs inspired by Ariosto's *Orlando*.[65]	**-1532:** Rabelais, *Pentagruel.*

[64] Larry Wild, "A Brief History of Theatrical Scenery", Larry Wild's website, n.d., http://www3.northern.edu/wild/ScDes/sdhist.htm, accessed August 2016.

[65] For an exhaustive list of musical works inspired by Ariosto's *Orlando* before the full advent of opera, see Alfred Einstein, "*Orlando Furioso* and *Le Gerusalemme Liberata:* As Set to Music During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", *Notes*, second series, 8.4. (September 1951): 623-630.

-1545: Sebastiano Serlio details the design and construction of a court theatre, how to provide the King with a perfect view and to create a raked stage. He used four sets of angled wings (Comic, Tragic, Pastoral…) and a backdrop.	**-1589:** Jacopo Peri, *La Pellegrina.* **-1598:** Jacopo Péri, *Dafne.*	**-1573:** Torquato Tasso, *Arminta.* **-1581:** Torquato Tasso, *Jerusalem Delivered*. **-1589:** Shakespeare*, Comedy of Errors*; *Henry VI*, Parts II and III. **-1591:** Shakespeare, *Henry VI* Part I. **-1592:** Shakespeare, *Richard III.* **-1593:** Shakespeare*, The Taming of the Shrew*; *Titus Andronicus.* **-1594:** Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*; *Two Gentlemen of Verona*; *Love's Labour's Lost.* **-1595:** Shakespeare*, Richard II*; *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* **-1596:** Shakespeare, *King John*; *Merchant of Venice.* **-1597:** Shakespeare, *Henry IV*, Part I and II. **-1598:** Shakespeare, *Henry V*; *Much Ado About Nothing*; Jonson, *Every Man in His Humour.* **-1599:** Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*; *As You Like It*; *Julius Cesar.* **-1600:** Shakespeare, *Hamlet*; *Merry Wives of Windsor.* **-1601:** Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida.* **-1602:**Shakespeare, *All's Well That Ends Well.*

		-1604: Shakespeare, *Othello*; *Measure for Measure*; Dekker's *Honest Whore.* **-1605:** Shakespeare, *King Lear*; *Macbeth*; Ben Jonson, *Eastward Ho.* **-1606:** Ben Jonson, *Volpone*; Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra.*
	-1607: Claudio Monteverdi, *L'Orfeo*, Mantua. **-1608:** Monteverdi, *L'Arianna*, Venice.	**-1607-1610:** Thomas Dekker, *The Roaring Girl*; Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*; *Timon of Athens.* **-1608:** Shakespeare, *Pericles.* **-1609:** Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*; Jonson, *Epicoene, or the Silent Woman.* **-1610:** Shakespeare, *Winter's Tale,* première of Ben Jonson, *The Alchemist.* **-1611:** Shakespeare, *Tempest.* **-1612:** Shakespeare, *Henry VIII*; Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi.* **-1613:** Thomas Middleton, *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside.* **-1614:** Ben Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair.* **-1621:** Thomas Dekker, *The Witch of Edmonton.*
	-1624: Claudio Monteverdi, *Il Combattimento di Tancredi e di Clorinda*, Venice. **-1640:** Claudio Monteverdi*, Il*	**-1636:** William Davenant, *The Wits; Heywood, Love's Mistress or the Queen's Masque.*

	Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria, Venice ; Cavalli,*Gli Amore di Apollo e di Dafne*, Venice ; *La Didone.* **-1642:** Claudio Monteverdi, *L'incoronazione di Poppea,* Venice.	
	-1643: Francesco Cavalli, *Egisto,* Venice.	**-1643:** William Davenant*, The Platonick Lovers*; *The Unfortunate Lovers.*
	-1644: Francesco Cavalli, *Ormindo*, Venice. **-1649:** Francesco Cavalli, *Giasone*, Venice. **-1651:** Francesco Cavalli, *La Calisto*, Venice.	
	-1656: Francesco Cavalli, *La Statira,* Venice ; *Il Novello Giasone,* Venice.	**-1656:** William Davenant, *The Siege of Rhodes.*
	-1657: Francesco Cavalli, *Artemisia,* Venice.	**-1657:** Thomas Middleton, *Women Beware Women.* **-1658:** William Davenant, *The Cruelty of Spaniards in Peru.* **-1659:** William Davenant, *The History of Francis Drake.* **-1663:** Robert Stapylton, *The Slighted Maid*; *The Stepmother.* **-1664:** Sir George Etherege, *The Comical Revenge or Love in a Tub;* Richard Flecknoe, *Love's Kingdom;* John Dryden, *The Rival Ladies.* **-1665:** John Dryden, *The Indian Queen.*
	-1667: Francesco Cavalli, *Eliogabalo.*	**-1667:** John Milton, *Paradise Lost; Dryden, The Indian Emperor.*

	-1668: Marc Antonio Cesti, *Il Pomo d'Oro*, Vienna.	**-1668:** John Dryden, *Secret Love; or, the Maiden-Queen*; *Sir Martin Mar-All; or, the Feigned Innocence.*
		-1669 : Thomas Shadwell, *The Royal Shepherdess;* John Dryden*, The Wild Gallant.*
		-1670: John Dryden, *The Conquest of Granada*; *The Tempest; or, the Enchanted Island*; *Tyrannick Love or the Royal Martyr.*
		-1671: Villiers, 2nd Duke of Buckingham, *The Rehearsal.*
		-1672-3: William Davenant's version of *Macbeth.*
	-1673: J.B. Lully, *Cadmus et Hermione*, Paris, Jeu de Paume.	**-1673:** John Dryden, *Marriage à la Mode*; Elkanah Settle*, Empress of Morocco.*
		-1673-4: Thomas Shadwell, William Davenant, *Tempest*; Cambert, *Ariane ou le masque de Bacchus.*
	-1674: J.B. Lully, *Alceste ou le Triomphe d'Alcide*, Paris, Jeu de Paume.	**-1674:** Thomas Shadwell, *Psyche.*
	-1675: J.B. Lully, *Thésée*, Saint-Germain-en-Laye ; Giovanni Legrenzi*, La Divisione del Mondo*, Venice.	
	-1676: J.B. Lully, *Atys*, Saint-Germain-en-Laye.	**-1676:** Sir George Etherege, *The Man of Mode*; John Dryden, *Aureng-Zebe.*
		-1676-7: William Davenant, *Circe.*
	-1677: J.B. Lully, *Isis*, Saint-Germain-en-Laye.	**-1677:** Racine, *Phèdre*; Thomas Durfey, *A Fond*

		Husband.
	-1678: J.B. Lully *Psyche,* Saint-Germain-en-Laye.	**-1678:** John Dryden, *Oedipus: A Tragedy*; John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Nahum Tate, *Brutus of Alba, or The Enchanted Lovers.*
	-1679: J.B. Lully, *Bellérophon*, Paris, Palais Royal ; Alessandro Stradella, *Trespollo Tutore*, Genoa.	**-1679:** John Dryden, *All for Love; or, the World Well Lost*; *Troilus and Cressida; or Truth Found too Late.*
	-1681: M.A.Charpentier, *La Pierre Philosophale*, Paris.	**-1681:** William Harrison Ainsworth, *The Lancashire Witches*, Nahum Tate's happy version of *King Lear* (entirely omitting the fool and ending in the happy marriage Edgar/Cordelia).
		-1682: Nahum Tate's own version of *Coriolanus : The Ingratitude of the Commonwealth.*
	-1683: Henry Purcell, *Dido and Aeneas*; John Blow, *Venus and Adonis.*	
	-1684: J.B. Lully, *Amadis*, Saint-Germain-en-Laye.	
	-1685: Henry Purcell, *Dido and Aeneas.*	**-1685:** John Dryden, *Albion and Albanius*, Nahum Tate's farce, *Duke and no Duke.*
	-1687: M.A. Charpentier, *Orphée descend aux Enfers*.	
	-1688: Agostino Steffani, *Niobe, Regina di Tebe*, Munich *;* Charpentier, *David et Jonathan*, Paris.	
	-1689: Agostino Steffani, *La Lota d'Ercole con Acheloo*, Hanovre ; *Henrico detto il Leone*, Hanover.	
	-1690: Henry Purcell, *Dioclesian*, London.	
	-1691: Henry Purcell, *King*	**-1691:** John Dryden, *King*

	Arthur; André Campra, *L'Europe Galante*, Paris, Palais Royal; Agostino Steffani, *Orlando Generoso.*	*Arthur; or The British Worthy*.
	-1692: Henry Purcell, *The Fairy Queen*, Dorset Garden.	**-1692:** John Dryden, *Cleomenes, The Spartan Hero.*
	-1693-4: M.A. Charpentier, *Médée.* John Eccles, *The Rape of Europa.*	**-1694:** John Dryden, *Love Triumphant; or, Nature Will Prevail.*
		-1695: William Congreve, *Love for Love.*
	-1699: André Campra, *Carnaval de Venise,* Paris.	
	-1702: André Campra, *Tancrède*, Paris.	
	-1705: G.F.Handel, *Almira,* Granville, *The British Enchanters.*	
	-1707: G.F.Handel, *Rodrigo* ; *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno.*	
	-1709: G.F.Handel, *Agrippina*, Venice; Agostino Steffani, *Tassilone*, Düsseldorf.	
	-1711: G.F.Handel, *Rinaldo*, London.	
	-1712: André Campra, *Idoménée*, Paris.	
	-1713: G.F.Handel, *Teseo*, London.	
	-1714: Antonio Vivaldi, *Orlando Furioso*, Venice.	
	-1737: G.F. Handel, *Faramondo*, Venice.	
	-1738: G.F. Handel, *Xerxes*; *Serse*, London; Carl Heinrich	

	Graun, *Cleopatra e Cesar*, Berlin.	

COMPARATIVE TABLES EVIDENCING THE RECYCLING OF PLAUTUS, TERENCE AND MENANDER'S CLASSICAL COMIC MODEL IN ENGLISH OPERATIC/LITERARY COMEDIES OF MANNERS.

MENANDER PLAUTUS TERENCE	**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES**	**LITERARY /DRAMATIC WORKS**	**OPERATIC WORKS**
-**620BC:** Aesop. -**526-456:** Eschylus Tragedies, fate of the city, humans vs gods. -**480-406:** Euripides. -**428-347:** Plato. -**384-322:** Aristotle. -**Betw.c.342 BC-292 BC: Menander.** **a)*Aspis* (*The Shield*)** The old miser, Smikrines tries to use the Athenian *epikleros* (the older male in the family has to marry the orphaned heiress) to marry his niece whose brother, Kleostratos, presumably died in action. A servant, Daos, stages the false funerals of Smikrine's brother-Chairestratos, uncle to Kleostratos- so as to make Smikrine marry Chairestratos's daughter, which he is ready to do. Kleostratos's sister marries her true lover, Chaireas. At	-The (incestuous) old miser. -The mercenary Kleostratos as an example of how war dissolves identity and relationships…Everybody thinks him dead only because his servant found his shield. The major consequence is the sister's obligation to marry her uncle. Mad dissolution of normal conjugal bonds.	-The Pantaloon, The Dottore, the zanni, the Spanish Captain in the commedia dell'arte. -Septimius in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway.*	-Beaumarchais (*Barbier de Séville*, Bartholo as the old miser wishing to marry his ward), Arlequinades à l'anglaise. -Septimius in *Theodora*

the end, Kleostratos arrives alive and marries Chairestratos's daughter, Smikrine is left behind for what he is… -**<u>319BC:</u>** Theophrastus, *The Characters*. **b)<u>317:</u> Dyskolos** -How an old, grumpy, and misanthropic peasant, Knemon, finally recovers better feelings after falling in a well and being saved by his servant Gorgias to whom he passes the administration of his affairs. Finally Sostratos is able, thanks to Gorgias, to marry Knemon's daughter, Myrrhine.	-Delineation of the senex iratus character previous to Plautus.	-Shakespeare's Egeus (*Midsummer Night's Dream*).	

MENANDER PLAUTUS TERENCE	DISTINCTIVE FEATURES	LITERARY WORKS	OPERATIC WORKS
-c.254-184 BC: Plautus *-Asinaria,Bacchides, Cistellaria, Casina, Mercator, Stichus* *-Miles Gloriosus*	**1-stock figures and comic characterization:** -opposition between **alazon** (senex iratus, Miles Gloriosus) and **eirôn.** Coincidental birth of modern irony. Irony which will also become a strategy of reading with the reader sometimes taking the part of *alazon* to a text which is *eirôn*[66]. -**the senex amator** (the old man in love with a young girl): Demaenetus, Philoxenus, Nicobulus… Lysidamus vs *sene lepidi* (who know to moderate their pulsions) -**the pompous soldier** as braggart and the parasitic flatterer	Shakespeare, *Coriolanus, Falstaff.*	-Uberto (*Serva Padrona*), Bartholo, Scipione. -1926, Kodaly, *Hary Janos.* -Verdi, *Falstaff.*

[66] Jennifer Thompson, "Irony: A Few Simple Definitions", Al Drake's website, n.d., www.ajdrake.com/e456_spr_03/materials/guides, accessed August 2017.
Irony appears in French in 1370 with Nicole Oresme's translation of Aristotle's *Ethics*: « Yronie est quant l'en dit une chose par quoi l'en veult donner à entendre le contraire. Si comme parleroit d'un sage homme notoirement il diroit ainsi : 'il ne sait rien non ? Ou il est plus sage qu'il ne cuide ! ou autre chose semblable' », quoted in Huzeyfe Tok, « Le concept de l'ironie. Eiron et eironeia. », GRIN website, 2013, https://www.grin.com/document/298987, accessed February 2016.

MENANDER **PLAUTUS** **TERENCE**	**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES**	**LITERARY WORKS**	**OPERATIC WORKS**
-*Amphitryon* -*Bacchides* -*Curculio* -*Truculentus*	-The ***servus callidus*** (intelligent slave) able to conceive clever plans. A character Plautus may have inherited from Greek drama. **2-satire revolving around Romanitas.** **3-Structure.** Protasis-epitasis-catastrophe	-Jeeves (P.G.Wodehouse)	-Despina (*Cosi van Tutte*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*), Figaro (*Barber of Seviglia*),
-185-159BC : **Terence** -**166 BC:** *Andria* -**165 BC:** *Hecyra* -**163 BC:** *Heauton-Timorumenos* -**161 BC:** *Eunuchus, Phormio* -**160 BC:** *Adelphoe*	-borrowings from history, mythology and Eastern fables. -the duped parent, the jealous lover, play on identities, disguises, deceptions[67]. -Birth of scenes of humour coming from real life. Draws on the same universality of common nature that classical comedy of manners[68]. -Comedy can be associated with "variations on the elements of surprise,	Modern drama (from Shakespeare)	Baroque and modern operas.

[67] Cornelia C.Coulter, "The Plautine Tradition in Shakespeare", *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 19.1 (January 1920): 66-83, 67.

[68] *Idem.*

-**<u>106-43 BC</u>**: **Cicero.** -**<u>19:</u> Horace,** *Ars Poetica.* **-Early Italian literature** **-1313-1375: Boccaccio.** **-1480-1557: Straparola.** **-1480-1561 : Bandello.** **-1504-1574 : Cinthio.** **-early sixteenth century German and Dutch schoolmasters Introduced Christian Terence plays** They used the appealing and lively model of classical comedy in order to instruct pupil in morals and Latin culture. **example : Riotous, rebelling schoolboys neglecting their studies and repenting.**	incongruity, conflict, repetitiveness, and the effect of opposite expectations."[69]	-French fabliaux.	

[69] *Understanding Drama*, Rai Technology University, Rai Technology University website, n.d., http://164.100.133.129:81/eCONTENT/Uploads/understanding_drama.pdf, accessed January 2016, chapter 6, 25.

Here we will consider Greek tragedy to be a direct ancestor of operas, thus merging literary and operatic arts.

1-From non dramatic to dramatic and operatic sources, from ethos to pathos, the early fashioning of ancient stock characters in New Comedy, commedia dell'arte and historical writings.

Character can be construed as inherent qualities, as reputation, as a kind of intangible substance, a kind of intrinsic structuring of personality. In its original Greek acception, a character was a figure stamped onto a wax tablet and the object that stamps that figure. It came to mean a readable sign in a general sense[70].

The original meaning of the word "character", having to do with the physical inscription and readability of signs, evolved much to accommodate its rhetorical acception. Indeed, « character » came to designate a particular use of language meant to identify a particular writer, particular groups of writers. Moreover, simultaneously, writers increasingly tried to use language to define and represent particular kinds of speakers as well.

1-a-Aesop: a sense of morality uniting the human and animal realms and informing human characterization in Greek drama.

I would put forward the argument that at the root of literature and opera, there is of course the impulse of story-telling and that most primitive attempts at story-telling rely on the elaboration of easily recognisable, efficient, stock characters. These characters are useful inasmuch as they undertake predictable actions and imply easily foreseeable twists and turns in the canvas or plot, thus satisfying the audience both with the joy of recognition and mystery.

Aesop (-620-564) in his some six hundred fables was certainly one of the first to focus on the caricature of specific human characteristics, thus giving a sort of model for potential actors playing such and such a figure disguised with a mask. However, Aesop's characters were first meant to serve the education of children and were frequently animals "humanized" insofar as they were talking and somehow displaying human relationships. The goal of the animalisation was to achieve a sort of zoom on human defects and a sense of morality.

---

[70] Edward Burns, *Character Acting and Being on the Pre-Modern Stage*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1990, 4-5, (My paraphrase).

In fact, staging moral themes seems to have been more important than simply presenting caricatures. Thus, were highlighted the unexpected reversal of power relationships ("The Lion and the Mouse"), the absurdity of tyranny ("The Wolf and the Lamb"), the benefits of fraternity and disadvantages of disunion ("The Father and his Sons"), the difficulty of being a real actor (one may disguise oneself like the ass in the lion's skin but the unskilled impersonator's real identity will come out as soon as he talks). Aesop was also responsible for the famous fable of "The Belly and the Members" Shakespeare uses in his *Coriolanus* to caricature the relationships between Coriolanus and the Plebeians. He thus evidences how essential it is for a city that the citizens offer reliable support to their leader. One can also notice, among others, the caricature of cowardly desertion ("The Bear and the Two Men") and that of a miser transforming his whole fortune into a lump of gold he buries. Regularly spied on as he contemplates his gold, he is finally robbed of it. Only to be reminded by his neighbour of the overall absurdity of his relationship to wealth.

Aesop was somehow influential in drama, which at the time, looked more like operas. One can notice allusions to his fables in Aristophanes's *Wasps*, for instance and some of his caricatures (the man with his two wives, the young one and the old one, "Of an Old Man who married a Young Girl", "The Mischievous Dog" portraying a nasty older dog trying to bring confusion by telling the younger -also nasty- dog that his bell is a sign of disgrace) may have inspired Menander's nasty Smikrines, trying to secure a young woman. "The Mice and the Weasels" which is often interpreted as meaning that greatness does not go without its penalties[71] seems to foreshadow the destiny of tragic heroes most often condemned to a cruel fate.

If the themes tackled by Aesop are not necessarily reflected in subsequent Greek tragedies, they contributed to inform the Greek popular culture and a certain vision of morality. The need for an unwavering moral sense even in the midst of unsettling circumstances can be found in the adventures of Neoptolemus in Sophocles's *Philoctetes*. Moreover, his treatment of animals reminds the reader that, as Chiara Thumiger assesses "[…] in tragedy a middle ground between human and animal rather than a sharp opposition is established"[72]. In this respect, one can suggest a sort of indirect interaction between Aesop and tragedians.

In tragedies, animals appear both pragmatically -even if it is quite complicated to imagine having a whole flock of sheep invading the stage, some characters appeared on horse- and also figuratively, as haunting metaphors (Odysseus as a biting animal, Elektra as a fed animal,

[71]The biggest mice, who had been designated leaders are unable to go back to their holes as safely as the others and fall prey to the weasels.

[72]Chiara Thumiger, "Greek Tragedy Between Human and Animal", *Leeds International Classical Studies,* 7.3 (2008), 3.

Neoptolemus as a cub[73]). This is maybe due to their proximity to man as implied by their necessary presence during the rituals of sacrifice and divination.

Aesop seems to have contributed to the delineation of a common intellectual and emotional ground between animals and humans to be opposed to the sharp contrast we frequently establish nowadays[74]. In Greek plays, animals often foreshadow crisis, change or fate as feathered birds are used as metaphors for dreams or pain. As in Aesop, the relationships between man and animal illustrate power relationships in general, often through the metaphor of the yoke.

*

Before Theophrastus**,** Plato (-428-348 B.C.) first gave sketches of types corresponding to the various kinds of societies possible. A timarchy is not populated with the same kind of people as an oligarcy, a democracy or a tyranny. Then, Aristotle (-384-322)'s conception of man in action at the center of mimetic art supposed the division of man into dianoia (thought, intellectual nature) and ethos (being as defined by habits and moral stature). Aristotle contributed to develop the portrait of the common man in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as his perfect protagonist had to be neither too elevated nor too low from a mortal point of view. People had to be able to identify with him, feel terror and pity. He had to be katholos (have a universal dimension), chrestos (good) and behave with decorum.

1-b-A rounded vision of humanity in the wake of Aristotle: Theophrastus's thirty character types, and their influence on the New Comedy and Shakespeare.

> What stories are new ? All types of all characters march through all fables; tremblers and boasters ; victims and bullies ; dupes and knaves; long-eared Neddies; giving themselves leonine airs; Tartuffes wearing virtuous clothing; lovers and their trials, their blindness, their folly and constancy. With the very first page of the human story do not love and lies too begin ? So the tales were told ages before Aesop.[75]

After Aesop, Theophrastus (-319), influenced by his master Aristotle[76], concentrated more deeply and systematically on character as defined by shortcomings (the dissembler, the flatterer,

[73] Chiara Thumiger, "Greek Tragedy Between Human and Animal", *op.cit.,* 6.
[74] *Ibid*., 3.
[75] W.M.Thackeray, *The Newcomes*, vol.1, Chap.1, Gutenberg Project website, n.d., https://www.gutenberg.org/files/7467/7467-h/7467-h.htm, accessed August 2017.
[76]Aristotle already conceived a binary system in which each virtue had a corresponding vice. He conceived a sort of moral equilibrium with its attendant excesses.

the coward, the overzealous man, the tactless man, the shameless man…). Theophrastus's *Characters* which was written during a revival of comedy enjoy a specific place in the literary and operatic/dramatic history since they both contribute to shape the notion of character and that of theatre. The various types appear as acting persons on the world's stage, as an illustration of the *theatrum mundi avant la lettre* based on imitation rather than caricature[77].

The *Characters* helped shape a brand of comedy as they highlight negative traits of human personalities apprehended with realism, concreteness and humour. Briefly focusing on defects can both entertain and educate. Positive traits are not staged by Theophrastus as they are more fitting for the elaboration of tragedies, epic and moral allegories[78].

Theophrastus's various characters illustrating notorious shortcomings will reappear in Shakespeare. For instance, the dissembler who "never admits anything he is doing" seems to foreshadow the character of Iago or the patterns of deception to be found in *Hamlet* which could be read as a study in deception. Throughout the play, Hamlet works as a sort of strategist specialised in double-dealing. Feigning madness and staging *The Murder of Gonzago* (which he also dubs "The Mousetrap") help him prove Claudius's guilt. Hamlet is so much of a dissembler that he even lies to himself as he rejects the possibility of killing Claudius while he is praying on pretendedly religious grounds.

As for Theophrastus's flatterer who adopts "a cringing sort of conduct that aims to promote [his own] advantage"[79], he may also find an illustration in Bunyan's novelistic *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) as Christian and Hopeful encounter a metaphorical black man clad in white, who diverts them from the Celestial City while feigning to lead them there. In Bunyan's text, one does not have access to the exact flatteries potentially proffered by the flatterer to mislead his victims as though Christian and Hopeful's deception was too shameful to tell. This certainly partly accounts for the violence of the Angel's punishment, forcing them to lie down before him, in an attitude of flattery…to be whipped.

Other characters will also inspire other theatrical embodiments (the shameless man seems to be a forerunner of Shakespeare and Verdi's Falstaffs). However, no outstanding, properly dramatical villainy is represented in Theophrastus's *Characters*. As far as the evil side of man is concerned, the writer humanistically chooses to give us access to a realistic nuanced vision of man.

To the extent that he delves into uncomfortable distinctions: between the relatively close

---

[77] Theophrastus, *The Characters*, (eds.) Charles E. Bennett, William Alexander Hammond, New York: Longmans, Green and Co, 1902, XXXI.
[78] *Ibid*., XXXIV.
[79] *Ibid.*, 7.

notions of meanness and avarice, between roughness and grossness, boorishness and impudence, all these and surliness, or affability and garrulity[80]. The reader has the strange sensation of both reading something meant for the stage (each piece reflecting a sort of study in specific type) and a classification and account of the real.

In spite of the previous references to Shakespeare, Theophrastus's text will not directly influence tragic or operatic drama. One may find echoes in some comic operatic characters: the surly character of Uberto or the unmanageable servant Serpina in *La Serva Padrona*, the superstitious Valens in *Theodora* (even if this character is not really comic)… However, in fact, operatic and dramatic characters seem to have integrated only some characteristics of Theophrastus's types.

Theophrastus had great influence over Terence, Plautus and Menander whose characters are more of types than of individuals and who really influenced many other playwrights (Shakespeare among them) and opera librettists.

Before Theophrastus, Aristotle had for the first time distinguished different kinds of men according to their ages, fortunes and habits[81]. One of the earliest of such characters appeared in between 342 BC and 292 BC, created by Menander, the very famous, often quoted and praised comic author. It is the incestuous old miser, whom Menander called Smikrines, but who historically took other traits in the visions of other authors such as Plautus (Antipho, Euclio/Aulularia).

Smikrines will reappear in the commedia dell'arte[82] under the guise of Pantaloon or the dottore. It was the precursor of the operatic Don Bartholo we find in *Le Nozze* and *The Barber*.

With Plautus will appear the common stock characters of the Miles Gloriosus (the alazon) countered by the eirôn (the character progressively and theatrically giving birth to our modern notion of irony), the character of the wily parasite, the lascivious old men, the senex iratus and amator, the pompous soldier and the servus callidus prototype which will give birth to the character of the fool in theatrical plays and operatic servant characters such as Despina, Susanna, Figaro or Serpina.

---

[80] Meanness (the fact of being totally unable to let go of any of one's belongings to the advantage of another person), roughness (which he defines as "coarse conduct, whether in word or act", 51), grossness (defined as "such neglect of one's person as gives offence to others. The gross man goes out with an eczema or white eruption […]", 51), boorishness ("ignorance of good form", 60), impudence (obstrusively offensive conduct, 56), surliness (sullen rudeness of speech, 29).

[81] Karen Newman, *Shakespeare's Rhetoric of Comic Character, Dramatic Convention in Classical and Renaissance Comedy*, Hove: Psychology Press, December 2004, 32.

[82] See "Comparative tables evidencing the influence/recycling of Plautus, Terence and Menander's classical comic model on English operatic, literary comedies of manners" of this book above.

Ariosto was responsible for drawing inspiration from several plays by Latin authors at the same time to create Italian comedies such as the 1498 *La Cassaria*[83]. This intiated a whole tradition of playwrights also resorting to philosophic, romantic and commedia dell'arte material. Soon emerged plots reminiscent of the Latin ones and stock characters such as Pantaloon, the dottore, the zanni and lazzi[84].

As Karen Newman suggests in *Shakespeare's Rhetoric of Comic Character, Dramatic Convention in Classical and Renaissance Comedy*, ancient comedy influenced Shakespeare in two ways: first in his delineation of stock characters and then in his recreation of a festive comedy[85].

Shakespeare designates some of his characters as "the Braggart", "a Pantaloon" or a "Magnifico" and he includes the lover and the soldier. Shakespeare also borrows the type of square setting used in Latin plays, the prologue, the themes of mistaken identities, disguises, of the restoration of a long lost offspring, that of the conflict between love and duty, love and friendship. He also dealt with the Latin theme of the lustful old man looking at his son's mistresses and freely adapted the characters of the Miles Gloriosus to fashion many of his braggarts such as Falstaff and his Coriolanus, that of the senex iratus to create his Egeus. Some of his major stage-tricks were also inherited from Latin plays. Thus, in his works, one can notice the tradition of having heralds announcing the entrance of characters, people overhearing the conversations of others and commenting on the situation or on others' speeches by uttering asides.[86]

In the wake of Aristotle, authors still relied on the categories of ethos, praxis and pathos to delineate their characters[87] so as to move the reader or spectator and engage him humanly. Then, with Cicero (-106-43), the notion of character was conflated with the notion of the ideal orator. « Character » came to mean a specific style, way of speaking associated with a distinct type of person. This association was, of course, something everybody agreed on and so perfectly recognizable. It was the beginning of the intersubjective pact and cooperation reader-spectator/author around the schematized notion of character. Creating characters became a rhetorical exercise and the writer was bestowed the skill of flexibly identifying and imitating the diverse types of humans.

---

[83] See Cornelia C. Coulter, "The Plautine Tradition in Shakespeare", *op.cit.*, 66.
[84] *Ibid*., 67.
[85] Karen Newman, *Shakespeare's Rhetoric of Comic Character, Dramatic Convention in Classical and Renaissance Comedy*, *op.cit*., 30.
[86] See Cornelia C. Coulter, "The Plautine Tradition in Shakespeare", *op.cit.*, 81.
[87] Edward Burns, *Character Acting and Being on the Pre-Modern Stage*, *op.cit*., 29-30.

1-c-From Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* (circ. 2 AD) to Suetone (70-140). From ethos, to praxis and pathos.

At another level, Cicero further helped fashion our conception of humanity by delineating eleven factors (nomen, natura, victus, fortuna, habitus, affectio, studia, consilia, facta, casus, orationes)[88] permitting to give fully convincing representations of characters. In his wake, much later on, Quintilian (35-100) would himself define sixteen criteria (*Institutio Oratoria*, 95 CE).

Plutarch's also conceived his original literary project[89] _writing biographies of pairs of historical figures, picking up one Greek and one Roman each time_ as a means of delineating/creating individual human characters.

In fact, from Aristotle to Plutarch or Suetone, the authors fashioning characters faced a difficult choice: either depicting the ethos of the figure they concentrated on (Plutarch's technique) or his actions (Aristotle). In the second case, they provided a sort of model to the audience[90] who would not know how to take decisions. Seeing the character evolve and make choices, witnessing the consequences of the character's decisions, could help them learn how to behave themselves.

After Plutarch, Suetone, in *The Twelve Caesars*, went on with biographical innovations by elaborating other contrasted portraits. Instead opposing one Roman to one Greek, he opposed one good ruler to one bad ruler, and depicted the private and domestic lives of good rulers only. Later, authors made ethos depend on action and from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, authors relied on the idea that displaying characters provoked reactions in the audience's minds, and could permit to educate them[91].

Before Prudentius's *Psychomachia* (early fifth century A.D.) where the struggle between the different vices (Luxuria, Avaricia …) and virtues (Faith, Chastity, Patience…) defined the soul, the distinction comedy/tragedy, also helped define characters and, by reflection, human beings. Tragic characters all had a certain "gravitas" whatever this rather vague term may mean (dignity, seriousness, depth of character…) whereas comic characters divided into many types (the student,

---

[88] Anthony William Butler, *The Characterology of Nathaniel Lee: or Studying Lee's Study of Character*, Diss., Melbourne: Monash University, 2004, 14.

[89] Plutarch's undertaking, revolving around the enumeration of some apparently minor anecdotes, was self-avowedly more of a literary attempt than of a historical one. Tackling ordinary issues was more instructive than using the narration of military deeds.
He used to say that he was writing lives and not histories. See Edward Burns*, Character Acting and Being on the Pre-Modern Stage*, *op.cit*., 3.

[90] *Ibid*., 36.

[91] Edward Burns*, Character Acting and Being on the Pre-Modern Stage*, *op.cit*., 39.

the athlete, the various types of comic women,…).

Interactions between audience, actors on stage and playwright as mediated by acting and disguise began defining character in terms of his/her place in the world, in between the divine and humans, interiority and exteriority[92].

In the end, what mattered most in the association between actions (praxis) and ethos in the definition of a character was the possibility of identification it offered to the viewers. Once they identified with the character, they could feel pity or empathy which would ensure a certain community feeling and ethic.

2-From Ariosto to Shakespeare: towards a complex sense of identity.

2-a-Mythified crusades. Ariosto and Tasso in his wake Shakespearized: birth of some major dramatic and operatic characters.

Though nobody knows for sure if Shakespeare really mastered the Italian language well enough to read texts by Ariosto and Tasso in their original versions, many critics agree on the fact that he must have come to know the two authors's works in their translations[93]. The influence of Ariosto's major work, *Orlando Furioso*, can be felt in Shakespeare's works, and it in turn generated the plot of many operas (Vivaldi's *Orlando Furioso*, Porpora *Angelica e Medoro*, Handel's *Orlando*,…).

What is more or less certain too, is the importance of Italy as a source of poetic inspiration for Shakespeare.

*

Between 1483 and 1495, poet Matteo Maria Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato* was published followed in 1532 by Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* and in 1581 by Torquato Tassos's *Jerusalem Delivered*. In 1589, Robert Greene's *Orlando Furioso* also appeared. Then, as for the operatic versions of the famous theme, as early as 1720, Porpora's *Angelica e Medoro* was created followed by Vivaldi's 1727 *Orlando Furioso* and Handel's 1733 *Orlando*. At the same time, a

[92]Edward Burns, *Character Acting and Being on the Pre-Modern Stage*, *op.cit*., 50.
[93] See Andrew S. Cairncross, "Shakespeare and Ariosto: *Much Ado About Nothing*, *King Lear*, and *Othello*", *Renaissance Quarterly*, 29.2 (Summer 1976): 178-182, 178.

whole romantic pictorial tradition exploiting the same theme was emerging (see *Angelica and Medoro* by François Boucher).

In France, in 1564, Catherine de Medici held a festival during which the play *La Belle Genièvre* based on Ariosto's text was created. In 1582, Robert Garnier wrote a *Bradamante* which was performed by royal children.

As often noticed, what appealed most to spectators in this vein of stories was the fact that males were made captive by a female, be it Armida or Alcina, and then delivered from them. The sensual aspect of heroes delivering from monsters princesses often represented in the nude by romantic painters was certainly important too (Ingres).

Springing from a sort of neo-medieval artistic impulse, Ariosto's story finds its context in Charlemagne's struggles against the Saracens about to invade Europe. It draws its inspiration from French chansons de geste and possibly from Turold's *Chanson de Roland* though no real connection has been established so far between the adventures in *Orlando Furioso* and those in *Chanson de Roland*.

The main character is Charlemagne's paladin Orlando who is desperately in love with Oriental princess Angelica and who spends his time saving princesses such as Olympia from monsters. The Saracen soldier Ruggiero is in love with Bradamante whose sexual identity keeps oscillating between the feminine and the masculine. As for Alcina, she is the dangerous sorceress, attracting the lovers to her enchanted island so as to keep Ruggiero for herself. She is eventually defeated, and once her spell broken, she disappears in the destruction of her island. Angelica saves the Saracen Medoro from dying from his wounds and finally falls in love with him. The two lovers are soon embarrassed by Orlando who becomes mad when he understands that the princess is not in love with him but with Medoro.

Critics often oppose Arthur's chivalric love -Boiardo who first composed a poem about Orlando, *Orlando Innamorato,* drew part of his inspiration from the Arthurian legends of the Round Table-, an ideal of moral purity, to Orlando's more corporeal, more human, ordinary and universal love.

Together with Robert Greene's *Orlando Furioso*, some other pre-Shakespearian plays such as W. Wager's 1559 *The Longer Thou Livest, The More Fool Thou Art*, John Lily's 1589 *Mother Bombie* [94] may have inspired Shakespeare as far as the treatment of madness and its variants are concerned.

[94]Francis Guinle, « Moros, Accius et Silena, Orlando : trois aspects de la folie dans le théâtre pré-Shakespearien », *Actes des congrès de la Société française Shakespeare*, 7, 1989, 73-84.

Among the evidence of Ariosto's influence on Shakespeare, one can mention the Hero-Claudio relationship in *Much Ado About Nothing* which seems to refer to cantos IV to VI of Ariosto's text. Hero-Claudio relationship is apparently derived from the relationship between Ginevra and Ariodante in *Orlando Furioso*.

Because he understands that Ginevra is really in love with Ariodante and will never love him, Polinesso decides to take his revenge. He arranges to have Ginevra's maid, Dalinda, don her mistress's clothes and to receive him at the window of Ginevra's bedroom. He also secures the presence of Ariodante to witness Ginevra's seeming deception.

Andrew S. Cairncross supposes that Shakespeare does not make more of this parallel because he wants to stay with the register of the light comedy appropriate for *Much Ado About Nothing*[95].

The critic imagines that Shakespeare often simplifies Ariosto's complex plots. Thus, when it comes to his comparative reading of *King Lear*, he draws a parallel between two combats in *Orlando Furioso* -that of Ariodante standing for Ginevra's honour and that of Rinaldo against Polinesso once Dalinda informs him of her collaboration with the latter's deception plan- and a fight in *King Lear*. Shakespeare would have simplified Ariosto's plot on this point and would have transformed the two fights into one.

After Edmund is arrested for treason and demands trial by combat, he is slain by Edgar at the third sound of the trumpet and has to confess what he has done. Edgar also reveals his identity. Edmund's confessions once he is slain mirror Dalinda's and Polinesso's confessions to Rinaldo. The fight between Rinaldo and Polinesso occurs at the third sound of the trumpet too and Edgar's revelation of his identity reflects Rinaldo's. Ariodante's attempted suicide seems to foreshadow Gloucester's.

In *Othello*, the insistence on having visual evidence of guilt as well as the importance of the calumny theme seem to echo some of the thematic substance in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*[96].

In *As You Like It*, one finds a character named Orlando who, contrary to what happens in Ariosto's text -where it is the Medoro-Angelica couple who actually engraves the wood with testimonies of their mutual love thus making Orlando mad-, is the one responsible for littering the forest of Arden with love poems. However, one can clearly draw parallels between the Shakespearian character and Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. One can also suppose that Handel, Vivaldi or Porpora's Orlando, be they the re-creations of librettists such as Metastasio or Braccioli

[95]Andrew S. Cairncross, "Shakespeare and Ariosto: *Much Ado About Nothing*, *King Lear* and *Othello*", *Renaissance Quarterly*, *op.cit*., 179.
[96]*Ibid.*, 180.

have potentially benefited of earlier Shakespearian performances of the character.

One could say that though Orlando's passion for Rosalind will be satisfied and the character -unlike his operatic counterpart- will not have to see his mad passions quieted by an Astolfo or a Zorastro, his intrusion in the forest of Arden as well as his blindness to who Ganymede really is, are somehow an allusion to a madness of his amorous pulsions reminiscent of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. The Shakespearian idea of having Orlando delve into bad poetic clichés can also reveal the inadequacy of the young man's behaviour.

After Ariosto's Orlando's passions have been calmed by the help of Astolfo, he is finally able together with his allies to win the fight against the Saracens for Charlemagne's sake. Similarly, in Shakespeare, once Orlando and Rosalind are re-united, Frederick agrees to put an end to usurpation and to restore his title to his older brother Duke Senior. Therefore, sorting out matters of the heart finally results in putting an end to what was felt as unfair conquest or usurpation.

Shakespeare, especially in *As You Like It* which has just been roughly alluded to, was also inevitably influenced by the pastoral tradition. The operas of his time (such as Jacopo Peri's *Euridice* to mention a well-known composer) often had a rural context as a setting.

Some critics, such as Annie-Paule Mielle de Prinsac, propose to dwell on the influence of Tasso's pastoral *Aminta* performed during a garden party at Ferrara[97]. She quotes Richard Cody's argument according to which neo-platonism was an important influence for Shakespeare. She also presents his analysis according to which *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Love's Labour's Lost* would form a sort of pastoral medallion on one face of which would be represented the reconciliation of pleasure and virtue while the other face would stage Hercules having to make his choice between the two. These two major pastoral theme can be found in a whole pictorial tradition.

The embedded performance of "Pyramus and Thisbe" in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with its references to bad acting and rough double entendres, would also imply that Shakespeare takes his distance from the pastoral as his way of making fun of the traditional concordia discors testifies. Annie-Paule Mielle de Prinsac reads the *Pyramus and Thisbe* performance by the mechanicals as a way of asking the lovers to consider the inner landscape of their amorous

[97] Annie-Paule Mielle de Prinsac, « L'*Aminta* du Tasse a-t-elle inspiré Shakespeare? », *Etudes Epistémè*, n.6, 2004, 93-112.

disposition.[98]

If nobody knows for sure if Shakespeare was well acquainted with Tasso's *Aminta*, the playwright was both responsible for poking fun of the excesses of the pastoral -nobody dies for love, as is well-known- and for keeping intact the deep meaning of this tradition.

For Annie-Paule Mielle de Prinsac[99], *The Tempest* transforms the pastoral into a utopia where the theme of the necessary union of the mental, spiritual and the corporeal seems to spring from the relationships woven in Tasso's *Aminta*. Prospero tries to invent ordeals so as to make Ferdinand reach sacred love and help him forget about his lust. In *Aminta*, Tirsi, which many commentators make stand for Tasso himself prompts Aminta to show a greater ardour so as to win Silvia. The end of the tempest seems to be an equivalent for Aminta's fall, as it plays the same role, leading the spectator towards the reconciliation of corporeal and mental, spiritual impulses.

Apart from obvious relationships between Italian texts and Shakespearian plays, one can also conclude this part by underlining the importance of the Italian inspiration as far as the delineation of characters go.

Given the physical absence or rarity of available complex settings in Shakespeare's theatre, more often than not, the playwright compensated the lack of visual help by creating a whole network of literary images[100] which could appeal to spectators coming from a variety of social classes. The elaboration of pseudo-Italian characters had to be based on the creation of Italian sounding names, cultural allusions, interjections in the original language.

Contrary to Ben Jonson, Shakespeare despised resorting to clichés to create Italian/foreign characters. For Ben Jonson, the Italian as Other had to make the audience laugh, which prompted him to use clichés making people think about the ridiculous aspect of the Other and question cultural identities.

In Shakespeare, opaque Italian titles abund while in *Volpone*, Ben Jonson delights in including allusions to the animal world in his onomastics (Volpone, the fox; the lawyer called Voltore as an allusion to the vulture; Corbaccio as meaning bad raven[101]). Shakespeare also uses names reminiscent of Italy and also references to la commedia dell'arte as when he seems to draw his inspiration from the character of Brighella to fashion his Iago or resorts to lazzi -jokes, puns,

---

[98] Annie-Paule Mielle de Prinsac, « L'*Aminta* du Tasse a-t-elle inspiré Shakespeare? », *op.cit.,* 97.
[99] *Ibid*., 112.
[100] See Christophe Camard, « L'Italie selon Shakespeare et Ben Jonson; l'altérité dans un théâtre sans décor», *Italy in Shakespeare and Ben Jonson: Otherness on the Bare Stage, LISA e-journal. Littératures, Histoire des Idées, Images, Sociétés du Monde Anglophone–Literature, History of Ideas, Images and Societies of the English-speaking World*, 6.3 (2008): 246-261, 247.
[101] Christophe Camard, « L'Italie selon Shakespeare et Ben Jonson ; l'altérité dans un théâtre sans décor», *op.cit.*, 250.

facial expressions, …

What is more, in his "Italian" works, machiavellism appears as an important source of images which will foster in its turn an important brand of operatic portrayals of villains.

One may think about Machiavellian Iago, which seems to equate the Italian with the archetypal scheming villain. One may also think about Malvolio from *Twelfth Night* whose puritan rejection of amusement seems to identify as one of those in favour of closing theaters. His ambition which makes him endeavour to climb the social ladder by marrying with Olivia is severely punished. His cruel plight finally makes him more or less sympathetic.

2-b-Shakespeare's characters: towards a new sense of dramatic identity introducing a Nietzschean multifaceted ambiguous character.

> All the world's a stage
> And all the men and women merely players;
> They have their exits and their entrances,
> And one man in his time plays many parts.[102]

For Edward Burns[103], the Shakespearian character first exhibited an "accretion of meanings" and was delineated by a mixture of philosophical and psychological discourse. Later on, Shakespearian actors such as David Garrick (1717-1779) developed this new Shakespearian brand of characterology by proposing a new way of acting based on the idea that Shakespeare created new theatrical individuals, reflecting the various kinds of men found in reality. No Shakespearian character has a truly fixed identity contrary to what happens in Molière -see Harpagon, Tarfuffe or Don Juan who are so fixed that their names have become common designations for types of people in French among other languages.

Shakespearian characters such as Cleopatra can have contrary qualities. Thus, the queen of the Nile can be seen as Mark Antony's prostitute as he has become "the bellows and the fan to cool a gipsy's lust" and the "triple pillar of the world transformed into a strumpet's fool" (I.1). Nonetheless, the imagery used to depict her first encounter with Mark Antony shows her as the Queen of the Nile (see "The barge she sat in like a burnished throne…"II, 2). Mark Antony, in turn, is both a warrior and an effeminate lover. Shakespeare seems to have borrowed the Ariostian

[102]William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Cambridge University Press, 2000, act II scene 7, 139-143.
[103]Edward Burns, *Character Acting and Being on the Pre-Modern Stage*, *op.cit*., 6.

theme of the effeminate warrior made feminine by the love they have for women. Thus, a Mark Antony announcing Handel's Orlando (who is prompted by Zoroastro to "lascia Amor e siegui Marte" or "Leave Love to follow Mars", act 1) has forgotten to go to war to stay with his Cleopatra in the opening scene of the play.

In fact, one aspect of the complexity of the Shakespearian characters has to do with his realistic approach to characterology.

One can think about the Shakespearian characters as if they were real persons and question the reasons urging them to act in such and such a way as if we were simply questioning the behaviour of people around us. Thus, though the codes of behaviour, the feelings displayed and the ideals related to the Shakespearian sense of self are very different from ours, the psycho-intellectual tools we ordinarily use in the context of our everyday social life are still relevant in the Shakespearian context[104]. The recurring spectacle of bare human nature reduced to the minimum once condemned to undergo the consequences of others's treason (Lear) or of their own haughtiness and pride (Coriolanus), of their frivolous spending habits (Richard II), makes us think about our own human nature.

Identity is then related to the type of social interactions the character entertains which is pre-determined in the *dramatis personae* and in the complex way the character participates in the verbal exchanges[105]. Shakespearian characters are also original as they are inseparable from the metatheatrical reflection on what it is to be a "shadow". As Lionel Abel declares:

> For the first time in the history of drama the problem of the protagonist is that he has a playwright's consciousness…[Hamlet] is the first sage figure with an acute awareness of what it means to be staged.[…] After *Hamlet*, it would be difficult for any playwright to make us expect any character lacking dramatic consciousness.[106]

This meta-theatrical stance which sometimes goes hand in hand with a generic questioning - for instance through the hesitation between tragedy and comedy in *Antony and Cleopatra*, the reflection on the pastoral and the ridicule of concordia discors in the mechanicals' performance in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*- seems to foreshadow the meta-operatic ones. If in Cavalli's *La Calisto*, Jupiter can be seen as an image of the stage director as he totally manipulates, from above, what happens on earth, Richard Strauss's *Capriccio* revolves around a debate between a Piccinian priority bestowed on words versus a more Gluckian approach based on a primacy of music. One can also mention Prokoviev's *Love for Three Oranges* with the debate between the supporters of comic end and those wishing a tragic one. Or Brechtian and post-Brechtian operas

---

[104] Michael Bristol, "Confusing Shakespeare's Characters with Real People: Reflections on Reading in Four Questions", Paul Yachnin and Jessica Slights (eds.), *Shakespeare and Character. Theory, History, Performance, and Theatrical Persons*, New York: Palgrave Shakespeare Studies, 2009, 21-40.
[105] William Dodd, "Character as Dynamic Identity: from Fictional Interaction Script to Performance", *Ibid*., 62.
[106] Lionel Abel, *Tragedy and Metatheatre: Essays on Dramatic Form*, Teaneck (NJ): Holmes and Meier, 2003, 132.

such as *Aniara* where Miroroben, the computer, is responsible for the fate of the whole spacecraft and seems to act once again as a God or a sort of stage director. The inmates of the spaceship hold sorts of ceremonies during which they listen to Miroroben to know where they are going to go. Shostakovitch trying to escape the Stallinian oppressive power also created operas that have a meta-operatic dimension. *The Nose* could be also analysed as a story about the right to sing and to create music in the Stallinian society. All these works are haunted by the consciousness of inhabiting the well-wrought universe of an artwork.

Character identity also incorporates the layer of preceding performances as well as the interactions of the character with each its impersonating actor as well as the audience.

Also participating in the complexity of Shakespearian characterization, the treatment of object -of the recurring themes of possession and dispossession- can make critics reassess the relationships between characters as James Berg has shown[107]. It is also a reference to the cultural context of the post-feudal crisis in property.

3-Towards a theatre of action and a European reform of the theatrical space. Vice in motion as positive action.

From the drama of Senecca to the sixteenth century theatre of action of Shakespeare or of Alexander Hardy in France, narrative passages became limited and action was progressively enriched with emotions, madness, violence, magics and physical love **i**mposing a theatre revolving around the notion of spectacle. This was a major turning point in the history of the performance arts. Man is less and less a blind victim of his fate and more of an active human conscious of his responsibilities and willing to act.

At the end of the sixteenth century, Palladio had just completed the Vicence Teatro Olimpico, reducing the proportions of the Roman theatre and giving it a roof[108]. There are three painted settings in the stage wall. However this theatre would never be used as no playwright wrote for it.

There were many evolutions leading us from Shakespeare's theatre set up in a circus amphitheatre and presenting two floors separated into six different places where simultaneous action could take place to today's Italian Sabbattinian theatre[109] in which spectators can be

[107] James Berg, "The Properties of Character in *King Lear*", in Paul Yachnin and Jessica Slights, *Shakespeare and Character. Theory, History, Performance and Theatrical Persons*, *op.cit*., 98-116, 99.
[108] This information comes from Niccolo Sabbatini, *Pratique pour fabriquer scènes et machines de théâtre*, Neuchâtel: Ides et Calendes, 1977, XVI.
[109] As defined in the book cited above.

arranged in a semi-circle embracing the stage on each side and whose great invention is that of the painted setting. The Italian theatre had a machine which Shakespeare's had not. Now that perspective has been discovered, the stage can constantly move and change, as cloud machines and gloires allow Pegasus to fly in the sky and interludes appear.

As Arthur H. Scouten and Robert D. Hume in "'Restoration Comedy' and its Audiences, 1660-1776" suggest, the audiences for operas and plays were variegated and open-minded enough to accommodate and delight in seeing their own social class derided on stage. Therefore, from the end of the sixteenth century, one can notice with other critics the fact that plays begin to express more specifically dynamic values in action on stage.

At the end of the sixteenth century, drama began to express a certain form of disillusion with human nature as Jacobean tragedies revolved around a refined sense of violence. A satirical approach to tragedy and a development of the dark side of comedies started to express a growing uncertainty about the universe. Thus, in 1589, Christopher Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* staged a jealous Jew named Barabas stripped of all his belongings for having criticized the Governor of Malta's seizure of the whole economic wealth owned by the Jews to pay off the warring Turks. In revenge, Barabas becomes a murderer and uses his own daughter, the fourteen year old Abigail, to take revenge of the Governor. He arranges to have the Governor's son fight with his friend over Abigail's love which results in the deaths of both friends. Once Abigail, who understands what her father has done, flees to a nunnery, Barabas can no longer quiet his violent impulses. He pursues her and poisons his daughter as well as the whole nunnery and a well-meaning friar. Because his sins are well-known of his slave and the latter's prostitute lover, because he is going to be blackmailed, he again resorts to poison to get rid of those who know too much.

To sum up what Alexander Leggatt said of the period, one does not even know if the divinities or the monotheists's God intervening in these works are really reassuring. There is no real transcendence meant to help comfort man[110]. Instead, from Dekker and Webster's plays, there emerges a sort of materialistic vision of the world reduced to primary sexual and financial impulses. Social prestige begins to take pride of the place in such plays as those written by Chapman, Jonson and Marston[111] and human relationships seem to have deteriorated because they have been contaminated by the dynamics inherent in trade.

Instead of displaying a positive culture revolving around moral values, the new plays express a complex vision of the world where vice is a dynamic force more beneficial than virtue. Shakespearian characters can no longer follow true ideals as they have to adapt to the vitality of

[110] Alexander Leggatt, *English Drama: from Shakespeare to the Restoration 1590-1660*, London: Routledge, 2014, 102.
[111] *Idem*.

their own desires and move according to it[112]. However, subsequently, Jacobean and Caroline drama will offer a little different, more open approach returning to the centrality of moral values such as honor and chastity.

The early seventeenth century saw the success of Fletcher and Beaumont who created many tragicomedies of French as well as English inspiration[113]. Once the theaters were closed during what Nettleton[114] called the "dramatic interregnum" from 1642 to 1660, only drolls and farces could be performed. However, several works by William Davenant, James Shirley and Francis Quarles were being published[115] and the English playwrights began to be influenced by the Lully/Molière duo as well as by Pierre Cambert and Robert Perrin (*Pomone*, considered as the first French operas was created in 1671).

With William Davenant, masques began to evolve and become fully-fledged operas like *The Siege of Rhodes* (1656) as he developed scenery, music and dance. From the early tragedies[116], Davenant evacuated the horrors to replace them by a semi-historic world where virtue, valour, love and honour had a central place.

In 1662, the coming to the throne of Charles II coincided with the restoration of operas as well.

4-Machine plays and operas from the 1660's to the 1700's. Restoration literature and the growing ambiguity opera/drama.

4-a-From Renaissance creativity to Restoration scepticism.

At the end of the interregnum, between the execution of Charles I in 1649 and the 1660 accession of his son Charles II to the throne, English heroic drama took a new turn as it was meant to reflect the successes and victories of this newly "re-born" England.

As some do on youtube, one can contrast John Dryden's heroic drama to Shakespeare's drama which was never truly heroic but which began to know important operatic adaptations having a role in popularizing the playwright's works (see the various adaptations of *The Tempest* and *Macbeth*). Indeed, one can notice the concomitantly growing importance devoted to music in

[112] Alexander Leggatt, *English Drama: from Shakespeare to the Restoration 1590-1660*, *op.cit*., 105.
[113] George Henry Nettleton, *English Drama of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century (1642-1780)*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932, 35.
[114] *Ibid*., 14
[115] *Ibid*., 19.
[116] *Ibid*., 22-23.

drama. The adulteration of Shakespearian drama concomitant with the birth of English opera was meant to refine the Elizabethan playwright's works thought to be in "barbarous tastes". The various re-writings permitted to use newly created stage machines…

Even during the closure of the theaters, William Davenant's 1656 operatic *Siege of Rhodes*, a Suleiman opera among others, deemed acceptable owing to some generic ambiguity put forward by its authors, seems to have paved the way for the heroic drama of the period. Indeed, it preceded the first heroic drama called as such by John Dryden himself, *The Conquest of Granada* (1670).

Now, authors tended to lay emphasis on a satirical emphasis undermining the representation of great effort and great success.

"Splendour of court spectacles, pomp of national myths, sentimental melodrama" characterize restoration drama[117] and cause it to grow closer to opera paving the way for opera seria as developed by G.F. Handel.

For Nettleton[118], "it is a commonplace of criticism that the Elizabethan age is creative, the Restoration critical". Many critics express a certain disappointment concerning Restoration artistic endeavours as they notice a loss of spontaneity due to the importance bestowed on satirical intents and the treatment of religious and political issues. For James Gifford, nationalist libretti and music after Charles II comes to power and prevents James from doing the same manage to destabilize the disciplinary borders and make the dramatic field, one of confusion between genres.

Criticism and violent satire became prominent as a consequence of the civil war opposing Republicans to Loyalists and ending in the King's beheading. This skeptical approach will later -in the eighteenth century- underlie the proliferation of English ballad operas.

For Nettleton, one can thus oppose the qualities of Elizabethan and Restoration drama:

[117]Slavoj Zizek and Mladen Dolar quoted in James Gifford, "Dramatic Text, Music Text: Competing Nationalist Styles in Restoration Opera", *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies*, 14.1 (2012): 21-37, 21.
[118]George Henry Nettleton, *English Drama of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century (1642-1780), op.cit*., 3.

Comparative tables between qualities of Elizabethan and Restoration drama. Adapted from George Nettleton[119]

Elizabethan drama	**Restoration drama**
Blending of genres (see the Shakespearian waverings between tragedy and comedy).	Clear-cut separations between genres.
Rough speech focusing on indecent corporeal concerns.	Tendency to make the viewer sympathise with the wrong-doer/villain
The global scope of Shakespearian and Elizabethan drama.	The localness of Restoration preoccupations with fashion and vice at the court, in London.
The complexity and diversity of the passions displayed in Shakespeare.	Obsession with illegitimate love.
Emotional concerns.	Intellectual concerns.

Basically, as James Gifford himself reminds us, restoration drama is most often tackled from the point of view of the arrival of women on the dramatic stage. The use of moveable scenery also became a hallmark of restoration drama.

Masques and semi-operas abunded over the period. The use of these intermediary forms revolving around political motives emanated from the wish of establishing a sort of English semi-opera taking its distances from Italian and French influences. The prototypical example of this could be Purcell's *King Arthur* which was partly composed in 1684 prompted by the twenty-fifth anniversary of Charles II's accession to the throne. Celebrating Arthur's victories and his attempts at unifying the country, this semi-opera seems to revive a certain nationalism.

However, as James Gifford notes it, one of the factors complexifying the aesthetic identity of the artworks was that sometimes, librettists and composers (like Dryden and Purcell) displayed differing political sensibilities. This usually prevented music and lyrics to be really concordant.

Thus, *King Arthur* (1691) could not but reveal the growing political rift between John Dryden and Henry Purcell[120]. However, even before Purcell and Dryden's masterpiece, such unsettling generic and ideological confusion intrinsic in Restoration had already been put to the fore. In John Blow's *Venus and Adonis* (about 1683) credited to be the first English opera sung

[119] George Henry Nettleton, *English Drama of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century (1642-1780), op.cit.*, 4-5.
[120] James Gifford, "Dramatic Text, Music Text: Competing Nationalist Styles in Restoration Opera", *op.cit.*, 32.

throughout[121], Venus would stand for the papists under which sway Charles II would be.

According to Giffard, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (1683) would, at a second level, stage the complex relationships of Catholics and Protestants. The witches endeavouring to destroy Carthage at the end ("Destruction's our delight/Delight our greatest sorrow") stand for the Catholics aiming at destroying the monarchy[122]. Purcell also resorts to a sort of French musical idiom inherited from Lully in his overture or whenever he deals with the witches whereas, in contrast, for some critics, the form used to represent the characters of Dido and Aeneas musically sound more English. This could be interpreted as a warning against possible Papist tendencies in James II, the witches would be his own mental temptations.

As for the masque *Albion and Albanius* (1685) meant to be the prologue to *King Arthur*, it is an allegorical work. A tribute to King Charles II and James II after the latter's death, it metaphorises the restoration of the Stuarts and the way they won over the Whigs. Purcell's musical text seems more politically involved than Dryden's[123] as in *King Arthur* Dryden, having Papist and Catholic sympathies establishes the enemy as being Scandinavian rather than French or Papist.

4-b-A mutual generic interaction between literature and operas: from comedy of humours to comedy of manners.

It is necessary to trace an evolution in the conception of the comedy, from the various operatic adaptations of Shakespeare's plays and Ben Jonson's masques to later plays and operatic works. One can notice a shift from comedy of humours to comedy of manners and then to a combination of both in the Restoration comedies however operatic they are.

Later on, in the nineteenth century, comedy of humours and of manners will leave their trace on Gioacchino Rossini in such operas as the Shakespearian *Othello* and *Falstaff* on the one hand and in comedies such as *La Pietra del Paragone* where the manners of a whole artificial society are explored.

Even if George Chapman preceded him, Ben Jonson was often considered, after Menander and the New Comedy, to be the father of the comedy of humours as he created the famous *Every Man In His Humour* with its less successful sequel *Every Man Out of His Humour*. One can also notice that "operatic" commedia dell'arte which was originally musical and madrigal comedies -

[121] James Gifford, "Dramatic Text, Music Text: Competing Nationalist Styles in Restoration Opera", *op.cit.*, 22.
[122] *Ibid*., 24.
[123] *Ibid*., 32.

such as *Amfiparnaso* revolving around Pantalone- must also have had their own influence[124].

Assuming a sort of divine power which makes him act as the creator and legislator of his poetic world, the playwright understands the role of the necessary unbalance of the four humours (black and yellow bile, blood, phlegm) in each individual in the elaboration of an identity.

Comedies of humours focus on characters who are dominated by two or more personality traits related to their most self-defining humour. This will necessarily prevail over their desires and behaviour and the poet will only have to set a contrast between traits -such as bragging and being a coward- to create comic relief.

Very famously, Ben Jonson gives in the prologue of *Every Man Out of His Humour* his own definition of the comedy of humours through his presenter Asper:

> Some one peculiar quality
> Doth so possess a man, that it doth draw
> All his affects, his spirits, and his powers,
> In their confluctions, all to run one way.

Still through Asper dialoguing with Cordatus, he announces in the same prologue his objective to:

> […] scourge those apes,
> And to those courteous eyes oppose a mirror,
> As large as is the stage whereon we act;
> Where they shall see the time's deformity
> Anatomized in every nerve and sinew,
> With constant courage and contempt of fear…
> My strict hand
> Was made to seize on vice, and with a gripe
> Squeeze out the humour of such spongy souls.
> As lick up every idle vanity

Asper fears no courtier or strumpet and will denounce him/her to punish their folly.

In *Every Man In His Humour*, onomastics reveal the dominant trait and humour of each character. Edward Knowell is a brilliant scholar, Brainworm is the *servus callidus*, the bright servant…

As for the comedy of manners, somehow deriving from the comedy of humours, it is known to be:

> a style of comedy that reflects the life, ideals and manners of upper class society in a way that is essentially true to its traditions and philosophy. The players must strive to maintain the mask of social artifice whilst revealing to the audience what lies behind such manners. In other words it is to make "The real artificial and the artificial real.[125]

For Wikipedia, it often satirises stock characters such as the fop, the rake or an old person

---

[124] Nino Pirrotta, "Commedia dell'arte" and Opera"*, The Musical Quarterly*, 4.3 (July 1955), Oxford University Press, 305-324, 306.

[125] Tracey Sanders, "The Comedy of Manners", n.d., https://resource.acu.edu.au/trsanders/units/comedy/comedyofmanners.html, accessed August 2016.

pretending to be young. The plot of the comedy often has to do with scandal and is less important than dialogues.

According to the same website, witty blunt sexual dialogue, boudoir intrigues, sensual innuendos, rakish behaviour are major characteristics. Both businessmen and clergymen, perceived as too serious characters were treated with indifference. Among the conventions underlying the comedy of manners, everything to do with amorous fidelity and life in the countryside had to be invariably represented as boring. Sex should appear as a natural temptation in such a context and the diversity of amorous engagement should be inextricably linked to love. There also emerged a specific way of dealing with conflicts of interest in love entanglements through the staging of personal clashes.

It is important to note that the development of feminism in comedies of manners by Aphra Behn among others seems to derive from the growing importance bestowed on the discourse on sex since the end of the sixteenth century especially in operas. This seems to be illustrated in such seventeenth century operatic artworks such as Monteverdi's 1600 *Orfeo* or 1642 *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. As Susan McClary notes it in "Constructions of gender in Monteverdi's dramatic music"[126] :

> Studies such as José Antonio Maravall's *Culture of the Baroque*, Jacques Attali's *Noise* and Lorenzo Bianconi's *Music in the Seventeenth Century* have begun to lay bare the post-Renaissance politics of 'representation' and to demonstrate how opera and other public spectacles of the seventeenth century served as sites for struggles over power.

The critic continues to note how the authority crisis did not only concern religious dissent in the wake of Henry VIII's schism from papal domination but also involved the private sphere suffering from the patriarchal order. If one can find traces of musical gender characterization and of the treatment of erotic passion in madrigals[127], operas clearly contributed to shape social gender expectations. If the humanists sought to regulate who had to have access to rhetorical training and debated the necessity to have women develop rhetorical skills, operas sometimes reversed the attribution of such masculine qualities. As Susan McClary remarks, Proserpina and Poppea, both mature feminine characters, enjoy a certain level of rhetorical ability that can be contrasted with the young Eurydice's chaste submission to her husband when she tells him that her answers to his questions are in his heart. What is more, when Proserpina asks Pluto to let Orfeo be reunited with Eurydice in Act IV, explicit references to shameless sexual pleasure and desire in the older couple are inscribed in the libretto.

---

[126] Susan McClary, "Constructions of Gender in Monteverdi's Dramatic Music", *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 1.3 (November 1989): 203-23, 203.
[127] *Ibid.,* 204.

A good example of comedy of manners would be Aphra Behn's 1677 *The Rover* which has been only relatively recently re-discovered as the author is a woman albeit a very active one. Though her poems were very successful, her position as a woman and an actor did not allow her to be fully considered. *The Rover* makes people think about the major social issues of the relationships between men and women and of the little freedom and power of women to decide their fate. It also reflects a particular upper class society who can afford idly spending time abroad. As Arnand Prakash and his students unveil during their youtube interview, one of the most interesting point of the play is to establish female wit as the only tool left to women to affect their destinies and resist arranged marriages.

In her poetry, Aphra Behn does not hesitate to speak of the woman's body, something she was implicitly asked to do by her readership and the audience in the playhouses. The introduction of women on stage concomitant with the re-opening of the theaters had the result of clearly sexualising drama whose spectators became more voyeuristic as they identified actresses with prostitutes.

The Rover with its carnival and its men and women trying to pursue each other for pleasure is dominated by Aphra Behn's expression of her sexuality. As Arnand Prakash shows on youtube, the action revolves around a central duo, which proves to be the male and female "rovers", the ones whose gazes incessantly wander about after a potential companion and for pleasure. Willmore and Helena are not perfect mirror images of one another as Helena, contrary to her male counterpart necessarily has to integrate marriage among her preoccupations.

The interactions between the two are essential in the play. Other couples illustrate other dimensions of marriage that must be considered. If Florinda wants to marry for pleasure and escape her brother and father's plans to have her marry the old and rich Vincentio by marrying the sweet colonel Belleville, the question of knowing whether the man will be able to finance her is a haunting one.

This comedy of manners is interesting insofar as the woman writer and actress on stage has a confidence to talk about marriage that men would not have. Also, sometimes sexual roles seem blurred as when Helena is identified with the rover and participates to the action by cross-dressing in the masquerade. Another matter of interest is the way in which different forces are opposing each other to create interactions. The nunnery to which Florinda's parents want to send their daughter is a place where the only thing to learn is self-denial through protracted absence from society. This is to be opposed to the force of marriage as Florinda stands for the wife and to that of prostitution with Angelica standing for the whore. Though only the three roles of nun, wife or

prostitute were available for women at the time, there was still possibly hope for the future in the display of female wit throughout the play. The only way for a woman of opening the field of possibilities was to use her mental tools and carefully act as a strategist.

In William Congreve's 1699 *Way of the World* which deals with the new ways of living the world is experiencing and involves every reader citizen by its democratic title, emerges a new sense of equality between men and women. In this comedy, in which the comic vision is sustained by an onomastic strategy dating back from the comedy of humours (see the insincerity of the Fainall couple, the angry Petulant, the Witwouds who want to express themselves about their society with their wit), male and female characters are approximately equal in number.

Chapter 4-Parallel historical evolutions between reception-oriented practices.

1-A space to perform and a space for reception. Relationships singer/spectator foreshadowing the relationships narrator/reader. Stage considerations (novels/operas).

According to Laurent Feneyrou, novels and operas correspond to the reversal of ancient Christian liturgical and social rituals[128]. Indeed, liturgical social rituals are characterized by an audience who sings and a priest who mostly listens to what is sung in echo to his own voice. Of course, the operatic structure reverses the relationship as the singers are professionals on stage and no longer common people seated in the church. The principle meant transforming the voice into a spectacle, weaving it into an artwork logically preceding what happens in narratives and novels where the authorial voice sounds like a master voice.

Luigi Nono also insists on the importance of opera as an artwork formally characterized by the official separation between audience and stage on the church model (churchgoers/priest), as well as the two-dimensional impression of hearing what one sees and seeing what one hears. However, another characteristic evoked by Luigi Nono, resides in the creation of a perspective built around a unique centre from a visual and auditive point of view. Any possibility to use space and time is therefore abolished[129].

---

[128] Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et dramaturgie: esthétique de la représentation au XXe siècle*, 16.
[129] Luigi Nono, « Notes sur le théâtre musical contemporain. », Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et dramaturgie: esthétique de la représentation au XXe siècle*, *op.cit.,* 275-280, 275.

This may be likened to what happens when an impalpable omniscient narrator directly presents events in a linear way in early Victorian novels. This may also be likened to what happens in eighteenth (and nineteenth) century novels such as *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) which opens on Robinson's presentation of his family and his beginnings. The reader's attention is entirely focused on the character-narrator to the exclusion of anything else, abolishing any sense of time and space which would differ from the spatio-temporal landmarks Robinson gives. The reader follows the voice and imagines the character and his familial interactions mentally ("I was born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family, though not of that country"[130]), something similar to the basic mechanism at the heart of early operas in which one has to recapitulate the familial links present in the *dramatis personae*.

A sort of separation between text, narrator, author and reader naturally occurs (with the presence of the author conceived as that of a disappearing stage director) and sometimes a stronger stereoscopic image of the real may emanate from certain spatial descriptions at the incipits of eighteenth and nineteenth century novels.

Thus the reader of *Vanity Fair* follows the manager of the performance's gaze at the incipit and he "looks into the Fair" to discover the populous scene in front of him.

Some novels open and close on a theatrical or operatic illusion, the narrator plays the role of stage director and may manipulate his characters as if they were puppets. Of course, one may think once again about *Vanity Fair* which begins "before the curtain" and closes when the children shut up the puppet box. The action in the novel is likened to a puppet show in a fair. Thus, one may have the impression of seeing what one hears assimilated to what one reads. From the incipit, the author also enhances the theatrical illusion as he insists on the way his characters are merely playing scenes:

> As the manager of the Performance sits before the curtain on the boards and looks into the Fair, a feeling of profound melancholy comes over him in his survey of the bustling place. There is a great quantity of eating and drinking, making love and jilting, laughing and the contrary, smoking, cheating, fighting, dancing and fiddling […]Yes, this is Vanity Fair; not a moral place certainly; nor a merry one, though very noisy. Look at the faces of the actors and buffoons when they come off from their business; and Tom Fool washing the paint off his cheeks before he sits down to dinner with his wife and the little Jack Pudddings behind the canvas. The curtain will be up presently, and he will be turning over head and heels, and crying, 'How are you?"
> …There are scenes of all sorts; some dreadful combats, some grand and lofty horse-riding, some scenes of high life, and some of very middling indeed; some love-making for the sentimental, and some light comic business; the whole accompanied by appropriate scenery and brilliantly illuminated with the author's own candles. What more has the manager of the performance to say?_To acknowledge the kindness with which it has been received in all the principal towns of England through which the Show has passed, and where it has been most most favourably noticed.[131]

---

[130] Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, New York: Penguin USA, 2008, 16.
[131] William Makepeace Thackeray, *Vanity Fair*, Pennsylvania University Electronic Clasics Series, Gutenberg Project website, 2000, 5, http://gutenberg.us/Results?SearchEverything=vanity%20fair&EverythingType=0, accessed August 2016.

The visual dimension is made prominent thanks to the accumulation of verbs in -ing. The narrative voice, the "best/master voice" the author can create -and therefore one ethically committed shaping the outlook on the nature of the narrative material- highlights the generic instability of the "play" or "opera": ("this is Vanity Fair; not a moral place … nor a merry one") which was common practice early in Shakespearian plays (in *Antony and Cleopatra*, or *via* the mechanicals hesitating between the two genres in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and in operatic history when gods and goddesses struggled (or not) over what kind of destiny they should create for mortals below[132]. Later on, in operas such as in Prokoviev's *Love for Three Oranges*[133], this will take the form of an entertaining struggle between comedy and tragedy in which the story proper is embedded.

What is maybe more specifically operatic in *Vanity Fair* is the bustling and noisy dimension of the extract. The great number of verbs in -ing seems to people the set with a rather important chorus. The very visual dimension of what they are doing (eating and drinking, making love, jilting, laughing, smoking, cheating, fighting, dancing and fiddling) is enhanced but this use of -ing also seems to echo the very principle of some opera stagings like stagings of *La Callisto* in which some stage directors like to recreate the impression to be children manipulating characters like puppets in a box.

In *Vanity Fair*, the narrator, identifying himself to a show manager is of course unreliable, manipulating his audience's points of view as he himself admits late in the book to rely on gossips.

2-Parallel evolutions in the modes of addressing readers and opera spectators.

2-a-Preliminary notes: readers and opera houses.

If we follow Northrop Frye's theory, it is the mode of address to the reader/viewer (whether the piece of writing is to be spoken, sung or performed) he terms the "radical of presentation" which distinguishes between genres, be they literary or operatic. In literature, the epic would imply the author somehow directly speaking to their audience, the fictional an author and an audience who can never see each other, the dramatic an audience directly experiencing what the

[132] See the prologue of Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Atys*, 1676.
[133] Serguei Prokoviev, *Love for Three Oranges*, 1921.

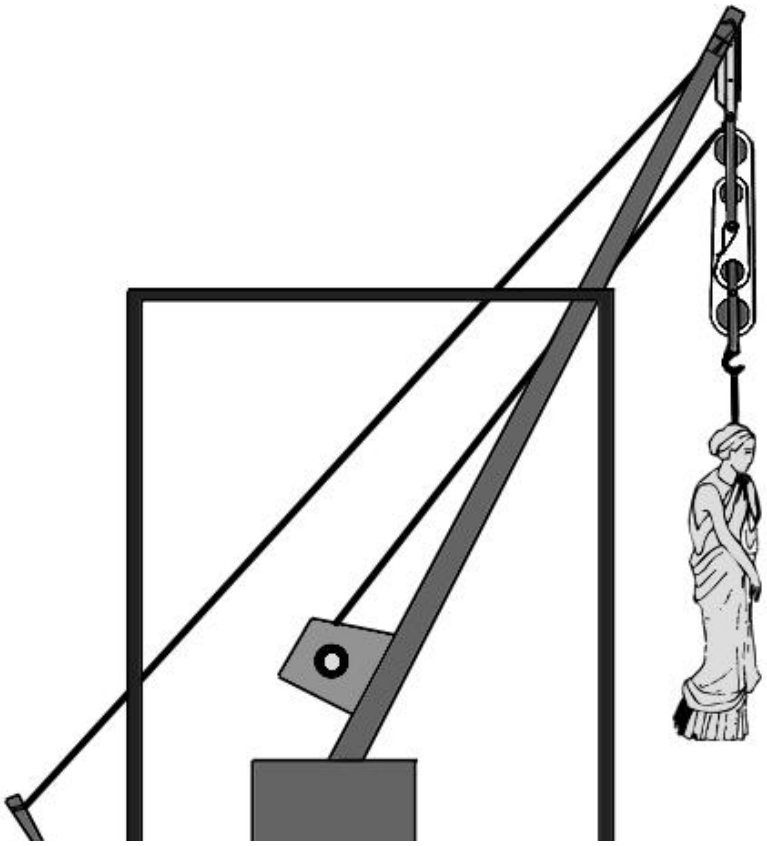
author meant them to experience (author and audience never directly meet), and the lyrical an audience hidden from the author and a speaker who is overheard by the audience[134].

Though I adhere to the idea of an intricate relationship between genres and the mode of reader address, I am not going to use Northrop Frye's definition of the epic, the fictional, the dramatic and the lyrical as I will simply focus on larger parallels between operatic modes of address to the audience and literary ones.

First designed with the political wish for rationalising and controlling the impulses of frightening crowds, opera houses originally lacked dyonisiac appeal before they somehow regained it by the various contemporary re-fashionings of theatres and operatic stages first devised to accommodate the Wagnerian conception of the spectators' immersion. For didactic purposes, one should possibly qualify Louis Feneyrou's view by enhancing the richness of stage effects and stage machinery already available well before Wagner which really permitted a certain sensuous pleasure to the spectator as well as it allowed to gather the people around values.

The mèchinè allowing the *Deux ex Machina* to appear, for instance, must have supplied the viewers with an exalting feeling of being together waiting for the last act of the play to see their god. However, it could also correspond to a sort of pleasing Dyonisiac aesthetic apotheosis.

[134] See wikipedia on Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism,* Wikipedia website, n.d., https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anatomy_of_Criticism, accessed March 2016.



In the 10th century, bird, lion and lifting machines seem to have already existed in the Byzantine culture:

> In front of the emperor's throne was set up a tree of gilded bronze, its branches filled with birds, likewise made of bronze gilded over, and these emitted cries appropriate to their species. Now the emperor's throne was made in such a cunning manner that at one moment it was down on the ground, while at another it rose higher and was to be seen up in the air. This throne was of immense size and was, as it were, guarded by lions, made either of bronze or wood covered with gold, which struck the ground with their tails and roared with open mouth and quivering tongue. Leaning on the shoulders of two eunuchs, I was brought into the emperor's presence. As I came up the lions began to roar and the birds to twitter, each according to its kind, but I was moved neither by fear nor astonishment … After I had done obeisance to the Emperor by prostrating myself three times, I lifted my head, and behold! the man whom I had just seen sitting at a moderate height from the ground had now changed his vestments and was sitting as high as the ceiling of the hall. I could not think how this was done, unless perhaps he was lifted up by some such machine as is used for raising the timbers of a wine press.[135]

In the seventeenth century (Sabbatini, *Pratica di fabricar scene e macchine*), the systems to have gods and goddesses ascend and descend, people disappearing and appearing abruptly by trapdoors and via cloud machines were already very elaborate.

However, as the author of *Entangled: Technology and the Transformation of Performance* underlines, Wagner's Festspielhaus was the first opportunity to enjoy a very new sense of

[135] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *Book of ceremonies* quoted in J.Becker, *Antapodosis* (Hannover-Leipzig, 1915), 6,5, tr. Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 209-10.

acoustics, lighting and architecture[136] and to test the composer's idea of having the audience experiment a new plurality of sensory experience to place [them]

> in a new relation to the play [they] are about to witness quite distinct from that in which [they] had always been involved when visiting our theatres.[…] Here at last [they] are to have no more provisional hints and outlines; so far as lies within the power of the artists of the present, the most perfect scenery and miming shall be offered [them][137]

This seems to find a reflection in the evolution between a moralizing literature to a more exalting and enriching view. Henry Fielding drawing on Horace when it comes to stigmatizing greed, lust and vice (1707-1754), Alexander Pope (1688-1744), Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), Samuel Richardson (1689-1761) all had moral purposes. Under their influence and that of succeeding male and female Victorian novelists, the novel soon became an entertaining but also an educational undertaking meant for the middle class, owing to its realistic, didactic form springing from an always male perspective.

The triple-decker with its linear pattern always edged towards the question of social integration. Judging characters and situations became a prominent novelistic issue. More often than not presenting forms of viral criticism, the novel somehow contained unrest. Intended to be moral, novels were circulated within family circles.

In the 18th century, the opera house was still designed according to the political goals of the government. However, the 20th century U shaped and spherical theatres, simply inspired by Shakespeare's theatre, seemed to further erode the frontier between audience and performers. As Antonin Artaud's theatre of cruelty and the new conception of stage it triggered did:

> la scène et la salle (…) sont remplacées par une sorte de lieu unique, sans cloisonnement, ni barrière d'aucune sorte, et qui deviendra le théâtre même de l'action. Une communication directe sera rétablie entre le spectateur et le spectacle, entre l'acteur et le spectateur, du fait que le spectateur placé au milieu de l'action est enveloppé et sillonné par elle[138].

This seems to recall the literary tradition of integrating the reader (De Quincey's "courteous reader…", associating him) and of having him collaborate in the creation of the artwork by making him interpret it. In Charlotte Brontë's Lucy (*Villette*) a female narrator constructs a hostile and unhelpful if reactive reader whose mind is peopled by gender prejudices. This seems to go as far as foreshadowing the construction of an hostile audience in operas such as Thomas Adès's *The Exterminating Angel* where the inmates dressed for an opera evening relaxing on comfortable sofas mirror and criticize their bourgeois audience.

Then, authors such as the operatic Vernon Lee, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf or D.H.

---

[136] Chris Salter, *Entangled: Technology and the Transformation of Performance*, Cambridge (Mass.), London (England): the MIT Press, 2010.
[137] Richard Wagner, William Ashton Ellis, *Actors and Singers*, University of Nebraska Press, 1995, 325.
[138] Antonin Artaud, *Le théâtre et son double*, « Le théâtre de la cruauté », Paris: Gallimard, 1938, 148.

Lawrence began to get interested in elaborating an intuitive communion narrator/reader/artistic subject[139]. In the wake of impressionism, they started to account for what it is to feel as a human being, to open the reader's perception to the narrator's. This brand of realism, giving access to the "myriads of impressions" an individual may have somehow echoes with Wagner's realistic art in which the spectator is assaulted by details.

Mikhail Bakhtin and Serguei Vakhtangov ended up devising a simple theatre where the audience sat all around the stage and surrounded a staged action built so as to enfold in the depths of the stage. This total immersion of the spectator in the scene and the multiplicity of incompatible settings available in a single space could be compared with the total absorption of the reader in the novel's heterotopic dimension, its evocation of another place and time. Neither exclusively real nor fictional[140], the fictional space-time dimension is resolutely non-Euclidian, fiction sharing elements with reality.

2-b-Preliminary notes: gestures.

> "Gesture in language is the outward and dramatic play of inward and imaged meaning"[141]
> "Speech explains the passions only by way of the ideas to which sentiments are tied, and by reflection. Tone and gesture reach the heart directly and without any detour."[142]

For this theoretical part, I am drawing on Barabara Korte's seminal work, *Body Language in Literature*. One of my assumptions here was that pathognomy (emotions as conveyed by gestures and body language) was an important field of characterology which must also be analysed historically in relation with performance arts such as opera. As research dealing with nonverbal communication began in the nineteen seventies, body language in literary fictions -particularly those dating back from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries- started to prove expressive of mental states.

In fact, the newly created brand of research tackling the issue of gestures and corporeal movements in literary fiction was inspired by the emergence of the new psychological science in the mid-nineteenth century. It was also certainly inspired by the fact that more and more body

[139] Kirsty Martin, *Modernism and the Rhythms of Sympathy: Vernon Lee, Virginia Woolf, D.H. Lawrence*, Oxford University Press, 2013, 1.
[140]Brian McHale, *Constructing Postmodernism*, London: Routledge, 2012, see the definition of "heterotopia" from 137.
[141] R.P. Blackmur, *Language as Gesture*, Santa Barbara: Greenwood Press, 1977, 6.
[142] Charles Batteux, *The Fine Arts Reduced to a Single Principle*, quoted in Sophia Rosenfeld, *A Revolution in Language: The Problem of Signs in Late Eighteenth Century France*, Stanford University Press, 2001, 60.

language is used in contemporary literature[143].

The history of this new scientific interest in literary body language was presented by Barbara Korte's work[144]. She mentions Linda Pelzer's study of body language in Henry James, David E. Smith's comparative work on body language in Kafka and Kleist. It seems that a wider spectrum of people accept the idea that body language is part of the literary characterology and especially serves the purpose of specifying the relationships between characters and the type of communication which is possible between them[145].

Both in operas and in literature, body language as nonverbal communication is known to be composed of different domains : haptics (concerned with communication by touching), kinesics (concerned with how bodies move in space), vocalics (concerned with how people convey messages and meaning by changing tone or pitch, among other parts of vocal paralanguage), chronemics (concerned with communication by playing on the structure of time). In operas, gestures are known to fall into three categories: imitative gestures, emphatic gestures and expressive gestures[146]. Of course, these categories find equivalents in literary fictions. In operas as well as fiction, one can combine several categories of gestures, thus creating a complex posture.

Gestures are often thought to reveal feelings or intentions.

Table of the circumstances of occurrence of nonverbal communication in literary and operatic fiction. Inspired by Barbara Korte

Circumstances of occurrence of nonverbal behaviour	**Definition**	**Operatic example**	**Literary Example**
+/- interactive	The nonverbal communicative behaviour occurs in the presence of others or not.	*Cenerentola* I, 11. In most performances, when Ramiro puts out his hand so as to prevent Dandini from speaking loud.	The mutual glance between Daniel and Gwendolen in the opening scene of *Daniel Deronda.*
+/- within a speech	The NVC occurs within a speech or outside of it.		
+/-comitative	The NVC works to support, contradict, complement the speech. The NVC is	Operatic emphatic gestures derived from rhetoric (the actor underlines the	*Catcher in the Rye* (14): "Hell," Ackley said. "If I had his dough, I

[143] Barbara Korte, *Body Language in Literature*, *op.cit*., 33.
[144] *Idem.*
[145] *Ibid*., 22.
[146] Opera atelier website, n.d., https://operaatelier.com/education/opera-lovers/about-the-art/acting/, accessed March 2016.

	linked to the speech.	important words by gesture) When the singer emphasizes what he sings by pointing his right forefinger upwards.	would [give you my tie if you liked it]." "No, you wouldn't." I shook my head.
+/-independent	There's no relationship whatsoever between the NVC and what is being said.	Dissimulation/disguise scenes Almaviva as the music teacher Don Alonzo, pretendedly teaching Rosina but really loving her. In some productions (Dario Fo's) playing the flaut so as to kiss.	Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, IX: 'Did you see any of these pretty things [jewels], my dear?' said the Jew […]. 'Yes, sir,' replied Oliver. 'Ah!' said the Jew, turning rather pale. 'They—they're mine." Contradiction/ discordance between what Fagin says and his complexion.
+/-concordant	The NVC conveys a message logically in agreement with the speech.	Imitative gestures (When some Figaros move so as to suggest dancing when the character proposes ironically and metaphorically to have the count dance the capriola) *Le Nozze*, I 3.	"In short," concluded the parson, decisively smacking his leg with his switch, "there's hardly such another family in England." *Tess of the d'Urbervilles.*
+/-unconscious	May suggest deeper psychological level.	Violetta turning pale in *La Traviata* act 1.	"her eyes, sky-blue, were as innocent and untouched by experience as they must have been when she was ten". "Everything that Rises Must Converge". Flannery O'Connor, *Complete Stories.*
+/-intentional	May suggest idiosyncratic aspects	Blanche de la Force supporting herself on	A black sheen appeared in the

	of the character	a chair I,1 suggesting her weak nerves. *Le Dialogue des Carmélites*. Operatic affective gesture.	boy's eyes. "Satan," he said. "He has me in his power." The Lame Shall Enter First", Flannery O'Connor, *Complete Stories.*

Eighteenth century revival of the pantomime and some novelistic consequences.

In Antiquity, pantomimes -theatrical performances where gestures replaced words, mimes and postures- used to abund. Sixteenth century commedia dell'arte relied on these ancient practices as the actors came to freely elaborate their performance while only following the canvas created by a playwright.

In the 1760s, under the influence of people such as dancer Jean-Georges Neverre, thinkers Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Etienne Bonnot de Condillac and Denis Diderot in France, a revival of the pantomime took place and the hypothesis of gestures and body language constituting a sort of primeval human language was put forward. There also emerged a desire to renew society thanks to a new sign language and to replace the artifice of soulless mechanical choreographic prowesses impossible to understand in a real human way by a realistic art based on mimesis, able to represent and convey human sentiments[147]. One of the artistic challenges was to try to invent a syntactic way of linking gestures together.

Influenced by the commedia dell'arte, there appeared in France a variety of pièces à la muette, pieces à écriteaux on which dialogues were written and operas-comiques combining pantomimes, music and speech. As Sophia Rosenfeld underlines it, one of the communicative advantages of this genre relying on the production/exchange of signs was that:

> […] universal expressions of transient passions, from tears to flailing limbs, were believed to be capable of producing sincere and profound emotional relations, themselves often physically manufactured in involuntary tears, sighs, and other corporeal demonstations on the part of the audience.[148]

Another relied on the aptitude of the genre to go beyond gender-related acting stereotypes_female acting no longer had to produce strategic tears and blushes exemplifying irrationality as what mattered was to lay emphasis on the universality of human experience[149].

---

[147] Sophia Rosenfeld, *A Revolution in Language: the Problem of Signs in Late Eighteenth Century France*, *op.cit.*, 59.
[148] *Ibid*.,74.
[149] *Ibid*.,75.

After Delsarte's nineteenth century attempts at creating a repertoire of realistic gestures and advice for opera performers so as to perform more efficiently, stage directors such as Vsevolod Meyerhold began replacing what they still perceived as stereotypical gestures by more stylized pantomime gestures. Instead of having performers clutching their bosoms or wringing their hands when signalling their inward turmoil, Meyerhold decided to use music as a frame of reference for staging performances and to show actors relying on gestures influenced by pantomimes.

The influence of pantomime can be felt on novels such as Edith Wharton's *1920 Age of Innocenc*e in which the New York elite society, an almost aristocratic one is depicted through their use of primitive non verbal language. It is as if the author made fun of their upper class origins by showing how their "intra-tribal organisation, obligations, consuetude"[150] debase them as well. She particularly focuses on description of facial expression and eye movements as non verbal communication tools. Non verbal behaviour proves to be a criterion of acceptance in and rejection of a certain type of society:

> [the] persons of their world lived in an atmostphere of faint implications and pale delicacies, and the fact that he and she understood each other without a word seemed to the young man to bring them nearer than any explanation would have done.[151]

However, the influence of pantomime can be traced back to many authors including the romantic Thomas De Quincey who in an essay on pronunciation laid emphasis on the importance of having a clear way of pronouncing words as it is the only way of passing for a true gentleman and of thus distanciating oneself from middle class workers[152]. De Quincey opposes the English habit of trying to pass for somebody higher than they are to the French lazy spirit accepting that farmers always look true to their trade.

Virginia Woolf also seems to have been inspired by the genre[153], especially in her novel *Orlando*. The author used to appreciate theatrical works, experimental plays as well as musical pantomimes or plays with incidental music such as J.B. Priestley's and Benjamin Britten's *Johnson over Jordan*. As Caroline Marie showed in her essay, identity perceived as an ever-changing entity, a characteristic shared by certain pantomimes, is somehow alluded to through the creation of the ever-changing Orlando. The brutal shifts from one place to the next, from one situation to the next in the novel seem to echo cinematographic practices.

---

[150] J.D. Thomas, "Tribal Culture, Pantomime, and the Communicative Face in E. Wharton's *Age of Innocence*", *Edith Wharton Review*, Penn State University, 22.1 (2006): 1-5, 1.
[151] Edith Wharton*, The Age of Innocence*, San Diego: Icon Classics, 2005, 19.
[152]Eva-Lynn Alicia Jagoe. "Degrading Forms of Pantomime; Englishness and Shame in De Quincey", *Studies in Romanticism*, 14.1 (Spring 2005): 23-40.
[153] Caroline Marie, "Sense of Self and Sense of Place in *Orlando*: Virginia Woolf's Aesthetics of Pantomime", Gina Potts, Lisa Shahrian (eds*), Virginia Woolf's Bloomsbury, vol 1: Aesthetic Theory and Literary Practice*, New York: Palmgrave Macmillan, 2010, 75-85.

Maybe the reason for such an influence of operatic gestures is to be found in the inherent poetic and aesthetic dimension of such gestures.

Nineteenth century. From the operatic stage to the novel: mechanical electric metaphors for gestures.

In the nineteenth century, the two metaphors of the singer as machine and the singer as electric were used to describe the critics' reactions to operatic performers[154]. The former was negative, as it suggested the soulless repetition of thoroughly rehearsed acting methods[155] whereas the latter had positive connotations suggesting the circulation of emotion between the audience and the spectators. These operatic acting metaphors, inspired by the technological context - seem to find an obvious illustration in Charles Dickens's novels.

A rather close friend of scientific pioneer and mechanical engineer Charles Babbage, who invented a forerunner of the computer, Charles Dickens, seems to create a human identity marked by a blurring between the human and the mechanical.

Dombey and Son (1848) is replete with images of human bodies threatened by dissolution[156] (the agile though single-handed Captain Cuttle able to supplement his absent hand by a knife as well by a hook[157], aging Mrs Skewton attempting to save appearances), *Hard Times* (1854) presented a sort of posthuman society making automata out of men in the wake of industrialisation. Therefore, Dickens whose first work was the operatic burletta *The Village Coquettes* and who was continuously under the influence operas and musicians via his sister, seems to have been influenced by the trendy metaphors used by the opera critics of his time as well by the wider philosophical, scientific and cultural reflection on automata.

As Katherine Inglis has it Dickens created a great number of "mechanical and metallurgic characters" (Bitzer, Wemmick, Pancks, Flintwinch,…)[158], as for Little Nell, she is implicitly compared to an automaton or a machine as she beings working and declining in a factory though she is never a true puppet as she remains in control of the situation until her death.

As for George Eliot, she is well-known for using electricity as a metaphor as early as the publication of her first novel, *Adam Bede* (1859) where it is meant to represent love, then electricity is used to depict an unexpected shock or thrill (in 1871-2 *Middlemarch*, in 1860 *The*

---

[154]Céline Frigau-Manning, "Singer-Machines: Describing Italian Singers, 1800-1850", *The Opera Quarterly*, 28:3-4 (2012) 230-258.

[155] Hector Berlioz, "They have the voice, the musical knowledge, an agile larynx. They are lacking in soul, brain and heart.", quoted in *Ibid*., 231.

[156] See Robert Newsom quoted in Herbert Sussman, Gerhard Joseph, "Prefiguring the Posthuman, Dickens and Prosthesis", *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 32.2 (2004): 617-628, 618.

[157] *Idem.*

[158] Katherine Inglis, « Becoming Automatous: Automata in *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Our Mutual Friend", Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 6 (2008), n.pag., 5.

Mill on the Floss or 1862 *Romola*)[159]

If George Eliot is particularly well-known for resorting to the electric metaphor, authors such as Mark Twain, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville and Henry James did approximately the same[160].

Mechanical metaphors applying to singers can also be found in operas such as Jacques Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann* which somehow seem to mirror the anxieties of nineteenth century coloratura sopranos who had to voice always higher sounds. Technical improvements to allow sopranos to sing higher notes began to develop (the French school of voix de petit chien, voix de flageolet).

PART 2

Beyond the transmission of value, operatic intermediality as being more essentially a necessary human poetic/expressive challenge.

[159] Sam Halliday, "Science and Technology in the Age of Hawthorne, Melville, Twain and James. Thinking and Writing Electricity", *American Literature Reading in the Twenty-First century*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, 3-4.
[160] *Idem.*

Though there are a great many ideas in [Nadine Gordimer's] work one doesn't feel that the mind has ever been violated by any of them because they' re always converted into sensuous texture. […]
[Nadine Gordimer] I can't imagine how there could be a novel or high ambition without ideas; to me, ideas become themes. They are the thematic and the transcendent aspect of any imaginative work, novels and poems alone.[161]

[161] Nadine Gordimer, Robert Boyers, Clark Blaise, Terence Diggory, Jordan Elgrably, *A Conversation with Nadine Gordimer*, Salmagundi, 62, Winter 1984, 3-31, 3.

Chapter 1-Case Study: Operatic intermediality as textual technique for going beyond the contemporary hypercrafted real. Corporeality and esthetics.

The present study proposes an interpretation of A.S. Byatt's "Medusa's Ankles"[162] based on the short story's relationships with the operatic universe it alludes to. I will draw on operatic intermediality as a method to represent and question a contemporary hypercrafted real fashioned by layers upon layers of sophisticated dramatic/operatic representations of femininity. At the end, representing the gap between appearances and reality in a new, innovative way seems to be A.S. Byatt's main aim.

Implicitly, the barber's role, Susannah's first name and *The Rosy Nude* evoking every woman's youth as a Rosina, conjure up Beaumarchais's world in *The Barber of Seville or the Useless Precaution* and his *Marriage of Figaro or the Follies of a Day.* However, more to the point in this intermedial study, I will analyze A.S. Byatt's poetical fantasy of sitting in the hands of Figaro, from the point of view of her operatic dialogue with Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Rossini's *Barber of Seville*. I will also explore possible allusions to Susanna operas (Handel's *Susanna* and Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*).

[162] A.S. Byatt, "Medusa's Ankles", *op.cit.*.

A.S. Byatt both identifies with and challenges the masculine artist's gaze on the feminine body founding classical notions of artistic beauty. From Susanna/Susannah to the Antonia Susan dreamily communicating with the revolutionary and feminist aspects of Rossini's or Mozart's works, there is indeed but one metafictional step. Susannah's destruction of Lucian's salon seems to announce the desacralization of Matisse's pictures of perfect female voluptuousness. It seems to assume that destroying male artists's sensual artworks revolving on female beauty is needed though always a more or less useless precaution. Indeed, the story's structure is somehow circular as the whole action - from Susannah's first visits to Lucian's salon to the redecoration and the progression towards the final climax - is set in a compact and lyrical artform, itself evoking an opera in two acts.

A.S. Byatt's deliberately interartistic approach to literature is made manifest here by the use of the word “salon”. A new version of Mozart's Aguas Frescas castle, A.S. Byatt's salon constitutes an imaginative location where relationships and attitudes can be explored without being constrained by the real world's divisions. The salon also creates a coincidence between the hairdresser's place and the artistic and literary salons of yore connecting writers.

A.S. Byatt's negociations with her operatic intertext seems to inherit on the one hand from the historical link between librettist novelists (Zola...) and opera composers, and, on the other hand, from the traditional adaptation of novels into operas (Walter Scott). “Medusa's Ankles” also somehow suggests A.S. Byatt's nineteenth century idols' -and in particular George Eliot's- rediscovery of long forgotten operas inspiring a new aesthetics to writers. Through the Susannah character, “Medusa's Ankles” could even be said to build on the metafictional vocation of the feminine singer's role otherwise explored in George Sand's relatively feminist *Consuelo* and *La comtesse de Rudolstadt*.

Here, the short story writer also implicitly refers to the opera as staging the most direct expression of intense passions. As *Le Nozze di Figaro* gives depth and humanity to Beaumarchais' political play, referring to it easily raises the story to the universal heights of a psychological drama. In A.S. Byatt's work too, primitive pulsions are disguised beneath words. Only an irrational, immediate, pre-verbal language following a music shifting from “quiet seraglio” to “muted heavy metal” imports as it undermines the meaningless world of respectable illusions “making old dear presentable”. The duo Lucian/Susannah adding to the great variety of duos in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, evokes some violent, irrepressible and shameless ardor preluding to the revelation of intimacy and to sexual union. Articulating her character's emotions in parts of the introspective text and undertext, A.S. Byatt's technique in this short piece is somehow reminiscent of aria writing.

However, shattering the operatic stage together with Lucian's already redecorated salon, saturating the norm of expressivity, Susannah's tale finally plays with the sublime and the irrational as the appearance of the mythical medusa illustrates. What remains at the end of the natural physical transformations inherent in the female aging process is indeed akin to what Françoise Escal describes as a sense of the lyrical strange[163].

Fashioning herself as the diva, as another rebellious Susannah/Susanna, A.S. Byatt conveys the sense of a high brow culture which can only precariously be idealized[164]. By implicitly comparing singing, Mozartian operas and writing she nevertheless restores the link between female writing and female enigmatic seduction, between the short story and a growing awareness of the individual, of the need for tolerance and universal good will.

As she loses control, Susannah the scholar appears just as human as Lucian, who, desperately in love, weakly makes a show of his self destructive impulses. It is by presenting herself sunk into the hysteria of operatic nostalgic introspection, a source of sexual/textual and ontological fascination for Lucian and the reader, that she reinvents art, taking the musical lead (like Susanna in the opera), using feminine cunning against male moral oppression.

I will now turn to an analysis of A.S. Byatt's use of operas for feminist re-characterization and re-staging in the perspective of dealing with a postmodern hypercrafted version of reality and discovering the gap between appearances and reality.

1. Lucian and the commedia dell'arte.

Susannah's TV broadcast may be an allusion to TV broadcast of *Le Nozze di Figaro* which began in the fifties. The popularity of these broadcasts was partly due to the ease with which one could identify with the comic commedia dell'arte stereotypes and to the treatment of the gap between appearances and reality.

1-a- Figaro/Lucian and Brighella: *Luxe, calme et volupté.*

Lucian who plays Figaro to Susannah (A.S. Byatt's Susanna), shares common characteristics

[163] Françoise Escal, *Contretemps musique et littérature,* Paris: Méridiens Klincksieck, 1990, 28.
[164] *Ibid*., 78.

with Brighella, a commedia dell'arte character from which Figaro is known to derive. First, Lucian's first name, related to the Latin “Lux” and evoking light, seems to refer to Brighella's entirely white outfit. Then, Brighella's almost supernatural lust and greed which the character's green half-mask points at, seem to find an echo in Lucian's craving to possess beauty and his business seemingly inherited from the operatic Figaro's renunciation to writing.

Lucian's erotic voluptuousness is hinted at through the evokation of his slenderness, his balletic soft motions and the black tight trousers he is wearing (3). If Susannah assumed her barber was homosexual, the reader guesses he may be bisexual as he fills his “salon” with many beautiful young men (10) as well as with young female.

In the potentially dubious beauty salon, Lucian as the operatic Figaro in his recognizable full white sleeves, strangely officiates, adopting an “anatomically odd” posture (4) as Susannah's face “meets his belt, his haunches skim her breathing” and his face is “far away, high and behind.” (4). His grossly futile cause for leaving his wife and the passion for physical beauty (10) to which he ridiculously reduces ancient Greek art further identify him as obscene. Buying the Pink Nude, owning it, exhibiting it, he also prostitutes it as well as art and his beautiful employees. In his seraglio-like salon, the hairdresser can fulfil his own erotic needs as suggests the “quiet seraglio music, piped music” (5) “tinkling and tripping and dropping,..like sherbet” (5).

Lucian's ill-channelled Brighellan impulses culminate in the almost overt allusions to his sex-making with Susannah. References to the lexical field of hair (frizzed fur, curls, waves, …) contribute to build a subtext invaded with Lucian's sensual fright of providing erotic illumination to a middle-aged woman:

> [...] a kind of frizzed fur replaced the gloss. Lucian said that curls and waves - following the lines of the new unevenness - would dissimulate, would render natural-looking, that was, young, what was indeed natural, the death of the cells. […] “short and bouncy was best” […] “he stood above her with his fine hands...[she] averted her eyes”. (6-7)

The almost Shakespearian double entendres emphasize the circularity inherent in human existence as age coincides with the erotic “death of cells” which could prelude to life giving. The fact that Susannah remembers the old dome-like hair dryers is not a mere matter of chance. Operating like vaginas, maybe like Susannah's own mother, they used to “descend” and “engulf” the customers/ her mother/her giving birth (now the cubicles have gone and “everything [is] open” (6) to a new mature woman (7).

Brighella/Lucian's ambivalent social position as a middle class servant entertaining upper class expectations appears here. Lucian owns part of a house, pays half the rent of his girlfriend's flat, has his insured salon employing a generous staff redecorated at the drop of a hat though he is in financial dire straights. Lucian spends holidays in Greece maybe on board of a yacht and, what

is more to the point, owns the Matisse. Brighella, as typical from those who have risen from povery, is often most cruel to those just beneath him in the social ladder, loathing or killing them out of contempt. This behaviour -resulting in Figaro's disgust for Don Basilio- though downplayed, is still present in Lucian's condescendance for his wife and his "suburban old dears" (9)' longing for respectability. The fact that he considers the Rosy Nude as giving class (4) and that he admits liking things to have class (4) may also points to it. When the hairdresser finally metamorphoses into an army of swordsmen ("She could see several of him, advancing on her, he was standing in a corner and was reflected from wall to wall, a cohort of slender, trousered swordsmen, waving the bright scissors like weapons." 24-25), the reader may understand that the contempt he felt for Susannah could lead him to kill her, fully embodying Brighella, etymologically linked to "briga" ("fight", "brawl") and wearing a dagger fastened to his belt.

The variety of Lucian's pseudo-intellectual and sensual pursuits (see his interest for archeology, art, Lawrence Gowing, Greece antiquity, Tantric Art and the school of meditation, his customers' knowledge) surely reminds Professor Susannah and the reader of Brighella's and then Figaro's own dangerous adaptability and flitting mind identified as devilish in the commedia dell'arte:

> She could recognise the flitting mind, she considered. It frightened her. What she knew, what she cared about, what was coherent, was separate shards for him to flit over, remaining separate. You wrote books and gave lectures, and these little ribbons of fact shone briefly and vanished. (9)

Indeed, Lucian inherited Brighella's rich vocabulary compensating for his father's dumbness. Imitating his bourgeois clientele's aspirations, the financially settled Lucian wants to go out of the aquarium to fulfil other aesthetic longings. Lucian's honesty is maybe uncertain.

Like the talkative liar Brighella who owed his cunning to his birth in the high part of Bergamo, Lucian is a witty servant serving only his own interest. Posing Susannah as his psychiatric help or guru (7), he is always late to his appointments (7), carefully selects his priviledged listener out of the many customers (Susannah was "plump, which could be read as motherly, and, because, as a university teacher she was, as he detected, herself a professional listener. He asked her advice." (8) and selfishly rambles on his own predicament (8). When he asks whether Susannah knows about inner life, the expression "inner life" makes him sound completely self absorbed and self centered. Lucian as the lux, the light, is really the star at the center of the salon, and even at the center of the final mirror play.

Brighella and Figaro's excellent professional skills and generally successful undertakings, find an echo in Lucian's hairdresser's talent which so far permitted him to keep his customers. Though Susannah was ready to find out a new hairdresser after the redecoration of the salon,

Lucian's understanding of her hair and maybe of the sexual life associated to it prevents her from doing so (16). Lucian will certainly be able to install a stall in the Antique Hypermarket as Brighella's projects fail only when other characters around him fall out of luck. Lucian's salon will have to close because of Susannah's breakdown, not because of any shortcoming in his behaviour.

1-b-Figaro/Lucian, Harlequin, Meneghino, Pagliaccio.

As well as Brighella's features, Lucian's identity recapitulates some of Harlequin's. To Brighella 's cunning, Lucian adds some of the stupidity characterizing Harlequin the buffoon coming from the low part of Bergamo and inherent in Figaro. His short-lived intellectual and amorous interests illustrate this. At the end of the short story, Lucian's Harlequin-like body and identity are exposed and destroyed as the strange battlefield suddenly metamorphoses into “glittering fragments and sweet-smelling rivulets and puddles of venous-blue and fuchsia-red unguents, patches of crimson-streaked foam and odd intense spills of orange henna or cobalt and copper.”(7)

In fact, A.S. Byatt seems to borrow the structure of English commedia dell'arte Harlequinades which used to follow more serious, balletic or operatic works. Indeed, at the end of the short story, the Mozartian character is magically transformed into Harlequin, who, like Lucian speaking about his need for beauty and total affinity, becomes the romantic central figure.

Brighella's greed and lust could be Harlequin's though the latter is also often portrayed as insolent, cynical and lazy which chimes with Lucian's reflection on his wife's fat ankles backfiring on Susanna, his position on ageing and his need for pauses.

Because he is always broke, Harlequin, like Brighella or Figaro, does a variety of odd jobs among which barber, surgeon drawing teeth, employee at a chemist's. He therefore holds ever changing opinions. If choregraphic barbers influenced Lucian's characterization, light-hearted and nimble (see his dancing representations), Harlequin possibly also inspired the balletic Hamlet's « slender and soft-moving » body wearing tight trousers (3). When he deliberately hurts himself, Lucian does it with « a kind of balletic movement of wrists, scissors and fingerpoints above her brow. »(3). Like Harlequin's name, he would evoke the physical agility and trickster qualities of a mischievous devil character in medieval passion plays.

Harlequin, like Brighella, Figaro or even Lucian, acts so as to thwart his master's plans and

tends to selfishly pursue his own love interests. He soon becomes the witty and resourceful prototype of the romantic hero when competing with Pierrot for Columbine. Here, Lucian's romantic love interest for a beautiful girlfriend with whom he could live in total affinity makes him near the commedia dell'arte's most popular character.

One can add to the variety of commedia dell'arte influences possibly shaping A.S. Byatt's character, Dario Fo's 1991-1992 staging of *The Barber of Seville* as a sort of Meneghino entering with Pagliaccio's white mask in his hand. Dressed as Meneghino, the barber appeared as the zanni character officiating on Sundays, exclusively dedicated to his lady which his pink apron comically underlining his proximity with the maternal element enhanced. In Susannah's recollections, the barber is associated with the initiation into womanhood (6) and with the mother-daughter transmission (6).

2-Susannah, Suzanne.

If I mainly consider Susannah as a sequel to the Mozartian Susanna, A.S. Byatt's character's potential relationships with G.F. Handel's, Emile Paladilhe's or Carlisle Floyd's eponymous characters will also be taken into account as they add to the sensual and revolutionary dimension of the character.

Both Händel's and Floyd's heroines are implicitly involved in a quasi-feminist narrative in favour of women's liberty of movement and pave the way for the *Rosy Nude's* frightening, medusa-like, sensual intimacy. Like “Medusa's Ankles”, both works, directly derived from the Book of Daniel's *Susanna*, are based on a reversal of common notions as they associate middle and old age with lust and envy.

In Handel's and the Apocrypha's versions, espied bathing in the nude in her garden by two Elders, Susanna is warned that should she refuse to sleep with the two men, they would claim they found her committing adultery with a young man. As Susanna refused, the Elders accused her and demanded her death. Susanna claimed her innocence and prayed for help before young Daniel begged the Elders be questioned separately. Because they contradicted each other, they were sentenced to stoning for calumny.

In Carlisle Floyd's version (the only one with a final “h”), set in a Tennessee town in the mid-20th century, the very preacher exhorting Susannah to repent for having (unknowingly) bathed in the stream the church intended for baptisms, rapes her. The Elders force the young Little Bat to say she seduced him. Gnawed by guilt as he realizes Susannah was a virgin, he is finally

killed by Susannah's brother. The village go to Susannah's farm, however the young girl threatens them with a shotgun.

3-“Love isn't easy”: intertextuality, displacements of the Figaro operas' role models.

A.S. Byatt places her intertextual displacements of the Figaro operas under the sign of pop music using ABBA's title “Love isn't easy” that she puts in Susannah's mouth as a means to counterweigh the sheer number of references to highbrow culture.

A.S. Byatt creates her text by both adopting the complex Rossini-Mozart framework and by taking her distances from it.

3-a-General similarities between the short story and the Figaro operas.

A.S.Byatt exploits the Figaro operas' fluid exchanges of power within and between social layers as her use of Lucian's in-between social figure, his wife and Susannah evidences. She indirectly relies on Mozart's own manipulation of our sympathies as she leads us to crave for an equal consideration of characters.

In “Medusa's Ankles”, everything revolves around a possible sexual act Lucian/Susannah as in *Le Nozze* everything revolves around the eventuality of Susanna's defloration by the Count. The impatience of desire seems to allude to the kind of spermatic writing designed by Beaumarchais and inherited from Sade's *La philosophie dans le boudoir* alternating sexual action and periods of philosophical reflection. The Eros figure, Cherubino, loving all women finds a reflection here in the recollection of ads showing blonde pages and inviting to sexual debauchery. The pages yet unable to anticipate and control their desire reduce Lucian to a capricious child, one of the disguises of unspoken Eros.

Lucian, possibly loving the young males in his salon as well as the enslaved young women reminding the Rosy Nude, seems to constitute another Eros/Cherubino figure, half-man, half-

woman, symbolising amorous disorders and eroticizing the stage while upsetting his wife's intrigues.

Like the always polite Figaro fearing the Count, Lucian does not seem to be very reactive or very easily moved. His pain is muted like the heavy metal music. Lucian's amorous distress, his jealousy, like Figaro's disappointed accusation of all women, seem to constitute primitive pulsion.

Through Lucian's war with his wife, Susannah's war against a male artistic point of view, and the master-servant Susannah/Lucian, Lucian/his employees[165] relationships, A.S. Byatt points towards the revolutionary flavour of the Beaumarchais operatic works.

To the end of “Medusa's Ankles” coinciding with the happy reunion of husband and wife, could apply the last words sung by the opera's characters (“May love and faith eternal/reign in both your hearts”). As in the operas, the Figaro character appears as optimistic as he accepts the salon's destruction and as he reminds the reader of the Beaumarchais character who, accustomed to misfortune, is eternally laughing. As in the Figaro operas, the characters have to face the quasi-inevitability of unwanted marriages and of inconstancy. They have to fight against the farcical dimension of marriage pointed out by Basilio. If Bartholo wished to wreak revenge against Figaro by using any flaw in the legal code and make him marry Marcelina, here Lucian remains sordidly married to his wife against his will, out of a sense of legal decency and for respectability's sake. Like in the opera, the Figaro figure seems unable to cope with the others' flexibility, ability to take advantage of the circumstances. Like in the operas too, the Figaro character arranges things between Susannah and her husband against money.

In fact, both the Figaro operas and « Medusa's Ankles » share a certain number of structural points. Thus, first, the main characters, Lucian and Susannah, evoke a series of secondary characters (Lucian's wife and daughter whose absence, like Susannah's reflections suggest, may be a sign of their limited personality and expressivity, Lucian's employees, Susannah's husband). Then, love is linked to accomodation in all the cases. Bartholo keeps his ward partly for her money. If accomodation is problematic for Lucian now he has a new girlfriend, he is somehow reminiscent of Almaviva sometimes exclaiming that he is tired with conquests which convenience, interest or vanity daily offer and wants being loved for what he truly is.

The theme of justice appearing under Lucian's considerations about how much his wife is entitled to if they divorce and if she keeps their daughter is reminiscent of the Don Curzio and Don Guzman of Mozart and Beaumarchais as well as of the notary in *The Barber of Seville*. The debate about forced marriages between old and young is also clearly inherited from the Figaro

165 Reworking of the ironically named Sprightly/Youthful.

operas as well as the binding child motif (because they've found their son, Bartholo will have to marry Marcelina in *The Marriage of Figaro*), the relationship to the body and the world of instincts.

Figaro's conception of truth in *The Marriage of Figaro* (comprehensible and incomprehensible truths, tradesman's and lovers' truths) matches the representation of truth in "Medusa's Ankles". Thus, one finds the hyperbolic "Total affinity. Absolute compatibility. A miracle. My other half. A perfectly beautiful girl." (12). The legal, bookish aspect of truth for Figaro seems to match Lucian's fear of having to give up his part of the house. The rest of Figaro's speeches on the multiplicity and dissolution of truth applies rather well too: the truths in fashion, such as that of male idleness, ignorance, dissipation, gaming and seduction evoke Lucian's superficiality and the female truths out of fashion such as gentleness, obedience, economy and connubial love evoke Susannah's final revolt, the old truth of his love for his wife, of Susannah's husband's indifference and the new truth of Lucian's love for his girlfriend, of Susannah's change.

The sky-blue couch on which the Rosy Nude spreads and whose colour appears on the mirror-frames and the little trollies (5) can suggest the opening scene of *The Marriage of Figaro* in which the barber measures his bed, symbolically delineating the male/female relationships. The repetition of the frame motif (the house, the couch of the Rosy Nude, the salon as the vagina-looking interior of a pink cloud, the stall in the Antique Hypermarket) may suggest the emprisoning character of any love relationships.

The condensation of various operatic characters into one can be read as an allusion to the use of disguises in *The Barber of Seville* and *The Marriage of Figaro* as well as to the monstrous ubiquity of the barber.

Other parallels can be drawn between A.S. Byatt's short story and the Figaro operas such as the Matisse's drawing entitled *La Chevelure* and the heavy insistence on a variety of feminine hairdresses (the "rigidly bouncy 'set', like a mountain of wax fruit" characterizing Susannah's mother (6), the young Susannah's heavy chestnut-glossy curtain (6), the animal frizzed fur (7) which seem to stand for the Barber.

3-b-Economic condensations and superimpositions of operatic characters.

A.S. Byatt seems to identify with the Countess as well as with Susanna. Susannah's inner voice embeds recollections of her youth, and tacitly of her love affair with her husband. This forms a counterpart to Lucian's love story.

This may be reminiscent of the “Dove sono i bei momenti” which focuses on the Countess's regrets for a happy past when she and her husband were united. Susannah's inner voice, like the Countess’s, lays emphasis on the emotional richness of feminine psychology. In Susannah's case too, there is an evolution from meditative self absorption to action, destruction in the short story. In the opera, the intensity of the countess's feelings contrasts with the count’s dynamic authoritarian tone. But in this feminine re-working of the opera, the Count is no longer authoritarian.

On the other hand, Susannah evokes Susanna from *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Mozart's character whose agility contrasts with Figaro's heaviness and prudence, is characterized by musical lightness and suggests an active character who profits by life, whose flexibility and insightfulness protect from the Count. As she is able to reveal the Count's projects to Figaro and to slap her husband shortly afterwards, she can be compared to Susannah who patiently listens to Lucian's love life and destroys his salon soon afterwards. Neither Mozart's Susanna nor A.S. Byatt's spontaneous Susannah entertain any deep thought which is paradoxical given Susannah's occupation. A.S. Byatt's seems to dream of a lightless condition, in which she would be only dedicated to her passionate intimate feelings and in which she would solve all problems as they come.

If she mainly relies on allusions to *The Barber of Seville* and *The Marriage of Figaro* in order to deal with the issue of male power over female, each of her characters alternatively performs several roles of the Figaro plays and operas.

The dubious ownership of the supine Rosy Nude, a variant of Beaumarchais's or Rossini's Rosina, seems to cast Lucian, who must “have beauty” (10), in jealous Bartholo[166]'s or in Count Almaviva's role. He becomes a transgressor of pre-established roles as he crosses the common distinctions established by the *dramatis personae*. It is no longer the count who takes Figaro's wife but Lucian who as a Figaro tries securing the countess for himself before discarding her (16).

Abolishing his sexual right on the young girls of his domain (the fresh Rosinas), the better to break his promise, the count has intercourse with all the women attracting him and tries to seduce Susanna. One could go as far as asserting that Lucian's ownership of the Rosy Nude in addition to the “quiet seraglio music”, “tinkling and tripping and dropping”, “like sherbet” (5) he likes to play, make him easily transform into the villain Osmin from the *Abduction from the Seraglio.* The seraglio music can also be compared with Don Basilio's music, that of calumny as well, going from piano (“quiet seraglio music” (5) to crescendo (the “blatter of music” (25) and increasingly

166 The Pink Nude behind the fainly aquarial plate glass, like Rosina behind her symbolical jealousy.

emprisoning Rosina/Susannah in her unwanted marriage.

Indeed, in Lucian's salon, the relationships between males and females seem to be inspired by a remote historical period and geographical area (far from England), he assumes total control over his female employees: “The girls were subordinate and brightly hopeless. None of them lasted long.”(5). Though the action must take place in England (Charing Cross where Lucian bought the Rosy Nude (4), a place associated with women's sexual liberty in eighteenth century operas (*The Abduction*, …), Lucian's salon seems to be delocalized in a sort of Western noman's land, evoking *The Barber of Seville*'s Spain (“They wore -in those days- pink overalls with cream silk bindings.”(11). Moreover, like Figaro combing, shaving, curing and bleeding everybody, Lucian has a sort of priviledged access to beauty.

The slender Lucian (3), also referring to the pre-*Barber of Seville* famished playwright Figaro dedicated to the ruin of aristocratic reputations, sharply contrasts with Matisse's *Rosy Nude*'s tribute to male love for aristocratic, female plumpness. As he attacks his wife's pretentions to social respectability and as he accepts Susannah's destruction of his salon, Lucian, whose name is reminiscent of light, seems to share a French ardor for liberty with his eighteenth century counterpart. Neither want of money nor tyrants will be able to stop him from loving his girlfriend, as in Rosina's case, the enemy's labour will be in vain. After his salon is no more, like Figaro fired from his appointment in the Royal Stables for having been printed alive, Lucian proves adaptable and envisages selling costume jewellery with his girlfriend. Like in Beaumarchais, accustomed to misfortunes, he laughs at every event.

Part of the metafictional interest of the story is conveyed by the confrontation/interaction between the very strong literary Figaro, even able to exchange his pen for the sure income of a razor, and Susannah, seemingly standing for Antonia Susan Byatt, the female powerful writer of the story who seems to measure her talent against the famous operatic poet’s. It is under the aegis of the Rosy Nude assuming her nudity or of Rosina assuming the sensuality and desire inherent in her coloratura mezzo-soprano voice and resisting against Bartholo that Susannah / Susan Byatt finds her voice as a female intellectual having to re-tie the knot between body and soul.

Lucian can also be identified with Rosina as he is disgusted by his wife's ankles just as she was disgusted by her old tutor. His discourse about total affinity describing his girlfriend as object (the Rosy Nude) as the series of nominal sentences makes clear (“'All my life I've been looking for something and now I've found it”””Love,” he said.'Total affinity. Absolute compatibility. A miracle. My other half. A perfectly beautiful girl.”) as well as his discourse about his surprise at being loved by such a beautiful girl could be an allusion to the various love songs sung by

Almaviva. However, contrary to the operatic character, Lucian sometimes doubt of his girlfriend's constancy. Like Almaviva, Lucian both loves his girlfriend and cares for his wife's aspirations to respectability.

In this short story, Susannah is therefore also Rosina. As she perceives the Rosy Nude through the plate glass and as she finally cuts herself (she had asked for a “cut and a blow-dry”), she makes self-seduction rhyme with self-destruction. One can draw a parallel between the Rosy Nude perceptible only through Lucian's plate glass and Rosina who can only be glimpsed at through the symbolical jealousy literalizing Bartholo's feeling towards his ward as well as, implicitly, Almaviva's jealous love helped by Figaro.

In fact, A.S. Byatt lets the reader discover a post-Beaumarchais world where ambivalence is the word as there is no way of knowing for sure from the barber's speech if the wife is “a shrew or a sufferer, nervous, patient or ironically detached (13)”. Maybe the wife is right after all to request Lucian's love and even to act as Bartholo while trying to talk Lucian into keeping the house and her (“Buy a bargain, rosinette/ Buy a husband for a pet/ There's one now, e'en in this house, who will make a charming spouse, He's no sighing swain, 'tis true, Yet not the worse, my girl for you”). In this short story, Susannah all the more sides with Bartholo as she stands for the classicist rebelling against absurd modernity (see her reaction to the second decoration of the salon). As Lucian displays his smattering of cultural knowledge, Susannah becomes the artificial woman with whom it is impossible to speak straighforwardly, who must be addressed with respect for her importance.

The countess and Cherubino characters appear when Susannah remembers the blonde pageboys on wartime advertisements (5); the Amami shampoo inevitably evoking Cherubino's arias. In fact, it appears that Beaumarchais's Hannibal or da Ponte's Cherubino, other writer figures, share the metafictional role with Lucian and Susannah. The pageboys/love poets are partly responsible for what happens on the “page”. The Amami shampoo whose name means “love me” resonates with Lucian's and Susannah's framing love stories. The shampoo also evokes Almaviva singing his “name, condition and intention” to Rosina.

The overt confusion of the Barber operas (disguises, shams, secret appointments, delusions, false illnesses, clandestine exchanges of letters, calumny) has become more implicit, to be read under the way the characters perform various parts together.

3-c- Reversals.

Here, it is no longer Medusa's head which becomes a valuable trophy but, in homage to Beaumarchais and Rossini, her ankles. In *The Barber of Seville*, because Rosina screams when she distinguishes Almaviva's features under Don Alonzo's, Almaviva pretends she has strained her ankle so as to progress unsuspected in his elopement scheme. In A.S. Byatt's alternative version, on the contrary, the swollen ankles become real and remind the reader of how enslaved to the male's point of view women are.

Casting herself as aSusanna/h in search of intellectual as well as physical emancipation, A.S. Byatt represents herself as only symbolically married to Figaro. She is the one who can endorse her intellectual pursuit, who can afford having more than a flitting interest for cultural matters. Indeed, A.S. Byatt, pleasingly inverts the female/male roles so as to fit her feminist point of view. In *The Marriage of Figaro*, Susan knew Almaviva wanted her and Figaro was gullible and had to be informed, here, it is however Lucian's lux, casting light on the aging process and maybe tacitly on Susannah's relationships with her husband which is both nourishing and rejuvenating.

It is interesting to note that due to superiority of the intellectual career, the marriage of Susannah to Lucian/Figaro, another literary figure, is a missed one, one that is carefully avoided. After all Lucian is a bad story teller. As A.S./Susannah notices: “None of his characters acquired any roundness. She formed no image of the nature of the beauty of the girlfriend or of the way she spent her time when not demonstrating her total affinity for Lucian.” (13). Lucian's characterization differs a little from Figaro's. Though still a lover appreciating music, the barber no longer imposes himself as an authorial figure. He is no longer associated with poem, madrigal or music writing. Lucian/Figaro no longer looks after old Bartholo's beard and no longer deals with only other people's love story. He is now dealing with his own love life and the medusa Susannah's hair and ankles. Whereas in the Beaumarchais/Rossini work, Figaro derided the aristocratic Almaviva and Rosina's love discourse, here, like in *The Marriage of Figaro*, it is the Figaro character who is in love.

As A.S. Byatt returns to a sort of purified version of the barber as factotum, he is an embarrassing character who could face female troubles (8) and therefore his own fear of castration. The attractive though never beautiful (19) snake-like hair symbolising the mother's genitals (see Susannah’s strange “middle-aged disinclination to study” the barber's face (4) and her encounter with the image of her own mother in the mirror, 23) convey a sense of horror as they

evidence the absence of penis. Indeed, the barber only looks at Susannah through mirrors (“[...]his face, which she saw only in the mirror behind her own”, 4) and, in spite of her name, finds her sexually repelling as he cannot bear swollen ankles.

The loss of landmarks signalled by the coexistence of Figaro's wife's name (Susannah), Lucian as Figaro and the figure of Susannah's mother Susannah herself represents explains why the lost barber sheds his own blood as well as Susannah's. Like Figaro, Lucian must avoid marrying against blood, both understood as the network of family relationships and as instinct. He must refuse the mother figure as wife and therefore reject Susannah as well as his wife. He must struggle against any accident of chance, the principle reigning over Figaro's life.

The salon imposes itself as a space where operatic identifications are freely exchanged according to fortune and which leads the action to finish on a sort of return to normality. This makes the short story resemble Mozart's musical composition. Byatt seems to impose herself as an extra composer *of Le Nozze* as she adds to Da ponte and Mozart's explorations.

The Figaro operas provide the model of comedies revolving around the love and time theme. Figaro's wigs which one often sees in operatic performances, symbolize how people used to mask the ageing process and the dangerous wildness of female hair which the male barber has to tame. They announce the hesitation on hiding and showing age present in Matisse's *Chevelure* as well as in A.S. Byatt's bouncy sets, “massed rolls of hair “and infernal Arcimboldo-like heaps of curls shaped like sausages, snail-shells, grape-clusters” (23) and snakes, possibly a tribute to the eighteenth century nobles's refined hairdresses. Still linked to the love and time theme, the countess's pain and sighs caused by the count's growing indifference, her very operatic and Mozartian suicidal impulses seem to contribute to the emotional background to the story.

A.S. Byatt's postmodernism has to do with her reworking of the sentimental dimension typical of the Enlightenment. She tries to convey emotions and is concerned with awakening feelings in the reader.

Here as in a typically Burkean perspective, beauty does not belong to the realm of reason but to that of passions and of the individual. Through her reference to *Le Nozze*, she gives free reign to poetic expression as she interiorizes the Mozart poetic scheme. She creates a new poetic, intermedial language permitting to bring reason, feeling and imagination together. The extreme emotionality and self doubt of the Susannah character, in search of something beyond the material world seems to be rendered here on another stage. The Enlightenment conception of woman as near nature, not amenable to reason and liable to empathy, flattery and seduction is on the other

hand derided. A.S. Byatt also seems to debunk the old education for females revolving around the necessity for females to attract all males and making women artificial.

It is disguised as Susannah that A.S. Byatt goes forward, takes control and punishes the traditional fashioning of woman as being forced to be beatiful. She gives us a clear rewriting of the opera final scene where Susanna disguised slaps Figaro's face to punish his infidelity. Males seem alienated, dependent on femininity for their reunion with nature, to break the great glass cage and freely fly. Resounding with the Enlightenment sexual ethics of desire, the short story ends with the husband's reconciliation with the natural dimension of the ageing process. In A.S. Byatt's early days, marriage still expected to guarantee transcendent eternal love and monogamy though the divorce rate was already soaring.

Chapter 2-The specific place of music in operatic intermediality.

1-An intrinsic link music/literature.

> La musique est l'art le plus parfait. En écoutant une symphonie, n'oubliez pas le théâtre. L'alternance des contrastes, des rythmes, des tempos, l'union du thème principal et des thèmes secondaires, tout cela est aussi nécessaire au théâtre qu'en musique.[167]

Musical rhythms are always reminiscent of our rhythmic way of thinking, of organising experience as the emergence of musical creations aiming at facilitating studying or relaxing testifies. Resorting to musical leitmotives, themes, plots and denouements, taking certain musical forms and compositional schemes as syntaxic models therefore seems natural.

One has to admit that musical and literary works have always been very intimately related. For instance, according to Raymond Court, Igor Stravinsky's music was the most rigorous representation of Antonin Artaud's theatrical works. Still according to Raymond Court, in both cases, there was a risk of regressing towards mythos to reach their ritual bodily form of expression.

---

[167] Vsevolod Meyerhold, « Entretien avec des étudiants », Juin 1938, *Ecrits sur le théâtre*, vol. 4, Béatrice Picon-Vallin (trans.), Lausanne: L'âge d'homme, 1992, 217.

Nevertheless if the two arts are related, it is certainly because music first originates in the contemplation of a transcendental order after speculation[168]. In the Middle-Ages, music was associated with arithmetics, geometry and astronomy in the quadrivium while grammar, dialectics and rhetoric constituted the trivium composed by the arts implying language. Music was an art aiming at scientifically measuring the terrestrial and celestial worlds as well as man crafted products. For Boethius, understanding music meant reaching the numerus. For Roger Dragonetti, Boethius considered music as a "vibration of the intelligence, a rhythmic way of thinking, verging on transcendence, philosophical or poetical discourse"[169]. According to Francis Sparshott, it emanates from "a form of maths which has then to be worked into the fabric of life."[170] Rhythm, the pure Platonic musical essence, was the writing of figures in the realm of Ideas which imposes order and a sense of measure[171].

In fact, operatic fictions and metafictions seem to retain something of Boethius's old distinction between the music of the world whose harmony governs the universe, the human music which humans can hear when retiring from the world and meditating within their microcosm and the instrumental music produced by man-made instruments and craft. Thus, the writer's conception of the world, often presented in any piece of literature, could be seen as the music of the world while any use of musical patterns in literary composition could be associated with human instrumental music, a music created by literary means or instruments (length of paragraphs, leitmotivs…).

What is more, classically, music always tends to reassemble what is threatened by dissolution and to head toward a form of unison. According to Roger Dragonetti, medieval music was created to make peaceful harmony possible even in the context of death. At the time, one had to think according to music rather than on music. This sense of harmonious reunion of what was scattered is to be found in any piece of literature where all the ingredients are somehow assembled together to form a harmonious whole even in the midst of dissonances.

Historically, in between music and words, Rousseau's *Ursprache* and Nietzsche's language, were then inextricably linked to singing, whose inflections adapt to every change in the speaker's emotions. For Nietzsche, musical works echo a primitive dissonant language provoking night, terror and awe[172]. When found on the stage of dreams, these musical emotions become metaphors, images, forms and ideas under the influence of Apollo. Music can very often be used as an energy to reach the sublime as it allows the writer to get closer to death and darkness.

---

[168] Roger Dragonetti*, La musique et les lettres : études de la littérature médiévale*, Genève: Librarie Droz, 1986, 28.
[169] *Ibid*., 28.
[170] Francis Sparshott, "Music and Feeling", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 52. 1 (Winter 1994): 23-35, 24.
[171] Jean-Pol Madou, *Edouard Glissant : de mémoire d'arbres*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996, 46.
[172] Raphael Célis, *Littérature et musique*, Brussels: Saint Louis University Press, 1982, 7.

Music being a more fantasmagoric and fantasmatic form of writing as it eludes direct meaning and the realm of the visible, it purifies verbal ways of thinking, an aspiration which can be noticed in J.G. Ballard's "Prima Belladonna" sometimes placed at the very beginning of his *Complete Stories*. Music also perturbs our definition of the real[173] which is particularly relevant in an era when most authors try to decenter their vision of reality, identity and truth.

Music and literature are so narrowly linked that for a writer, being not enough of a musician could be felt as a problem and being not enough of a writer could equally constitute an obstacle for a musician. Music is indeed specialized in the expression of feelings, emotions and affects which form a dimension of our lives.

2-An intrinsic conflict between music and literature.

Though music and literature are coeval and their link indissoluble, it appears that they necessarily take divergent paths. One reason could be that, as Wilhelm Furtwängler argued:

> En conclusion, la musique et la parole sont sans doute susceptibles d'une alliance momentanée, ainsi qu'en témoignent plus d'un chef d'orchestre admirable, mais lorsque cette alliance est poussée à l'extrême, il apparaît que ce sont là deux puissances sans rapport l'une avec l'autre.
> L'eau ne peut pas être en même temps de la glace.[174]

Music often tries to compete with literature as far as the creation of meaning, the cognitive and referential functions of verbal language are concerned[175]. However, musical meaning can never be fully articulated, Françoise Escal quotes Igor Stravinsky asserting in a Robbe-Grillet manner: "[...] la musique, par esssence [est] impuissante à exprimer quoi que ce soit: un sentiment, une attitude, un état psychologique, un phénomène de la nature [...]"[176]. As for Edward Hanslick, he insists on music's inability to express specific feelings which would be defined by their psychological and contextual anchorage in the real world[177], though this is maybe arguable in the context of operas.

Malcolm Budd[178] thinks musical affects are specific to music and do not depend on those occurring in the practical world. Therefore, one may think that musical emotions even in the context of operas are only loosely related to real-life ones. For Malcolm Budd, music is an objective reality located in the listener.

---

[173] Roman Wald-Lasowski, « Ecriture et piano. Gide, Barthes, Chopin », Raphael Célis, *Littérature et musique*, *op.cit*., 161-171, 163.
[174] Wilhelm Furtwängler, lost disk cover.
[175] Françoise Escal, *Contretemps musique et littérature, op.cit*., 10, 71.
[176] *Idem* mentioning Igor Stravinsky, *Chroniques de ma vie*, Paris: Denoël et Steele, 1935.
[177] Francis Sparshott, "Music and Feeling", *op.cit.*, 25.
[178] Malcolm Budd, *Music and the Emotions: the Philosophical Theories*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985, 3, 24.

3-Complementarity between music and literature.

So, music always implies forms without a precise meaning attached to them while literature is composed of a disintegrating, plural meaning. Musical thinking is completely distinct from other kinds of thought as it mobilises another part of the brain[179]. Music in operas more often than not relates to the emotional content of plots which can be very similar. In fact, music requires of men to be able to hear sounds without wishing to assign meaning to them. As for literature (see Graham Swift's *Last Orders*), conversely, it may take advantage of a functional, ritual aspect if not of its purely aesthetic potential.

Only music also seems to fulfil man's animal need to "maintain a necessary perceptual acuity, world-making flexibility and range of emotive resource."[180]. Music, as implying diverse modes of listening and as being both more direct and more myterious[181] than literature, was much valued by writers who attempted to create verbal music[182]. As Gary Tomlinson suggests[183], music is generally thought of as offering an unmediated melocentric access to subjectivity, self-contemplation.

Often, music and literature function together or intersect structurally. According to Henri Meschonnic[184], auditory and visual, temporal and spatial perceptions being intimately connected, rhythm seems to introduce visual elements. It could correspond to the intrusion of narrative space within narrative time in a novel. Indeed, the rhythmic intersection of references to place with temporal considerations in novels or other literary pieces is something very carefully elaborated.

The main function of musical rhythm in operatic or in literary works seems organisational. When marked typographically, spatially, it convenes the visual aspect of the (un)said, it may materialise the invisible part of Hemingway's iceberg. The typographical rhythm may also create a meaningful combination between voice and sight.

Punctuation also corresponds to the introduction of the oral in the visual[185] and invites to conceive reading as a performance. Rhythmic patterns involve the presence or absence of typographical blanks marking the limits of what can be said; rhymes; indentations; the size of paragraphs as well as punctuation effects.

---

[179] Bruno Nettl, "Musical Thinking and Thinking about Music", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. Ethnomusicology: An Essay of Personal Interpretation*, 52.1 (Winter 1994): 139-148, 139.
[180] Malcolm Budd, *Music and the Emotions: the Philosophical Theories, op.cit.,* 4.
[181] Stephen Benson, *Literary Music.Writing Music in Contemporary Fiction*, *op.cit*., 12, 1.
[182] *Idem.*
[183] Gary Tomlinson, *Metaphysical Song: an Essay on Opera*, Princeton University Press, 1999, 6.
[184] Henri Meschonnic, *Critique du rythme, anthropologie historique du langage*, Paris: Verdier, 1982, 309.
[185] *Ibid*., 299.

The page can be considered as the rhythmic application of a particular conception of poetry and is integrated in the larger rhythms of the work and of the writer's thought.

When the scarcity of words may mirror an inflation of things to be said or the reverse, silences are invariably used as signifying, expressive lengths implying the presence of speech. Though they consist in an absence of actual speech of variable duration, they are fully woven into the grammatical fabric of the musical and literary text[186]. Their various appearances in the text are indications about the evolutions in the sometimes conflicting relationships between the said and the unsaid and in their intermittencies. Sometimes the explicit and the known win over the implicit and the unknown at other moments, the reverse may prove true.

In fact, our modern-day conception of rhythm owes much to the psychoanalytic perception of silence. According to Catherine Cyssau,

> l'analyse [peut parfois perdre] de vue ce que fut, à la clinique de l'audible inventée par la psychanalyse, le mouvement respiratoire du corps en déprise d'air où le vocal en deçà du vocable s'instaure, prononce un silence bruissant de la matière du sens qui devance le langage.[187]

According to her, silence woud be a specific locus from where any auditory perception originate.

*

For Paul Valéry furthering the idea of a complementarity between literature and music, a literary theme is to be understood as a musical theme inasmuch as it is based on the mechanism of desire[188]. Indeed, musical themes always suppose some developments which we are waiting for and cause harmony to enrich their linear enfolding. For Paul Valéry too, in literary texts, a timbre effect is achieved when an idea is expressed simultaneously with other secondary ideas_it is created by what is reminiscent of harmonics.

One of the other interests of resorting to musical devices for authors would be that only by elaborating a separate intuitive order such as that created by J.S. Bach can authors manage to create a feeling without any previous model.

Chapter 3-Delineation of a musical ethos and rapport with madness as rapport with the real and esthetics. The literary artist as madman.

[186] *Ibid*., 243.
[187] Catherine Cyssau, « La voix en visage », Gérard Dessons (dir.), *Penser la voix*, *op.cit*., 9-21, 19.
[188] Paul Valéry, *Cahier 24, été 1930*, cited in Antoine Luccisano, « Paul Valéry et la réception littéraire », *Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France*, n. 6, November – December 1987, 1033-1052, 1048.

In between operas and novels. The mind in transaction. Madness, pathos and interoperatic intermediality.

1-Lacanian madness as ubiquitous displacement.

For a proper definition of madness, one could turn to Shoshana Felman's book*, Writing and Madness*[189]. According to her, it is being blind about one's own blindness which mainly characterises madness. For, for Shoshana Felman as for the writers of *L'Encyclopédie*, it is one thing to consciously refuse resorting to reason in a fit of nervous passion and another to unwittingly yet confidently delude oneself to the point of mistaking the illogical for the logical[190].

The diagnosis of madness depends on the others's response to the spectacle of the madman or madwoman. One is mad when one becomes somehow unintelligible for the others, because something in our behaviour exceeds what is usually accepted. In the wake of Michel Foucault and his followers, madness remains at the heart a problem of expression often involving a confusion between the corporeal and the linguistic _what is generally perceived as somatic symptoms_ and between semiotic realms.

The relationships between inner self and outward appearance, and more generally the dialectic in/out are reversed baffling the subject's sense of direction. Madness goes as far as disorienting our sense of displacement, of tropological associations and metaphors[191].

Mad excess[192] could be thus typified by an incomprehensible loss of limits, a chaotic unanchored individual sense of rationality and personality, the sensual excesses of hopeful euphoria or the tense, painful extreme of unremitting and exalted despair[193].

Since Renaissance Shakespeare, the question is whether madness and truth strictly coincide, if the displacement induced by madness is a necessary requirement in the quest for truth. Indeed, madness, with its hallucinations, is the true language of pathos, affections and of the machine of desire, as it involves emotional manifestations unhinged from rationality.

One cannot omit to mention the major historical evolution in the apprehension of madness. From being seen as a precise illness to be diagnosed from the patient's face and symptoms, with

---

[189] Shoshana Felman*, Writing and Madness,* Palo Alto (Cal.): Stanford University Press, 2003, chapter 2, 35-59.
[190] *Ibid*., 35-36.
[191] Chris Wiesenthal, *Figuring Madness in Nineteenth Century Fiction*, London, Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 4.
[192] Shoshana Felman*, Writing and Madness, op.cit.,* 51.
[193] Monique Plaza, *Ecriture et Folie*, Paris: PUF, 1986, 5.

the advent of psychoanalysis, madness becomes difficult to diagnose with certainty maybe owing to the multiplicity of polysemic emotional associations blurring the frontiers between sanity and insanity[194]. Symptoms and signs are now considered in their irreducible chaotic organisation, the correlation sign/diagnosis can no longer be predicted and the validity of eighteenth century traditional classifications of species and subspecies of madness is being questioned[195].

In philosophy (Hegel, Nietzsche, Pascal) as well as in literature (Shakespeare), operas (from Orlando to Lucia di Lammermoor or the "Re in ascolto") and history, one can notice a sort of ubiquity of madness which can never be entirely put aside though its constant repression coincides with the progress of reason. Madness as the thought attributed to the Other orientates reason[196] in a world where conflicting thinking habits are the law.

Thinkers must accept that madness might be conditioning thought processes though they also have to firmly posit the undeniable existence of reason. Thinking about madness allows thinkers to go beyond what is considered as a traditional, healthy acceptation of perceptual errors. Not only doubts have to be integrated in any rational system of thought but one also has to accept that reason itself can be deconstructed in subjects in complete contradiction with the philosopher's necessary absence of madness[197].

2-In between novels and operas: the representation of madness at the centre of the historical development of the author's/composer's stance.

> I envy dear [Robert] Southey's power, of saying one thing at a time in short and close sentences, whereas my thoughts bustle along like a Surinam toad, with little toads sprouting out of back, side, and belly, vegetating while it crawls.[198]

For this section, as everywhere else in this work, operas and novels sharing a main theme or plot are perceived as caught in a circular pattern of constant interaction. I will try to shed light on the operatic and novelistic transfiguration of madness as resulting from and engendering a parallel development in authorial consciousness. This section will especially deal with the nineteenth century.

In the hygienic pre-Hitler nineteenth century marked by mad creators and imaginative creations, art used to be assessed in terms of its regenerative faculties, of its potency to cure what was already thought of as degenerate, depressed or over-engaging, especially in the wake of Max

---

[194] Chris Wiesenthal, *Figuring Madness in Nineteenth Century Fiction*, *op.cit*., 8.
[195] *Ibid*., 5.
[196] Shoshana Felman*, Writing and Madness, op.cit.,* 48.
[197] Shoshana Felman*, Writing and Madness, op.cit.,* 39.
[198] Quoted in Henry Crabb Robinson, *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence*, ed. Thomas Sadler, London: Macmillan, 1869, 217–18. The original letter has not been found.

Nordau's works (*Degenerescence*, 1892).

Richard Wagner identified Friedrich Nietzsche's illness as an after-effect of masturbation and attributed Giacomo Meyerbeer's success to his ability to replicate the general spirit of boredom bringing the audience to the opera house[199]. If he idolized Fromental Halevy whose work he could compare with Ludwig van Beethoven's[200], Wagner regretted the characteristically Jewish lack of any artistic creative spirit which could possibly be traced back to the Jewish biblical masturbator Onan who refused his dead brother's wife, thus annihilating any hope of procreating or creating. Wagner's anti-Semitic prejudices may also be connected with the old image of the Jew being weakened by the unnatural incestuous practices induced by the levirate.

As for Nietzsche, he came to underrate Wagner's work as pathologically neurotic (*The Case of Wagner*[201]) while granting Bizet's popular and pleasantly light if fatalistic Carmen restorative powers facilitating a return to "nature, health, cheerfulness, youth, and virtue"[202]. Bizet's Southern music would permit Nietzsche to cure himself of the nervous sickness induced by Wagner's serious music because its tragic love story is based on fate and cruelty as it is found in the natural realm, not on any artificial expedient[203]. Wagner's inauthenticity, for Nietzsche, would spring from his uncertain, possibly Jewish origins[204]. One could link this with the evolution towards more realistic narratives, even towards more or less magical realist naturalist narratives.

One can notice that even if one excepts the well-known conflict between Richard Wagner and Friedrich Nietzsche, literature was affected by nineteenth century and modern writers who were going to be wrongly thought of as degenerate such as James Joyce or Ernest Hemingway by the Nazis. Modernism of course triggered a feeble short-lived antimodernist movement -possibly in the wake of Heidegger's philosophy of living for dying[205]- supported by some authors such as Warwick Deeping and Rebecca West.[206]

2-a-Madness as appropriate intermedial, transemiotic fictional zone from which to create. A study in the leap of the imagination.

[199] Sander L. Gilman, "Nietzsche, Bizet and Wagner: Illness, Health and Race in the Nineteenth Century", *The Opera Quarterly*, 23.2-3 (1 March 2007): 247–264, 258.
[200] *Ibid*., 259.
[201] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Case of Wagner,* London: H. Henry and Co., 1896, 622.
[202] Sander L. Gilman, "Nietzsche, Bizet and Wagner: Illness, Health and Race in the Nineteenth Century", *The Opera Quarterly, op.cit*., 248.
[203]*Idem.*
[204] *Ibid*., 259.

[205] David J. Rosner, "Anti-Modernism and Discourses of Melancholy", *E-Rea*, 4.1 (2006), accessed online February 2016.

[206] William M. Greenslade, *Degeneration, Culture and the Novel: 1880-1940*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, in the whole book.

Therefore, a certain kind of madness can be seen as the *sine qua non* condition of creation. "Follittérature" would correspond to a sort of perilous but creative buffer zone between literature or fiction in general and madness[207]. For Plaza, "follittérature" is derived from psychiatrist Lombroso's theory opening up the field of rationality and intelligence and stipulating that madness actively engenders and sustain the genius's creative impulses.

The language and principle of fiction, be it operatic or literary, and as manifesting itself through metaphors and tropes, is particularly akin to madness[208]. Somehow giving a voice to the interior monologue of people without any recourse to philosophy is already staging madness[209].

Madness as represented in fiction more often than not corresponds to intersemiotic translation, interpenetration of signifying realms according to *Staging the Rage: The Web of Misogyny in Modern Drama*[210]. This explains why the governess's melancholic sexual anxiety and frustration in *The Turn of the Screw* (both the novella and the operatic adaptation) manifest themselves on the second plane of spectres and ghosts. The Victorian other of unrepressed sexuality and masturbation takes the form of paranoid gendered apparitions, manic voyeurism. This evidences the perpetuation of patriarchal prejudices and the impulse to overthrow them[211].

To create the parasitic presence of the unsayable of what should remain unsaid, the author / composer has to seize the rope of the imagination as Graham Swift would have it, to bridge the gap between sane author and mad character.

The author/composer has to forget about his own sense of reality to make up and sustain their narrative. This is what Virginia Woolf does for Septimus in *Mrs Dalloway*. Most of the time, the reader or spectator never really questions the fictional reality he is plunged in when the famous suspension of disbelief operates.

More than any other fictional theme, madness requires the total suspension of disbelief in order to profit by the human experience on show. In certain novels like in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, the reader -as well as the operatic spectator of Handel's work- does not necessarily analyse the character's behaviour in psychoanalytic terms but is sometimes reduced to accept the behaviour as it is; somehow adhering to it. However, in operas, the spectator is never really restricted to one point of view, as the presence of other characters coping with the madman interferes (be it Dorinda or Zoroastro who seems to completely master the course of events in

---

[207] Monique Plaza's neologism, *Ecriture et Folie*, *op.cit*., 11-12.
[208] Shoshana Felman*, Writing and Madness, op.cit.,* 47.
[209] *Ibid..,* 51.
[210] Katherine H. Burkman, Judith Roof, *Staging the Rage: The Web of Misogyny in Modern Drama*, Vancouver: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1998, 3.
[211] *Ibid*., 12.

Orlando, Farnace, Sifare, Aspasia or Ismene handling the angry Mitridate in Mozart's *Mitridate*).

When the mad person is not the narrator, he or she is explicitly diagnosed as mad by the community of characters while when the mad person is the narrator, the diagnostic is made more implicit[212]. Also, to make the diagnostic believable, the author must provide the reader with a plurality of points of view as univocal points of view.

Madness is often associated with pain and death and leads the reader/spectator where he does not want to go[213]. Nobody really wants to follow Prospero in his mad progression towards death in *Un Re in Ascolto*. The reader/viewer may accompany the madman, identify with him or simply look at him as a sort of witness who would be totally dependent on the author or stage director's own point of view[214]. In Graham Swift's *The Sweet Shop Owner* or in *Shuttlecock* which present large sections reflecting the main character's train of thoughts at different times, the reader's point of view on the psychologically suffering or even alienated character depends on the decisions the author makes about what kind of events are going to be introduced first and rhythmically pondered on.

The madman must represent a sort of uncanny magical dimension in us and must refer us to an imbalance between the sense of dream and that of reality as we identify with them. Even if the reader is not mad, in him, the relationship between dream, illusion and reality may become unbalanced by nervous breakdowns, anxiety and *furore*. It is this aptitude which may lead ĥim to the experience of insanity, the unknown[215]. In Handel's *Orlando*, the transition between the real world of the spectator suffering his own love pangs and the universe of Orlando's fantastic madness mysteriously halted by Zoroastro is staged at the very beginning of the opera. Indeed, Zoroastro contemplates the stars he compares to hieroglyphs predicting the future.

Life and fiction are so intertwined when it comes to the treatment of madness that Virginia Woolf's complex technique in *Mrs Dalloway* where she carefully controls her description of what Septimus goes through, his mental states and the undercurrents progressively working against him, seems to function as a cure for her own mental derangement. For her, madness and multiple self dissolutions are meaning. She writes:

> La difficulté […] est de trouver la juste mesure : il doit permettre au « feu capricieux » de brûler en lui, mais éviter à l'esprit de « courir à sa guise », ce qui aboutirait à un livre égocentrique, rétréci et amenuisé. Il doit maîtriser l'apport subjectif, mais sans apparaître trop clairement au lecteur comme un habile meneur de jeu, ce qui nuirait à l'identification. Il doit se maintenir entre la sensibilité et la technique. Comment donner libre cours au chaos, et « cacher cet aspect de soi-même au public »[216]

---

[212]Monique Plaza, *Ecriture et folie, op.cit*., 163.
[213] *Ibid*., 170.
[214] Monique Plaza, *Ecriture et folie, op.cit*., 170.
[215] *Ibid*., 177.
[216] *Ibid.*, 173.

Life seems to be meaningful while the world seems to be deprived of meaning and the subject is a precarious notion[217].

2-b-Historical evolution in operatic/ novelistic representations of figures of madness. Nineteenth century.

If being mad in the eighteenth century meant to be made an outcast, safely marginalised from society by internment in asylums, the various species of madmen occupy centre stage in opera houses, certainly due to the dramatic potential of tragedies thought to reflect cosmic disorders[218].

In the nineteenth century, madness –melancholic bodies, spectral apparitions or hallucinations- began to be progressively enfigured in literary texts eliciting a certain degree of reader response[219]. Mad people come to be desacralized and are no longer seen as merely evidencing divine judgement. After their liberation (Pinel) and the invention of psychiatry, madness becomes something which can rationally be apprehended and remedied[220].

Staging the fool -their sufferings, false happiness alternating with intense despair- means objectifying him to be able to observe him, to have the audience observe him and question his condition. Madmen and madwomen are both given to scrutiny -hence isolated from the others as cases for investigation- and reintegrated as part of humanity. The madman or madwoman is taken into consideration as an idiosyncratic individual whose life must be traced back. However, one of the common goals of operas and novels is to achieve a sense of universality, through the presentation of subjective experiences.

Very soon, the rich operatic language of folly is created. It seems to work the subject inside out. Madness becomes a lyrical opportunity of giving vent to emotions, it speaks in the place of the subject[221] and shapes their identity.

When young women (the governess in *The Turn of the Screw* or …) write about their story, it is to counter the threat of imminent madness[222]. It is not the same on the operatic stage, as literature/opera as a cure does not exist despite some notable exceptions[223]and though one may

[217] *Ibid*., 185.
[218]See Shohana Felman, *Writing and Madness*, *op.cit.*, 39 and the eternal hieroglyphs of *Orlando*.
[219] Chris Wiesenthal, *Figuring Madness, op.cit.,* 4.
[220] Shohana Felman, *Writing and Madness*, *op.cit.*, 40.
[221] Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*, Paris: Gallimard, 1972, 535-536.
[222] George Bataille quoted in Shoshana Felman, *Writing and Madness*, *op.cit.*, 43.
[223] One may however ponder over the teichoscopic gaze that guilty Captain Vere casts on his alienating story. *Katerina Izmailova* also seems structured by a guilty, repentant backward gaze coming from beyond the grave (she ends up by drowning herself with her rival). In *Pagliacci*, the spectator is cathartically led to think about the mad killer in

wonder about the role of the operatic madman as permitting the spectator to remain sane.

For the purposes of this study of madness, it will be necessary to divide the history of operas and novels into three main parts: the period before the nineteenth century, the nineteenth century characterized by a psychological drama sometimes marked by easy emotionalism and the twentieth century rejection of emotions and replacement of them by others. Thus, in the carefully ordered music of Stravinsky in *Oedipus Rex*, musical form is so powerful that it can give us a permanent image of vitality.

Melismatic madness and mad devils as defining an operatic subgenre.

Before the nineteenth century's profusion of operatic mad scenes, madness had always haunted baroque operas. In fact, in the wake of Courtney Miller's *The Evolution of Madness; the Portrayal of Insanity in Opera*[224]*,* one may divide the creation of operatic mad scenes into four periods: an early modern era preceding the eighteenth century, the *bel canto* era going from the eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century, the romantic nineteenth century and the modern and contemporary era going from the early twentieth century to nowadays. These subdivisions roughly correspond to the scientific progress of psychology, from an era when psychology did not exist and no organised vision of mental illness could stop analysing madness as a spiritual, religious affliction expressing conflict with the divine transcendence or demonic possession.

Orpheus's fate was marked by tragic alienation -a tragic alienation of the senses as Orpheus chooses the Dyonisian visibility of love over the invisibility of hearing[225]. Love is preferred over knowledge in this rhetorical construction of Eros and could not exist outside an optical system. Indeed, sight was bestowed splendour and omnipotence as well as aesthetic capacity in the baroque era[226]. Wit became an art of piercing through the darkness by manifesting its *chiaroscuro* aspect.

The baroque taste for the wonderful and metamorphoses which was expressed in such operas as Cavalli's 1651 *La Calisto* could be conceived as being intimately related with madness

---

ordinary life, about the relationships between fiction and reality through the metaoperatic mise en abîme, Nedda and Sylvio's murder by Canio.

[224] Courtney Miller's *The Evolution of Madness; the Portrayal of Insanity in Opera*, Honors Theses, Eastern Kentucky University, Easter Kentucky University website, 2015, https://encompass.eku.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1310&context=honors_theses, accessed March 2016.

[225] Buci-Glucksmann, Christine, *The Madness of Vision: On Baroque Aesthetics*, Ohio University Press, 2013, 2.

[226] *Ibid*., 57.

as it implies the escape of the human into the inhumanity of the other sex, of the divine, the beast or the monster. Anamorphoses and telescopes further developed as artistic models implying the capacity of seeing what cannot be normally seen.

Madness as an optical system is also evidenced in Antonio Vivaldi's *Orlando Furioso* as the eponymous character is devoured by jealousy when reading Medoro and Angelica's inscription of their love on trees. Orlando soon becomes on fire ("Arde Orlando!") and alienated by his deep sense of chaos and loss.

Before late nineteenth century literary fiction in English haunted by inhumanity, Charcot's experiment on hysterical women in France inspired a certain number of operatic creations revolving around mad women. Corresponding to that narrative trend, the use of melismas (quick notes sung with virtuosity by coloratura sopranos or mezzo-sopranos mostly) and its development resulted in unforgettable mad scenes involving women.

Charcot's hysteria shows staging real patients found a particular place in between theatre and reality. Operatic mad scenes starring females out of their wits placed spectators in a voyeuristic position as they attended performances of intense emotionality coinciding with coloratura.

In the end of the eighteenth century, in the 1781 *Idomeneo*, "Fuor del mar" staged the enraged elements echoing the emotional tempest created by the necessity of human sacrifice and the intricate state of love affairs. In Dorabella's 1790 "Smanie implacabili che m'agitate" (*Cosi fan Tutte*), amorous madness was refrained by the need to keep calm despite what happens.

In the 1814 *Turco in Italia* by Rossini where the composer redefines madness in comical terms, Geronio seeks a Bohemian who will be able to find a cure for his wife Fiorilla's mad brain. In his opinion, female brains are made in such a way that they are totally unpredictable even for an astrologer. Indeed, Fiorilla pretends that the worse madness consists in loving a single individual at the same time and getting bored to death. In the 1816 *Barber of Sevilla*, love is conceived by the old, scorned Berta as a universal disease and torment which announces Adèle's madness as she is left alone in the Formoutiers castle (*Le Comte Ory*, act 1, scene 8, n.4) before the Count disguised as a hermit tempts her to deliver her from her amorous loneliness:

> En proie à la tristesse. Ne plus goûter d'ivresse
> Au sein de sa jeunesse, souffrir, gémir sans cesse
> Voilà quel est mon sort
> Se flétrir en silence,
> N'espérer que la mort

Hélas quelle souffrance. O peine horrible
Vous que l'on dit sensible,
Daignez s'il est possible,
Guérir le mal terrible. Dont je me sens mourir !
Soulagez ma douleur
Rendez-moi le bonheur !

In the nineteenth century, Hugo inspired the 1833 *Lucrezia Borgia* by Donizetti in which Lucrezia's final mad aria reveals herself as being Gennaro's mother after the latter has taken poison. She madly begs her son to take an antidote. The year after, in Bellini's 1834 *I puritani*, Elvira becomes mad after she is abandoned by Arturo as he rushes to save the queen. The spectator follows the slow progression of her madness, in particular thanks to her uncle's comments. First, near the altar, she thinks she sees Arturo though he is absent, then her uncle mentions her rapid changes of humor and her painful silence. Her hair loose, often wearing her wedding dress and simply crowned with flowers, she asks where Elvira is and invokes death. She mistakes her uncle for her father. The young girl's mind expresses romantic fragility while the empathic chorus condemning the unfaithful Arturo seems to represent the audience's reaction on stage.

In the 1835 *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Lucia dies in madness as there is no solution to help her marry Edgardo. Her madness makes her blind or rather makes her confuse her desires with the common sense of reality_she takes the well in which she saw a woman drowning in dream for the altar of her desired marriage. In the 1842 *Linda di Chamounix*, the eponymous character goes mad once she knows her lover Carlo is going to marry another woman at the end of act 2.

Later on in Meyerbeer's 1854 *L'étoile du Nord*, Catherine becomes mad because she thinks she has lost brother and husband. She only regains her sanity by echoing Peter's flute tune with her coloratura. This acts as a therapy. Two years later, in *La reine Topaze* 1856, Ninette wants to die because of Pasquin's infidelities and the Carvalhlo variations on the Carnaval de Venise aria establishes a sort of competition between the female diva and the male violinist, thus alienating the singer. No longer a slave to her sexuality, the woman seems to emancipate musically while emancipating sexually envisaging to commit infidelities herself.

In the 1859 *Le Pardon de Ploermel*, Dinorah goes mad after her husband disappears on their wedding day to try to find a treasure and make up for his poor financial plight. In her coloratura aria "Ombre légère", she displays a schizophrenic personality as she dances with her shadow. She will only recover her mind thanks to the two male protagonists who will act as if Hoel, her husband, never disappeared and as if Hoel's abandon was no more than a nightmare.

The 1864 *Mireille* started to establish the waltz ariette with coloratura as an important operatic passage. The 1868 *Hamlet* by Ambroise Thomas pursued this tradition as Ophelia sinks in madness shortly before committing suicide. She has visions of the mythological Wilises, ghosts of women married very shortly before their death. They are supposed to come to males at night and have them dance until they die of exhaustion.

After Verdi's 1853 *Traviata*, coloratura was no longer successful as a means of conveying the madness of female transgressors in Italian operas at least. The use of coloratura went on for some time in French operas. According to the great specialist of coloratura, Sean M. Parr:

> Verdi, I will argue, writes coloratura out of Italian opera by making it troublesome. Although each aria employs melismatic writing to heighten an expression of joy, the exuberance and abandon felt by each of the heroines is somehow forced, premature, or even verging on the mad. In a sense, these arias ring false and presage doom for the women singing them. Coloratura, the ultimate bel canto singing style, here becomes the symbol, even the harbinger, of death. If coloratura at mid-century could often be a cue for audience excitement and even encores, in Verdi's middle-period operas the vocalizing is also a sign that a situation is too good to be true. Verdi subverted coloratura's signification in these operas—and then left it to be the domain of France.[227]

As a pendant to female madness, also developed melismatic devils and witches working as objectification of human alienation.

Among melismatic mad bass devils crowding the opera stage since Stefano Landi's 1631 *Sant'Alessio*, one can mention Pluto, the god of the underworld featured in Monteverdi's 1607 *Orfeo*, Lully's 1674 *Alceste ou le triomphe d'Alcide*, Rameau's 1733 *Hypolite et Aricie.* One can also think about Glück's Thanatos in 1767 *Alceste*, Don Giovanni and Leporello in Mozart's work (1787), Mephistopheles in Louis Spohr's 1816 *Faust*, and in Arrigo Boito's 1868 *Mefistofele*, the tempting devil in Jules Massenet's 1901 *Griselidis*, Lucifer and Marbuel in Dvorak's 1899 *The Devil and Kate.*

As for female supernatural evil beings, they were generally bestowed contralto or mezzo-soprano voices. This is the case in Humberdinck' 1893 *Hänsel und Gretel* where the Gingerbread witch is performed by a mezzo-soprano. It is also the case in Gian Carlo Menotti's 1946 *The Medium* where the medium is also a contralto. Gypsies such as Carmen among other female equivalents to Satan are also generally low voiced.

Nineteenth century literary mad scenes

> The growth of large towns is in itself an important factor in nerve wear and tear, not to

[227] Sean M. Parr, *Melismatic Madness: Coloratura and Female Vocality in Mid Nineteenth-Century French and Italian Opera*, Diss., Columbia University, 2009, 183.

> mention the weariness of perpetual travelling, hourly posts, innumerable newspapers, and a veritable plague of modern novels. Our fathers had no time to adjust their nervous system to this vastly increased demand on its resources. 'Fatigue and exhaustion showed themselves in the fist generation under the form of acquired hysteria, in the second as hereditary hysteria'. The twilight mood thus produced is a sign of atavism, not progress, in one word it is literary degeneracy.[228]

In the nineteenth century, the concept of (mental and physical) degeneracy emerged in the context of the fin de siècle's literary concern for immorality, insanity, atavism and the criminal. Growing political unrest, an emerging sense of new femininity, apocalyptic predictions for the future and anxieties about the recent scientific and technological advances also participated in the creation of the new literary representation of madness.

If operatic artworks focusing on mad devils and women growing insane after a process of sentimental alienation abund in the nineteenth century, only very few verist works imitate Verdi's 1853 sociological *Traviata* or Mascagni's 1898 *Iris* and link the subject of madness to that of prostitution in the wake of industrialization and urbanization and to the impossibility of reconciling provincial innocence with corrupt urban mores. Few also present professional criminality like Auber in *Fra Diavolo.* Therefore, we can say that the operatic presentation of madness is possibly less rich from a sociological perspective than the literary one, in the nineteenth century at least.

After Mary Shelley's 1818 *Frankenstein*, works such as Oscar Wilde's 1891 *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, H.G.Wells's 1896 *The Island of Dr Moreau* and of course Bram Stoker's 1897 *Dracula* appeared in the wake of the Ripper murders. Progress began to be questioned. Were technical advances going to coincide with entropic decline? Developing cities in the industrialisation context also caused panic as poverty was really rife in urban Britain and the fear of the reversion of the urban man to a primitive being started to grow.

A sort of systematic questioning of man in relation to beasts, to woman and to machines began to take importance as religion began to lose its power over minds and the universe began to be more and more godless for people.

Stevenson's London, inspired by James Thomson's "City of Dreadful Night" was haunted by prostitution, homeless people and crimes. Poor human beings were more considered as savages than as humans. The representation of the degenerate human was grounded in theories expressed by Bénédict Morel (*Traité des Dégénérescences*, 1857), Erwan Ray Lankester (*Degeneration, A Chapter in Darwinism*, 1880), the American Eugene Talbot (*Degeneracy. Its Signs, Causes and*

[228]William Hogarth quoted in Linda Dryden, *The Modern Gothic and Literary Doubles: Stevenson, Wilde and Wells*, New York: Springer, 2009, 8.

Results, 1898), Max Nordau or Cesare Lombroso (*The Female Offender*, 1895)

*

"Maud" as junction between romantic preoccupations with the soul and the topos of female madness.

In 1855, when operatic female madness was being exploited to the full, Alfred Tennyson published the famous "Maud" monodrama, which is, according to Ann M. Mazur, "one of the most recognizable mid-nineteenth century poems about madness"[229]. Still according to the same critic, the poem bridges the gap between romantic concerns with consciousness and Victorian stagings of female madness. In any case, the poem shows male madness rather than female.

The bower recalls the Coleridgian bower in "This Lime Tree Bower my Prison" or the bower in Keatsian poetry when it is similarly used as a metaphor for the psyche or the brain space which is both isolated and in communication with the others. The speaker's sad descent into insanity in "Maud" somehow mirrors the author's own psychic troubles due to his private situation.

Raised by a father, George, who was disinherited and had to bear the humiliation of begging his own father for money, Alfred Tennyson also had to go through the unfortunate plight of seeing his love for Rosa Baring unrequited and his plans for marriage with her irremediably thwarted. Retreating in an isolated personal universe, he cultivated a certain distrust for himself and the others as he experienced depression, despair and disgust for the newly materialist society.

The poem "Maud" constitutes a sort of transition as Tennyson's personas will no longer display such insanity in its wake. The concern with the father which is shared by Tennyson and his morbid, introspective persona appears through the poetic re-creation of the father as a suicide jumping to his death.

The madness displayed by the persona sinking so low as committing the murder of his beloved's brother and suffering from the loss of Maud finally disappears as the speaker finds solace in the prospect of becoming a soldier in the Crimean war. Maud becomes a sort patriotic spectre urging the speaker to fight. The poem sees its chronological and causal layout perturbed by the intrusion of madness.

*

[229] Ann M. Mazur, "Tennyson's Maud", in Ilaria Natali, Annalisa Volpone, *Symptoms of Disorder: Reading Madness in British Literature 1744-1845*, Amherst, New York: Cambria Press, 2016, 221-247.

Madness and the female author.

Femininity was all the more considered as incompatible with reason as females were represented by major writers as alien to linguistic subtlety and even language itself. In the eighteenth century, it was difficult to take seriously Henry Fielding's Mrs Slipslop, Tobias Smollett's Tabitha Bramble and Richard Brinsley Sheridan's Mrs Malaprop, all created to deride female linguistic abilities. Their words no longer conveyed any meaning as their syntax was inevitably distorted.

If Donizetti's Lucrezia Borgia (1833) could be seen as an image of the mad female author - indeed, besides being a mad, masculine criminal, she retains the power of life or death on all characters and her presence opens and closes the work- many female writers projected their authorial self onto mad monstrous women instead of mere heroines. Very often these characters, as images of female authorial alienation and dangerous creative rage are punished in the course of the work.

The need for creating a double for the female author somewhere in the novel appears in George Eliot (Maggie in *The Mill on the Floss* for instance or the omniscient Latimer who can hear everybody's thoughts in *The Lifted Veil*, 1859), Jane Austen, Charlotte and Emily Brontë. In *The Yellow Wallpaper* (1892), Charlotte Perkins Gilman recreates her authorial self in the portrait of a woman suffering from postpartum depression, a condition considered as female hysteria - etymologically a disease of the womb. Consigned in a garret room, she is forbidden to use her fancy to write as story-making is considered a dangerous activity for women. This confinement of the imaginative powers which is first considered a remedy turns out to be what makes the woman's health further deteriorate. The womb which was seen as generating mental illness also becomes a sort of sanctuary of female power, resourcefulness. According to Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar[230], the metaphor of the cave or infernal abysses in which the male hero falls, doomed to eternal loss, would represent the dangers of the maternal womb.

What is thought of by female authors as the maddening exclusion from society caused by patriarchal power corresponds to the ideal working condition for male poets delighting in the prospect of allowing their inner selves to develop thanks to a self imposed burial of the soul[231].

*

Madness and nineteenth century psychoanalytical fictions

[230] Sandra M. Gilbert, Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic, The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth Century Imagination*, New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2000, 95.
[231] *Ibid*., 402.

Pâle et blonde
Dort sous l'eau profonde
La Willis au regard de feu
Que Dieu garde
L'amant qui s'attarde
Dans la nuit au bord du lac bleu.
[…]
La sirène l'attire, l'entraîne
Sous l'azur du lac endormi.[232]

If in his 1868 *Hamlet*, and more particularly his rendition of Ophelia's mad scene, Ambroise Thomas used the aquatic trope constituted by the surface of the lake as a sort of psychoanalytic interface between the world of the living and the world of the dead, a little earlier in the United States, the very psychoanalytic and aquatic *Moby Dick* (1851) also placed madness and consciousness at the center of its preoccupations.

The narcissism implied by the drowning of Ophelia meaning to join the reverberation of her own self she can find in the protective Willis is also to be found in *Moby Dick's* Ahab. The play with surfaces and depths in Melville's work, the often deplored impossibility of seeing through the surface, the difficulty to see anything as a whole which is the plight of man finds in the inscrutability of the sea a perfect image. The limited scope of human understanding is inexorably linked with the frustrating loss of vision into the sea.

The megalomaniac, narcissistic Ahab is torn between self destruction and his ambiguous relationships with his aggressive, erotic white whale. The deep affinities between Melville and Coleridge (as well as with Poe and Hawthorne) can be seen through the reationships with the sea and the theme of self-isolation.

As often noticed, in the epilogue of the novel, Ishmael revolving round and round the shipwreck, forming a concentric circular pattern seems to mirror the unification and concentration of the ego in a perilous process verging on madness.

The precariousness of the unity of the self is otherwise displayed throughout the novel's accumulation of body parts signalled by the titles of the chapters ("Heads and Tails", "A Squeeze of the Hand", " Ahab's leg", "The Sperm Whale's Head"…). The treatment of skins and bowels also announce the doubling of Ahab's character ("Ahab beware of Ahab"[233], "I am orifices

[232] Ambroise Thomas, *Hamlet*, act 4 scene 2.
[233] Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*, Princeton University website, n.d.,

madness maddened" [234]).

The Lacanian reading of the novel draws a parallel between the adventure of the Pequod and a retrospective exploration of the mirror stage. The mad formation of Ishmael as the writer's Kunstlerroman is the key framing theme of Jake Heggie's 2010 operatic adaptation. The events on board the Pequod are seen as what will constitute the crux of the writer's imagination.

*

Literary madness and the creation of doubles.

For Scott Brewster[235], gothic is in itself a case of literary madness and there is a shift in this genre from a concern with the supernatural and the otherworldy to a more intense exploration of intrapsychic realities. The biggest anxiety is no longer that created by a potential intrusion of the supernatural but is caused by the prospect of losing our minds. As in Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw*, ghosts reflect the conflicts of our inner world, our self delusions and deliriums.

Inspired by the German gothic tradition, Poe created doubles such as Ligeia doubling as Lady Rowena in the 1838 "Ligeia". He progressively invented his theory of the "bi-partite soul" thus giving birth to a whole tradition of detective fictions[236]. In *The Murder of the Rue Morgue* (1841), the oppositions between detective Dupin standing for the analyst and the narrator seen as the creative figure, the connectedness established between criminals and victims, the criminal and his doppelgänger disguised under the traits of the detective, possibly led to Dickens's own use of doubles in the 1853 *Bleak House.* In the latter, the author resorted to a double narrator as he opposed Esther's subjectivity to an objective third person.

In Poe, the dual psyche of the detective divided into a rational, scientific half on the one hand and an irrational and more poetic half on the other went with corresponding plot reversals

---

http://etcweb.princeton.edu/batke/moby/moby_109.html, accessed March 2016, 470 (chapter 6).
[234] *Ibid*., 166 (chapter 37).
[235] Scott Brewster, "Seeing Things: Gothic and the Madness of Interpretation", David Punter, *A New Companion to the Gothic*, Malden, Oxford, Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2012, 481.
[236] Stephanie Craighill, *The Influence of Duality and Poe's Notion of the 'Bi-Part Soul' on the Genesis of Detective Fiction in the Nineteenth-Century*, Diss., Edinburgh Napier University, n.dat., https://www.napier.ac.uk/~/media/worktribe/output211971/theinfluenceofdualityandpoesnotionofthebipartsoulonthegenesisofdetectivefiction.pdf, accessed March 2016.

and repetitions. This allowed the author to create dramatic balance and unity of effect.

Thus, as early as 1841 (the date of publication of *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*) then, even before "The Tell-Tale Heart" (1843), the insanity of the detective, the "diseased intelligence" deriving from Aristotle's division between rational and irrational, began to spread onto the structure of a literary artwork. Poe created an aesthetic of the self and the literary piece comparable to a "hall of mirrors in which possible reflections, projections and identifications cannot be stabilized"[237].

At the end of the nineteenth century, Robert Louis Stevenson further explored the duality inherent in any human, divided between his moral and immoral self as the polar opposition between Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde in 1886 and the two brothers of *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889) testify. Henry, though not particularly virtuous, represents the common man realising how the personality of his brother, James Durie, a more Satanic figure, is inexorably linked to his[238].

Chapter 4-In between operas and novels. The body in transaction.

It could be argued that as the body in performance and the body represented in literature have to reach their full social universalistic value, they more or less correspond to the ambiguous entity portrayed by Anthony Synnott:

> The body social is many things: the prime symbol of the self, but also of the society; it is something we have, yet also what we are; it is both subject and object at the same time; it is individual and personal, as unique as a fingerprint or odourplume, yet it is also common to all humanity…The body is both an individual creation, physically and phenomenologically, and a cultural product; it is personal, and also state property.[239]

Gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, relationships to technological improvements (such as plastic surgery), to changing practices regarding the treatment of illness or of aging, and of death are major corporeal and sociological criteria that can be taken into consideration both in the literary work and on the opera stage. Moreover, the cult of appearances which characterized the seventeenth century in every cultural realms also came to dominate in the operatic, literary and theatrical worlds from that time.

---

[237]Lee Robert, *The Nineteenth-Century American Short Story,* Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1989, 372.
[238]Scott Brewster, "Seeing Things: Gothic and the Madness of Interpretation", David Punter, *A New Companion to the Gothic*, Malden, Oxford, Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2012, 129.
[239] Anthony Synnott, *The Body Social, Symbolism, Self and Society,* London, New York: Routledge, 1993, 4.

Again according to Philip Vannini[240], bodies are "socially constructed", "gendered", customized"; "fashioned", "electrified and digitized", "posthuman", "objectified","overtaken by panic", "ascended to the heights of the mystical and the sacred", "as well as descended to the depths of the stigmatized and the freakish", "commodified", "subject to the discipline of fitness, training, and diet", "fetishized", and of course, subject to the politics of gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity".

1-The monster.

Literary and operatic histories connect when it comes to the elaboration of monsters. The word "monster" is etymologically linked to the notion of enchantment (the Greek word "teras" from which the word "teratology" derives is related to to the Lithuanian word designating enchantment). It is therefore natural that monsters have occupied center stage in theatrical, literary and operatic works[241]-lyrical tragedies among them. From Beowulf, to the furie and larvae, and other monsters met by Orlando or Alceste, there is but a step…

Beowulf's title hero dating back from the seventh century to the late first millennium seems to foreshadow the baroque hybrid monster haunting literature and operas. If not a chimera, he is part man part the enigmatic enemy/wolf of bees (the bear) the famous kenning of his name makes him. He is also endowed with supernatural powers which adds a more divine essence to his animal identity. His world is a manichean world announcing that of the baroque external monster, the one living outside the self, the drastic projection of the evil other onto some external object even though it is necessary to relativise the historical opposition between the baroque external monster and the classical interior monster, the human, sinful villain with mortal flaws, condemned and marginalized for moral purposes[242]. Indeed, Beowulf is the only mortal able to put Grendel, a vengeful murderer and one of Cain's sons, his mother and a dragon to death.

One cannot necessarily make a clear-cut historical distinction between a period peopled by baroque monsters (early seventeenth century) and its sublimation at the classical era (starting at the end of the seventeenth) with the internalisation of the monstrous. Yet, as Norman Bulford[243] shows, one can oppose the fire demon (danced by King Louis XIII and characterised by

---

[240] *Body/Embodiment, Symbolic Interaction and the Sociology of the Body,* eds. Deniis Waskul and Phillip Vannini, Aldershot, Burlington: Ashgate, 2009, 2.

[241]See Norman Bulford, "Hybrid Monsters and Rival Aesthetics: Monsters in Seventeenth Century French Ballet and Opera", Ronald W. Tobin, Claire L. Carlin, *Theatrum Mundie: Studies in Honor of Ronald W. Tobin*, Charlottesville: Rookwood Press, 2003, 180-188.

[242] Christian Grünnagel, « Le monstre « classique », un trompe-l'oeil? *Atys*, « tragédie en musique », et l'esthétique baroque. », *HeLix-Dossiers zur romanischen Literaturwissenschaft*, 1, 2009, 52-75, 54.

[243]Norman Bulford, "Hybrid Monsters and Rival Aesthetics: Monsters in Seventeenth Century French Ballet and Opera", *op.cit*., 181-183.

supernatural powers) and the twelve hybrid half animal half human monsters in *Ballet de la deliverance de Renaud* (1617) to the extreme of monstrosity represented by monsters assuming the shape of the lovers' beloved in Lully's *Armide* (1686).

In the latter case, a shift from exteriority to interiority can be noticed as the image of the beloved is in intimate conformity with one's desire and feelings. The most difficult ordeal consists in resisting the appearance that can assume one's own desire, the object of one's desire. According to Norman Bulford[244], only once Ubalde and the Danish knight triumph from this ordeal are they able to reach Renaud and to defeat Armide's power. Baroque, half animal human monsters may also emanate from a satirical design: Louis XIII in Durand's *Ballet de la deliverance de Renaud* is the powerful fire demon as he is able to destroy heretical Protestants, rebellious princes, arrogant ministers. Alternatively, he is also the glorious Godefroy.

1-a-Literary/operatic monstrosity as reminiscent of early modern hesitations on gendered roles. Gender monsters and incestuous fears.

The apparition of Shakespeare's successful plays in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was contemporary with the emergence of the operatic genre out of the ashes of the ancient tradition of *azione sacre*. The reversibility of the gendered identity of power in Shakespearian plays was to announce what happens in operas.

First, the Shakespearian topos of reversible gendered identities, a traditional monstrous feature in both operas and literary/theatrical works, certainly began to articulate the anxieties around the gradual abandonment of the medieval violent male pre-eminence and its functions[245]. Shakespeare's monarchs could embody the dual perception of masculinity as both a source of aggressive, unruly, disruptive behaviour and of a necessary strength contributing to enforce social order. As Moulton suggests[246], this reflected the transition from a society of male warriors to a society of courtiers best described in Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*. Furthermore, the tensions accruing from the elderly heirless Elizabeth's hesitantly masculine reign which antagonized quasi-

[244] *Ibid*.,183-184.
[245] Ian Frederick Moulton, "'A Monster Great Deformed': The Unruly Masculinity of Richard III", *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 47.3 (Autumn 1996): 251-268, 253.
[246] *Ibid*., 252-253.

independent males on the topic of war run through Shakespeare's plays from Henry VI to Richard III.

Therefore, the playwright identifies and stages a variety of confused gendered relationships to power and more or less overtly criticizes them. Thus, Lady Macbeth, deprived of the milk of human kindness, is driven by her masculine thirst for power, Henry VI and Edward IV's lack of appropriate masculine behaviour is countered by Margaret and Joan's mannish ways in the wake of the 1620 pamphlets *Hic Mulier* and *Haec Vir : or the Womanish Man*. These pamphlets alternately condemn the Renaissance female fashion of cross-dressing and defend these transvestite women by putting forward the argument of male weakness.

This seems to pave the way for operas such as Handel's *Agrippina* (1710), where a female's craving for power in the absence of the male monarch is depicted at its harshest. Agrippina is the heartless scheming manipulator able to do her utmost to usurp power by proxy, by imposing her son Nero on the throne in the absence of Claudius. A little unexpectedly maybe, only the masculine power of Claudius is able to prevent the opera, deemed an "anti-heroic satirical comedy" by Wikipedia, from sinking into tragedy. Only the masculine restoration of order can put an end to the turmoils created by Agrippina.

More generally, in the wake of the late sixteenth, mid-seventeenth century closures of the theatres in England, the presence of strong operatic heroines such as Dido (1689) or Cleopatra (1724) and the victory of love over political concerns in Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (1642) seem to capitalize on the anxieties provoked by unstable sexual identification of (political) power made effeminate by female politicians or the feminine affection of love.

In Act IV scene 1 of *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*, the powerful beauty of Helen of Troy _that engendering the famous war_ is evoked by Telemachus to whom Helen appeared in Greece and who was announced his future by her. In Ithaca, Penelope rejecting her suitors in the absence of Ulysses is implicitly identified with powerful Helen as so doing she also rejects kingdoms and retains a strong political role as she will permit Ulysses to recover his own.

The notion of a monstrous untamed, deregulated manhood which appears after the disappearance of a masculine aggressive authority in England and which is epitomised by Richard III somehow transpires from operas such as Francesco Cavalli's *Il Giasone* (1649). In this work, the title hero monstrously no longer knows which of his two potential lovers, Isifile or Medea, he had Captain Besso kill. Giasone ends up unloved as Isifile dies of his infidelity. Unruly masculinity also appears under the features of Jove (in Cavalli's *La Calisto*) disguising into Diana (Giove in Diana) to conquer Calisto at Juno's expense. Malehood seems to fight against itself as it cannot seduce if retaining its authentic physical appearance.

On the contrary, as Handel's effeminate Orlando (1733) has to obey Zoroastro's order to leave love and follow Mars (Act I scene 1), his plight again paradoxically recalls that of Marlow's Tamburlaine and of Shakespeare's Richard III -inspired by Stephen Gosson's *Schoole of Abuse* and certainly by Ariosto before him. All these characters have to conquer the effeminate passion of love and the idle pursuit of female attractions. Roles of power such as Scipione (1726), Giulio Cesare (1723), Tamerlano and Andronico (1724), are given to castrati and heros such as Bradamante have strange transsexual qualities, thus further reversing the portrait of the aggressive male. Lully's Atys (1676), the son of the hermaphrodite Agdistis, is both the lover and son of Cybele -as she is the mother of all gods- in a sort of regressive pattern of sexuality if one considers sexuality as linked to transmission.

From another perspective, after Euripides and Senecca, Shakespeare's plays -and in particular *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1590/7) with its incestuous, scopophile, zoophile, homoerotic undertones- established a sort of precedent from which monsters related to devious sexuality such as Racine's Phaedra and subsequent opera monsters such as Rameau's Phaedra and Neptune's unsexed sea creature devouring Hippolyte in *Hippolyte et Aricie* (1733) seem derived.

In the same opera, also inspired by the whole Theseus story taking place after the plot of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the word "monster" is diversely applied to the Minotaur-like creatures Theseus has already killed and for the murder of whom he wrongly supposes he is punished by Pluto. In fact, the word "monster" more than the monstrosity linked to female power (Phaedra makes everybody suppose Theseus is dead to try to seduce Hippolyte into reaching a high position of power and thus win his love) seems to announce the sex related guilt corroding family relationships.

If one considers the treatment of monsters in parallel with the evocation of horses inherent in the first name "Hippolyte", it also seems to be partly inspired by the zoophile content associated with the forest in the Shakespearian play ("how easily is a bush / Supposed a bear/ Use me as your spaniel, as you use your dog", Act 2 scene 1). The sexual monster devouring Hippolyte is that invading Phaedra's heart as she is condemned by L'Amour to fall in love with him. As Theseus thinks his son guilty of loving his father's wife, Phaedra, he equates him with a monster. Once he regrets taking his revenge, Theseus also associates himself with a monster. The Oedipian knot present in Racine's play is therefore explored once again.

*

Falstaff-like deformed monarchs have been haunting the opera stage from Handel's Babylonian Prince Belshazzar. Together with Leocadia Begbick, the prince seems to be reminiscent of *Bartholmew Fair*'s Ursula as far as transgressing the norm is concerned. Violence, vulgarity, prostitution, forging, dialectics between the margin (the staged Babylonian wall) and the center, the self and other, measure and excess are at stake.

To a certain extent, the Hugo-inspired Duke of Mantua (François 1r) and Falstaff in Verdi could also be seen as drawing on a tradition including Ursula who is mostly characterized by her "enormity" and excess ("the womb and bed of enormities gross as herself", II3 102-103). Deformities seem to link the political and the corporeal, establishing correspondances between the two realms to be found even in contemporary operas such as Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre*. Indeed, in Shakespearian times, sin and physical deformity used to go hand in hand as sins were announced by deformities. The hunchback Rigoletto, a Verdian version of Triboulet, announces the sexual depravity leading to the murder of innocence.

As far as the non political realm is concerned, in the more domestic sphere characterising femininity, Katerina Ismailova (*Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*) reminds the spectator that, fair is foul and foul is fair. Our sense of what is legitimate becomes altered.

1-b-Literature and opera towards *der Freischütz*: staging transgressions and the grotesque monster as representing an excessive closeness to nature.

The operatic and literary grotesque monsters seem to follow a parallel evolution. According to the Shakespearian Line Cottegnies summarizing Mikhail Bakhtine[247], the literary grotesque renders a general feeling of alienation and, as a form of representation, finds its source in the enjoyment principle and the carnivalesque. Here we will particularly question the parallel representation of the female grotesque monster in early modern texts, plays and operas under the traits of the virago, the shrew, the witch[248].

According to Line Cottegnies, the grotesque aims at undermining everything spiritual, ideal and abstract. In George Benjamin's *Written on Skin*, transcendence is deconstructed through the

[247] Line Cottegnies, « Princes et bouffons: aspects du grotesque dans le théâtre de Shakespeare », *Sociétés et représentations*, n.10, 2000/2002, 55-68, 55.
[248] In the wake of Corinee Guy, *The Female Grotesque Amid the Carnival of Renaissance Drama*, Diss., University of Kansas, 2009, University of Kansas website, 2009, https://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/bitstream/handle/1808/5327/Guy_ku_0099D_10339_DATA_1.pdf;jsessionid=1C92A272B49FC1358FEE42684936ED2B?sequence=1, accessed April 2016.

elaboration of the "grotesquely monstrous human skin/book" and of the portrayal of angels and of Mary. Angels are violent and Mary is only a sort of counterpart of Agnes in heaven wishing to be shut in eternal hell with the devil. Eötvös's *Angels in America* also deconstructs transcendence as it mixes with the AIDS sufferers on earth and as AIDS attacks the surprised and grotesquely self-confident lawyer.

Still according to Line Cottegnies, in the Shakespearian grotesque, the insistence on gross bodily functions work hand in hand with the deconstruction of the stable relationships linking what is noble to what is vulgar. The deforming powers of the grotesque allow the writer/composer to cast light on the downfall of man and his association with the devil[249]. Inversion is used to comment on societies.

Man entangled in luxurious nature as stratagem cutting down pride.

The first sculpted motifs considered grotesque and featuring monsters appeared in medieval religious art where they tended to retrace the violent struggle of man and animal against monsters hidden in entangled vegetation. Sometimes, the characters are seen in action sometimes they are resting and natural vegetation seems to support them[250]. Men seem to force their way through tangled vine and are sometimes represented as apes or as naked which brings comic relief[251]. This entanglement of humans, vegetation and animals is to be found in Shakespeare's forest relying on a transgressive crossing of the realms.

However, one can but notice a similar confusion of the realms in the representation of Astolfo (Antonio Vivaldi's *Orlando Furioso*, 1727) or Dafne (Francesco Cavalli's *Gli Amori di Apollo e Dafne*, 1640)'s metamorphotic plights. Astolfo is curiously condemned by Alcina, a sort of sexual predator, to be trapped in a tree, as though he had become partly vegetal himself and Dafne, wishing to escape from Apollo's pulsions and his love transforms into a laurel. This confusion can be compared with the proximity of Shakespearian characters with the heavily sexualised forest, a marginalized space beyond the boundary of the city.

Maybe the closeness to nature and the primordial fight against the elements constitutes a sort of anticipation of the attack on human pride as a deadly sin imposing the constant reference to

---

[249] *Ibid*., 10 for example.
[250] Willard Farnham, *The Shakespearian Grotesque, its Genesis and Transformation*, Oxford University Press, 1971, 11.
[251] *Ibid*., 14.

what is low in man.

The operatic grotesque chimera as a legacy of prior literary pathetic fallacies.

In fact, after the famous frescoes rediscovered during the Renaissance, the adjective "grotesque" came to characterize transgressive behaviours not accepted as normal, seen as incongruous or disgusting according to Wikipedia[252]. It is also synonymous with "strange, fantastic, ugly", and thus is often used to describe distorted shapes such as masks. According to the same source, the grotesque may also generate "uncomfortable bizarreness" as well as "sympathetic pity" in the viewer.

Among the recurrent fantastic figures already appearing on the grotesque Roman frescoes discovered during the Renaissance, the chimera springing from the opening earth, from gaping hell, becomes a central monster/motif in Lully's 1679 *Bellerophon.*

In this opera, jealous Stenobée smooth-talks the amorous Amisodar into conjuring three monsters with the help of other magicians whose bodies he combines to form a chimera, roasting the land. Death by fire, the contrary of death by water and the general desolation spreading over Lycia make the spectator think about how violence in the sentiments can lead a country to ruin. The opera is therefore built on a strong and dynamic system of correspondences between the characters's feelings, the pathetic fallacy, the chimera, Philonoe's lament to the god and the hero's decision to quench the fire.

The pathetic fallacy drawing on the complementarity of the elements and triggered by the apparition of the chimera seems to be inspired by older pathetic fallacies like Shakespeare's. The winter of discontent "made glorious summer" by the recent accession to power of the Yorks one "unruly" night after the night of Duncan's murder in *Macbeth* resonates with "screams of death", "prophesying with accents terrible of dire combustion", the earth is also depicted as "feverous"(act II, scene 3).

If the history of pathetic fallacies goes back to the natural sympathy of nature for the mourning man in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, Bernard F. Dick cannot but underline that it took a decisive turning point with Homer's *Iliad* where, for instance, Achilles's lamenting Patroclus's death is prototypically orchestrated in an operatic way as the Nereids raise their threnos – a song of lament- to a literally "wave breaking" crescendo[253].

---

[252] Article about the grotesque on Wikipedia, n.dat, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grotesque, accessed February 2016.

[253] Bernard F. Dick, "Ancient Pastoral and the Pathetic Fallacy", *Comparative Literature*, 20.1 (Winter 1968): 27-44, 27.

Man and art animalised: structuring the artwork around the obscene, the carnivalesque inversion and death.

The structure of the grotesque is very often influenced by that of the carnivalesque in some operas following patterns one may find in plays such as *The Honest Whore* or *Bartholmew Fair*. Some plays and operas[254] center around an obscene King of Misrule (be it Leocadia or Oberon, Shakespeare's and Verdi's Falstaff or Handel's Belshazzar) and offer a set of reversals. Among these, one can notice the shift from one location to another which is completely different -between the world of work and civilisation and the world of Mahagonny or the world of the forest in *The Fairy Queen* or *Falstaff* where the title hero is successively disguised into a deer and unmasked. One can also notice a play on identities which could parallel the wearing of masks during a carnival.

A dangerous erosion of the natural boundaries between social classes (*La Cenerentola*), gender and age (relationships between Tytania and the Indian boy in *The Fairy Queen*, intermingling of the population in *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*) may reflect the chaos intrinsic to the reign of misrule. Values are often reversed too -Belshazzar's rule in *Belshazzar* is mostly marked by his monstrous Falstaff-like appetite and transforms Babylon into a sort marketplace. Babylon, the Shakespearian forest (*Falstaff, Midsummer Night's Dream*), Mahagonny and later on Brueghelland (*Le Grand Macabre*) gain a sort of corporality, as their grotesque representation is centered on evacuation and sexual symbolism.

Men may assume the appearance of wild animals and the work may end with an execution (be it metaphorical like Falstaff's or more real like Belshazzar's). If *The Rise and Fall of Mahagonny* ends with the execution of the anti-carnival figure, the restoration of social discipline as a dynamic is ensured by the storm supposed to destroy the city. The reversal of the ordinary city's values and normalcy is all the more pleasant and potent as it is ephemeral. Brueghelland is threatened by Nekrotzar but the apocalypse is only a fake one. Only Saturn falls from the sky and nobody knows when his/her hour will come.

The sacrifice of the city seems to be inherited from pagan rituals. Belshazzar's execution as well as Falstaff's fake one seem necessary for a certain truth to emerge and a certain clarification and renewal to occur. Falstaff can be then reintegrated, so can Nekrotzar and the corporeal

[254] *The Rise and fall of the City of Mahagonny* and operas derived from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and focusing, like Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, on Nick Bottom's translation.

extremities of death and love.

At the end of *Bellerophon* the sacrifice (a victim is burnt) puts an end to the disaster created by the chimera. The sacrificial substitution logic is triggered off by the sacrifices of King Pretus and Queen Stenobée's herself. The sacrifice of King and Queen, according to Corinee Guy[255] constitutes a symbolic punishment for incest in certain cultures, which seems relevant as Louis XIV married a cousin. This suggests that royalty cannot escape its sins.

For Corinee Guy working in the wake of René Girard, sacrifice and violence are part of the carnival[256]. In this perspective, the acceptable sacrifice to the gods would sublimate the unacceptable violence the Lycians are undergoing. The victim's immolated flesh seems to stand for Christ's flesh (carne) redeeming man's sins.

In *Bellerophon*, the fire metaphorising released sinful sexual energies structures the opera to the end as if representing male anxieties about female sexual insatiability engendered by the craving after children.

After the cathartic climax -be it the tragicomic opera within the opera *Pyramus and Thisbe* in Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or the storm in *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*- resulting from the chaos, operas based on carnivalesque inversions may return to the everyday though real cure and containment turn out to be impossible and a certain circularity and renewal are often hinted at[257].

In Act IV of Purcell's *Fairy Queen*, on Oberon's birthday, Phoebus says:

When a cruel long winter has frozen the Earth,
and Nature Imprison'd seeks in vain to be free;
I dart forth my Beams, to give all things a Birth,
Making Spring for the Plants, every Flower, and each Tree
'Tis I who give Life, Warmth, and Vigour to all,
Even Love who rules all things in Earth, Air, and Sea;
Would languish, and fade, and to nothing would fall,
The World to its Chaos would return, but for me.

The female grotesque in literature and operas.

Here we will see that operas and literature do collaborate around the image of the female grotesque.

---

[255]Corinee Guy, *The Female Grotesque Amid the Carnival of Renaissance Drama*, *op.cit*., 13.
[256] *Idem.*
[257]Corinee Guy, *The Female Grotesque Amid the Carnival of Renaissance Drama*, *op.cit*., 13-14.

In the early modern period a wide range of female anomalous figures were seen as grotesque monsters acting either as a scapegoat for male effeminate insufficiency or as an explanation given to the corruption of the society[258]. As has been shown earlier in this chapter, female grotesque monsters embodied anxieties about the gendered source of authority prevalent at the time and can operate differently in comedies and in tragedies.

In *Bellerophon*, a whole society is victimized by the chimera originating from Stenobée's deep resentment at being rejected by Bellerophon in love with Philonoe. A whole society is made to depend on the arbitrariness of love. From another perspective, the same opera can be considered as a tragedy since the representation of the aftermath of the chimera's crimes -death and unsightly series of dismemberments of Lycians- appears to test social resilience against the emotional disease corroding the society. The chimera represents the grotesque fire of unrequited love coming from Sténobée but also from Bellérophon's flame and love.

In *Niobe, Regina di Tebe* (1688), Niobe can be perceived as a female grotesque because her husband lets her wage war in his place. The character could have been inspired by Elizabeth 1, the female monarch taking herself for a masculine one through the refusal to marry. She embodies the woman who carries out deeds thought unfit for a woman. Geoffrey Whitney's emblem 'Superbiae Ultio' (Punishment for Pride) from his 1586 book *A Choice of Emblemes* also presents Elizabeth's sterile womb as recalling Niobe's plight. Niobe having mocked Latona for having given birth to only two children -Niobe had seven children- saw her own offspring killed by Apollo and Diana on Latona's order.

For Corinee Guy following Bakhtin, the grotesque signals an absence of boundary reminiscent of the openness of the female body[259]. In *Bellérophon*, Sténobée's feelings afflict Lycia as a whole and the hybrid monster springing from her rage thanks to the help of the magicians and Amisodar is itself bestowed very vague boundaries being an extremely hybrid monster created out of three former creatures. The divine world -through Neptune, Apollo and Pallas- also intrudes on the world of the mortals thereby eroding the boundaries between the skies and the reality down below. The whole Lycia seems to figure corporeal excess.

The chimera as well as violent vengeful Arcabonne in *Amadis* and Moll Cutpurse in *The Roaring Girl* (1607-1610) defy hierarchy, gender norms and morality, created as they are by the *id*.[260] The chimera represents the proximity between man and the beast and reminds man of his

[258]*Ibid*., 55.
[259]Corinee Guy, *The Female Grotesque Amid the Carnival of Renaissance Drama*, *op.cit*., 15.
[260]*Ibid.*, 16.

sinful nature while creating attraction and terror[261].

Doubleness, hybridity and metamorphosis are the three main manifestations of the grotesque according to Remi Astuc[262] who situates it as a necessary social device used to apprehend alterity and change. These doubleness, hybridity and metamorphosis are symptoms of the female grotesque appearing in George Benjamin's 2012 *Written on Skin* where Agnes leads a sort of double life, evolving from childish obedience to an adulterous, revolted wife who goes as far as eating her lover's heart unawares. She is contaminated by sin. Doubleness, hybridity and metamorphosis are also what characterize the real in this opera, as the boy trusted with illuminating the protector's book, creates an artefact which does not have any stable frontier, a sort of porous object. The book is the skin and a cannibal one at that (eats money, ...).

Doubleness and duplicity is also a feature shared by the Orlamonde sisters in Paul Dukas and Maurice Maeterlinck's *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* (1907). Indeed, the sisters are monstrous in so far as they are neither dead nor really alive. They are kinds of walking deads, as even in the open ending of the opera, they prove to be otherworldy, unable to flee from Bluebeard's castle. They are all the more monstrous as they cause Blue-Beard to get wounded by the peasants while he never truly injured them. Monstrosity becomes circular as it becomes unclear who the monster is.

When Ariane first meets with her sisters in the obscure part of the castle where they have been dwelling so far, they seem alive and well but very soon, as Ariane lights their faces with a torch she sees that they are almost dead, starving, clad in rags and in poor shape. They are monstrous in so far as the spectator can sometimes question their existence. We can also have doubts concerning the number of sisters. In act 2 as Ariane embraces them, she says "Avez-vous mille chevelures?".

Therefore, from Phedra as a Bluebeard more or less forcing Hippolyte to accept her and indirectly condemning him to death (*Hippolyte et Aricie*, 1733) to the contemporary female grotesque found in operas such as *Le grand macabre* (1974-77), displaying the embarrassment created by base female corporeality through the introduction of Clitoria, Amando and Mescaline, one can find a whole series of operatic characters making the conception of the female grotesque slowly evolve.

First, the woman has to be rescued in turqueries or operas such as Isaac Bickerstaffe's *The Captive, A Comic Opera*, Joseph Friebert's *Das Serail, oder die unvermuthete Zusammenkunft in der Sclaverey zwischen Vater, Tochter und Sohn* (1778); Nicolas Dalayrac's *Le Corsaire* (1784). Then, one can find femmes fatales, be it in *Mignon* (1866), *Carmen* (1875), *Samson and Dalila*

[261] *Idem.*
[262] Article about the grotesque on Wikipedia, n.d., https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grotesque, accessed February 2016.

(1877) and *Lakmé* (1883). They can be more or less exotic like Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine* (1865).

Then Olympia (*The Tales of Hoffmann*, 1881), the automaton created by Spalanzani and Coppelius Hoffmann falls in love with, is well known for her vocal pyrotechnics leading her to destruction in a mad waltz. Olympia seems to foreshadow the grotesquely cold and cruel *Turandot* (1926), also functioning like an automaton after her ancestress's bad experience with love. In the wake of Edward Craig's theories of the super puppet, Turandot is deprived of real sentiments to the point that spectators could question the pre-eminence of her role sometimes deciding that Liu more clearly focused the attention than the eponymous character.

Another trend of representation of the female grotesque on opera stages involves a depiction of female cruelty and female submission as it is found in *Jenufa* (1904). Kostelnika Buryjovka's dual behaviour -she seems to act as a half loving and half jealous stepmother- towards her stepdaughter springs from her disillusionment after her marriage to Steva Burya's father. Her absurd killing of Jenufa's baby and her way of making her stepdaughter completely passive makes her a grotesque picture of Medean maternity.

Since the nineteen seventies, the grotesque female body producing fluids and working towards reproduction, death in life and life in death emerges at the center of literary narrations. In the place of the classical body perceived as static, self-contained, the grotesque female body is open, protruding, irregular, deformed, doubled and abject. This can be seen as reminiscent of the gross female corporeality at the center of Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre*.

The South African writer Antjie Krog's collections of autobiographical poems thus follow the biological evolutions of the woman from virginal adolescence to menstruation, sexual awakening, pregnancy and ageing. The first four volumes contain very few allusions to the grotesqueness of the female body which is rather seen as a valorizing asset to be idealised and spiritualised[263]. Of course, the representation becomes more and more grotesque and abject as the volumes follow the natural processes of menopause and ageing.

In Margaret Atwood's "Hairball" (*Wilderness Tips*, 1991), the female grotesque corporeality reappears. Kat is a strongheaded woman who is used to have her say at her work. She goes to the Toronto General Hospital to be operated on and the surgeon removes a benign ovarian cyst, the hairball from the title. She decides to keep it in a jar of formaldehyde on her mantelpiece. Her boss takes advantage of the situation and her absence to fire her.

[263] Louise Viljoen, "'I Have a Body, Therefore I Am': Grotesque, Monstrous and Abject Bodies in Antjie Krog's Poetry", Judith Lütge Couillie; Andries Visagie (eds.), *Antjie Krog. An Ethics of Body and Otherness*, Durban: UKZN Press, 2014, 98-132, 98.

The hairball comes to symbolise women as unstable and disgusting body destabilising social norms and expectations. As was noticed by Yael Shapira in "Hairball Speaks: Margaret Atwood and the Narrative Legacy of the Female Grotesque"[264], the short story works as a cautionary tale about female transgression. It is thought legitimate to see the female body, forever changing and characterized by biological flux, contained by the patriarchal society. Therefore, it is the representation of this same body which can be used to subvert the order and emancipate women. This kind of feminist aesthetic recalls Antjie Krog's new poetic impulses to write poems about the disgusting physicality of menstruation.

According to Anne Carson, "In myth [and particularly classical antiquity], woman's boundaries are pliant, porous, mutable…She swells, she shrinks, she leaks, she is penetrated, she suffers metamorphoses"[265]. Literature established a strong connection between the mother and the monster. Julia Kristeva underlined the correlation between abjection and the maternal body[266].

Embarrassing female open corporeality as connected to the base rites of ingestion and digestion is to be found in such literary pieces as Angela Carter's *Nights at the Circus* (1984). The gluttony of the grotesquely monstrous main character, Sophie Fevvers -pretendedly a foundling let in front of a brothel, miraculously growing wings once menstruating- appears as reflecting Angela Carter's own anorexia in negative.

The anorexic obedience to male standards of female beauty is then subverted by the exuberant Fevvers. For Mikhail Bakhtin:

> Eating and drinking are one of [the] most significant manifestations [of the grotesque body][…]The distinctive character of this body is its open unfinished nature, its interaction with the world. These traits are most fully and concretely revealed in the act of eating; the body transgresses here its own limits.[267]

Fevvers's appetite includes a lust for wealth, power, food and sex. The self-assertive woman belches, indulges in erotical displays of her body and, as a showbusiness girl, transforms her body and femininity into a performance aiming at gaining money power.

In 1989, Katherine Dunn's *Geek Love* related the feminine grotesque to the image of the freak as if to inscribe her work in a tradition dating back from the Southern gothic vein exploited by Eudora Welty, Flannery O'Connor or Carson McCullers. She too challenges a particularly oppressive normative vision of womanhood as the domain of idealised appearances.

To draw the public's attention to their specialness, a whole family decides to recreate itself

---

[264] Yael Shapira, "Hairball Speaks: Margaret Atwood and the Narrative Legacy of the Female Grotesque", *Narrative,* 18.1 (January 2010): 51-72, 52.
[265] Anne Carson, "Dirt and Desire: the Phenomenology of Female Pollution in Antiquity", James I. Porter (ed.), *Constructions of the Classical Body*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999, 77-100, 79.
[266] Yael Shapira, "Hairball Speaks: Margaret Atwood and the Narrative Legacy of the Female Grotesque", *op.cit.,* 7.
[267] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968, 281.

by amputating the limbs of its members. The whole novel shows how freely embracing the status of freak permits the family to climb up the social ladder and enjoy a powerful position in spite of their simultaneous marginalisation. Through the character of Miranda, a girl possessing a tail, feminine forms of self display are explored so as to question the cultural and social positions of women in the contemporary world at large.

Handicap partakes of the quasi-Brechtian alienation effect on which the novel relies. The character of Mary Lick seems to take over some of the authorial functions as she specialises in re-creating artistically the female bodies by amputation sometimes to desexualise them.

Relating the extraordinary story of this family of freaks, Katherine Dunn distances her female reader from her real everyday plight to have her reflect about what she has taken for granted so far.[268]

2-Diseases from operas to literature.

2-a-Operatic diseases and deaths

> Music exalts each joy, allays each grief, expels diseases, softens every pain, subdues the rage of poison, and the plague.[269]

Representing and explaining illness would be dependent on a particular society's sense of value according to Linda and Michael Hutcheon[270]. Still according to the Hutcheons[271], the rise of medicine in the nineteenth century however entailed the undermining of the hierarchy of diseases according to their moral acceptability that had been prevailing until then.

Simultaneously, opera stopped being democratic and became more aimed at a bourgeois audience aping their betters. According to the two researchers, in this context, the growing variety of operas created only to sink in perpetual oblivion would have largely contributed to shape

[268] Katherine Weese, "Normalising Freakery: Katherine Dunn's *Geek Love* and the Female Grotesque", *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, 41:4 (26 March 2010), 349-364, 351.
[269] John Armstrong, *The Art of Preserving Health,* London: printed for A. Millar, 1744, 134.
[270] Linda and Michael Hutcheon, *Opera: Desire, Disease and Death*, *op.cit*., 2.
[271] *Ibid*., 3.

national identities and moral values as linked with health, sexuality, love, order, chaos and disease[272]. Situated at the intersection between nature and culture[273] as it conveys a variety of social meanings, the body embedded in the operatic narrative offered various ethnic, racial, sexual and ethic meanings. Desired and desiring, it is both the "subject and object of pleasure, the uncontrollable agent of pain and the revolt against reason- and the vehicle of mortality."[274]

From a certain point of view, diseases may be etiological in operas harking back to ancient mythology, in particular those dealing with the Antiquity. In Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex,* the murder by the Theban King of his father Laius and his incestuous relationships with Jocaste trigger the plague, perceived as punishment. This opera reverts to an older conception of disease in a determined universe prototypically governed by tragic fate, the necessity of inspiring awe, pity and catharsis and edging toward anagnorisis. This treatment of disease can be seen as metaoperatic as Stravinsky in 1927 seemed willing to cast a retrospective glance on older stage practices concerning diseases and his characters represent each an older vocal tradition. The overall aim seems to incite the viewer to a renewed powerful meditation.

More often than not, in literary as well as in operatic fictions, illness disrupts the life of the individual whenever his sense of identity can no longer be accommodated in the society he lives in. One can find a perfect image of this in Graham Swift's 1980 novel *The Sweet Shop Owner* in which the eponymous character falls ill once he understands that his daughter is no longer going to visit him as she has her mother's money.

Puccini's Mimi (1896), too poor to avoid falling ill and then too ill to be cured by cheap medicine has to find another lover and becomes inadequate and valueless. As the poor poet Rodolfo assumes while neglecting her, the only solution for her is to find a rich man who will pay to see her getting rid of tuberculosis. At the end of the opera, when her disease has been progressing too far and no wealthy man has been found, she dies in loneliness though her friends are gathered around her and have pawned their belongings to buy her a muff.

Love of the arts cannot always be successful in poverty and then, once combined with love, cannot always lead to happiness. Though one may endorse material poverty so as to embrace the career one really craves after, this is a choice which may have dreadful consequences. However, dying Mimi acts as a sort of foil to the empoverished young male artist always struggling against vital deprivation and death but not experiencing it directly. Mimi's death could be seen as a way of giving value to bourgeois people's unartistic and safe choices and also possibly as a way of moralising inadequate sexuality and love affairs. However, the connection between sexuality and

[272] *Ibid*., 5.
[273] Brookes, cited in *Ibid*., 11.
[274] *Idem*.

morality became looser as the advent of sciences replaced the language of morality by the language of pathology and the discovery of the causes of syphilis, cholera and TB as the Hutcheons underline[275].

In the nineteenth century, previous to Puccini's end of the century work, diseases connected with sexuality continued haunting the opera stage. Disease and death as one of the forms of divine or less divine sexual or moral scapegoating went on, even resulting in the purifying execution of the too handsome and charismatic Billy Budd appealing to male friendship, or the death of Aschenbach putting an end to the uneasy love relationship with Tadzio in Benjamin Britten's *Death in Venice*.

In fact, as the Hutcheons themselves suggest, in any study of diseases on the opera stage, one must start from the major historical turning points in performance and reception history.

First, occurred the shift from a plague obsessed collective consciousness to one more loosely connected with illnesses, representative of a period when people were less worried about the fragility of life. If mortal scarlatina is diagnosed to Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville* (1816), it is to poke fun at the extremely self-conscious profiteer. If Mustafa is sick in act 1 of *L'Italiana in Algeri* (1813) it is because he needs some amorous stimulation and he is finally comically cured after a short fit of madness at the hand the beautiful but also unpredictably skilful and almost dictatorial Isabella.

After the 1832-33 arrival of cholera in Europe, people became anxious again about risks of dying of deadly diseases. According to the Hutcheons, the symbolical social and cultural meanings associated with the plague reappeared[276]. It is interesting to note that as early as 1828, appeared Marschner's *der Vampyr*, a sort of pre-Stoker operatic *Dracula* certainly drawing on contemporary fears of the spreading to Europe of Eastern cholera which was then only threatening Asia. Lord Ruthven manages to seduce two victims (Ianthe and Emmy) and drain them from their blood though he cannot prevail with Malwina as Aubry, her lover, is ready to break his promise with Ruthven and expose him publicly as a vampire. However, as the vampire himself warns his ex-friend, breaking his promise will condemn him to become a vampire himself. Once dead, he will face, as Ruthven once did, the awful obligation of nourishing himself from his progeny and wife's blood, mirroring in the operatic world -often concerned with family feelings and emotions- the real life guilt linked with the inevitability of children's contamination by the parents, via the mother's womb and milk. In 1833, Marschner's *Hans Heiling*, deals once again with the underworld which threatens to perturb the course of normal amorous life on earth as by 1831 the

[275]Linda and Michael Hutcheon, *Opera: Desire, Disease and Death*, *op.cit*., 14, 21.
[276]Linda and Michael Hutcheon, *Opera: Desire, Disease and Death*, *op.cit*., 21.

cholera pandemic had reached Germany. It is as if the King of Erdgeister, or death in love, came to interfere with mortal love.

*

* *

In *Parsifal* (1882), Richard Wagner created a sacred world in which the notion of health was posited both in opposition with and in relation to sexuality. Nietzsche apparently disapproved of such a new-fangled Wagnerian critical stance towards sexuality, of such an ascetic betrayal of the previous sensualisation of art[277]. He resented the Shopenhauerian connection between pain, desire and Mitleid (compassion). Indeed, much in Wagner's opera revolves around the eroticisation of sacred suffering.

Throughout the opera, love as the necessary original sin is represented by the monstrously proliferating image of the wound to be cured. Human social bonds or human relationships to the divine as well as love are represented through the running metaphor of the ever flowing pure or impure blood and of the exchange of fluids more generally.

As the Hutcheons indicate, this permitted Wagner to tackle implicitly the major issues raised by syphilis as it condemns the diseased to be socially rejected as impure, links them to the rest of humanity through bonds of guilty sexual love and the pattern of familial contamination. Wagner disqualifies the sufferers from any religious pretences to purity, divests them of any aspiration to immortal transcendence. Thus, Titurel dies aged more than five hundred years now it has become impossible for the syphilitic Amfortas to celebrate the Grail rites.

The human relationships to health being closely linked to man's relationship to good and evil, the cure / redemption mechanism organises the opera's binary spatial and temporal structure. If God redeemed man from his slavery to sin, Parsifal does the same by liberating the Grail realm from Klingsor, and implicitly his syphilitic dictatorship. Gummas could find an apt image in the flowermaids which dangerously bloom in the otherwise healthy Grail realm and which wither away as soon as Kundry, the Oriental source of unchaste desire, metaphorically almost dies. The whole flower garden where Amfortas, identified with Christ, was wounded (or received his gumma?) possibly for the sake of humanity and conceived by Klingsor after having emasculated himself and gained magical powers -or, if we conjure up the old legend, having been emasculated by the jealous husband he had cuckolded- disappears once the Spear is recovered.

The young title hero, Parsifal, in Persian "Fal parsi", is the archetypal ignorant young man,

[277] *Ibid*., 63.

brought up in ignorance by his mother Herzeleide (Heart's sorrow) who, having lost her beloved husband Gamuret on the battlefield, feared the potential consequences of war and sinful sexual love on her son and finally died of sorrow at her son's departure for the Grail realm. Free from lust, he is the healthy man who will be used to restore order and health in Titurel's realm, a realm made sick by unwholesome sexuality. Only he will be able to recover and brandish the Holy Spear and cure Amfortas's wound with its point. Then, only he will be able to safely reunite Holy Spear and Holy Grail on that same Good Friday, obviously though implicitly miming sexual intercourse so that once having redeemed Amfortas, he will also redeem Jesus, the Grail realm made weak by Titurel's untimely death, and all humanity.

Parsifal, the innocent fool and Amfortas can be opposed to Klingsor. Amfortas's wound does not imply a loss of virility or godliness and he struggles for redemption supported by his knights whereas Klingsor's wound[278], though making him physically chaste, renders him unable to hold the Grail he covets as he has used treachery to remain pure. In Wagner's world like in Wolfram von Eschenbach's, it proves impossible for Parsifal to escape war, love or the wound made by remorse since he learns from Kundry that he unwittingly killed his mother (whose destiny was anyway encapsulated in her name, "Herzeleide", "Heart's Sorrow"). In fact, in him who acts as a sort of supreme redeemer, wounds (Herzeleide's two wounds, Kundry's, the pale Grail knights aimlessly wandering as their lives can no longer be renewed, Klimgsor's, Amfortas's, Jesus's, the swan's) are superimposed on each other.

Parsifal almost succumbs to Kundry's kiss, which the latter pretends is Herzeleide's present. Yet, at that moment, naturally compassionate Parsifal feels Amfortas's wound in his own flesh, which immediately drives him away from the woman. Sorrow is crying aloud from the depths of his heart. Parsifal can hear Jesus's wish to be redeemed from Klingsor's hands, defiled by his dastardly emasculation.

Predictably, Parsifal becomes a link in the chain around the original sin and the necessity of redemption, uniting Christ shedding his blood on the cross, guilty Longinus being condemned to be mauled by a lion every night, Klingsor emasculating himself to become virtuous, Amfortas being wounded by Klingsor in the genitals according to Wolfram von Eschenbach and, less shockingly in the side according to Wagner, Kundry who having dared to laugh at the moment of Jesus's crucifixion, is condemned to roam the earth forever seducing knights in quest of the Grail.

The Holy Blood of divine agony and extasy is poured into Amfortas's heart when he holds the Grail while his own sinful blood copiously flow, rushes out through his wound also caused by the Holy Spear. As Amfortas's human lust can never stop, his sinful, implicitly syphilitic blood

[278]Linda and Michael Hutcheon, *Opera: Desire, Disease and Death*, *op.cit*., 61.

(Hutcheon) cannot stop flowing.

*

* *

Syphilis once a very serious issue hinted at in *Parsifal'*s reference to the rose garden among other things, becomes comical in 1956 in Leonard Bernstein's *Candide*[279] as penicillin began to be used as a treatment.

Before this, according to the Hutcheons, Alban Berg's Lulu (1937-1979) embodies the prostitute thought responsible for spreading syphilis after the two world wars. Lulu has the supernatural power to infect Alwa with syphilis while seemingly remaining unaffected by it herself (this is what he reproaches her with at the end of act 3). Her physical, almost satanic resilience brings her close to previous eponymous operatic female demons and killer femmes fatales -Handel's Agrippina (1709), Cherubini's Medea (1797), Verdi's Lady Macbeth (1847), Lucrezia Borgia (1833), Violetta (La Traviatta, 1853), Jenufa's mother (Jenufa, 1904), Salome (Salome, 1905), Rossini 's Italian woman (1813), Carmen (1875), Kundry (Parsifal, 1882)- but her ambiguity clearly enriches this representation tradition.

Her transforming a disease into a weapon is reminiscent of war-time practices, though her spreading of death around her, her morbid aura, seems to be out of the sphere of her responsibility, due to her difficult start which makes us empathise with her. The dodecaphonic motives attributed to the characters seem to enclose them in a vicious circle of depravity and death.

On the other hand, this opera's relationship with disease also depends on the homosexual or at least homoerotic love affair between Lulu and Countess von Geschwitz, Lulu's ambiguous double, her non biological twin sister as the German name apparently derived from "Schwester" suggests. Lesbianism and the vindication of female rights that goes with it result in the exploitation of the cholera epidemic. Voluntarily infecting herself and Lulu with the disease, von Geschwitz manages her girlfriend's escape though she dies.

As the two Hutcheons underline, one finds traces of syphilis in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* created in 1951 where Tom, mad and melodiously dying after his encounter with Mother Goose herself and his degrading marriage to the ambiguously bearded Baba the Turk, takes himself for Adonis. Mother Goose whose name summons the lesson in sexual debauchery Tom so easily learns, with her loose morality and unhealthy sexual manners, acts as a foil to the chaste and untainted Anne Truelove who ends up acting as a real mother to dying Tom, letting him rest his

[279] Linda and Michael Hutcheon, *Opera: Desire, Disease and Death*, *op.cit*., 23.

head on her breast.

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, love and sex-related diseases continue to be represented. In the 2000 *L'amour de loin*, earthly love is presented as unreachable and impossible as the anguish the mere prospect of actually meeting with one's beloved engenders disease and death. Jaufré Rudel trying to see the still mysterious beloved to whom he devotes all his songs finally dies in her arms and the love between man and woman comes to be equated with the mystical relationships implied by the love uniting man and god. One may also mention the treatment of aids in *Angels in America* adapted from Tony Kushner's theatre play by Peter Eötvös and created in 2004 which revives the former cultural tradition of strange lethal diseases one conceals to hide one's shame. In the 2013 *A Harlot's Progress*, Moll Hackabout, the mistress of a rich man, is thrown out of his home because the young woman has many love affairs involving young men. She very soon sinks in depression, disease and death.

2-b-Parallel evolution of diseases and deaths in literature.

From tuberculosis to cancer. An esthetic choice of diseases.

Though many a cheap sentimental literary piece marked by Manichean excesses could be considered an exception, one can agree with Virginia Woolf when she underlines the following fact:

> Considering how common illness is, how tremendous the spiritual change that it brings, what wastes and deserts of the soul a slight attack of influenza brings to light […] it becomes strange indeed that illness has not taken its place with love, battle and jealousy among the prime themes of literature.[280]

This is problably due to the emphasis the authors wanted to lay on the life of the mind as opposed to the gross life of the body. The most frequent diseases one may find in literary works could be said to be tuberculosis -often called consumption as it used to cause its sufferer to waste in a romantic way in the Western world of the nineteenth century- and cancer, a more recent cause of death.

[280] Virginia Woolf, "On Being Ill", *Family Business Review*, 4.2 (Summer 1993): 199-201, 199.

Among the literary characters affected by consumption leading to beatific, idealised death, one may mention little, sweet and beautiful Eva from Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1852 *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. She is clearly meant for another world as her eerie golden curls framing her angelic face suggest. Too good to live Eva -short for Evangeline- asked her father to become an activist in favour of the abolition of slavery. As she truthfully loves both black and white people, she succumbs most peacefully to a beautiful natural death.

Among diseases associated with good people, one may also notice Esther's Summerson's blindness in Charles Dickens's 1853 *Bleak House*. Somehow, the loss of her eyesight which occurred while she was generously tending a helpless sick orphan, works as a reminder of her goodness and virtue.

In *Nicholas Nickleby*, Dickens thus described tuberculosis:

> There is a dread disease […] in which the struggle between soul and body is so gradual, quiet and solemn, and the result so sure, that day by day and grain by grain the mortal part wastes and withers away, so that the spirit grows light and sanguine with its lightening load and, feeling immortality at hand, deems it a new form of mortal life -a disease in which death and life are so strangely blended, that death takes the glow and hue of life, and life the gaunt and grisly form of death -a disease which medicine never cured, wealth warded off, or poverty could boast exemption from.[281]

Myriam Bailin sees the Dickensian sickroom as a "kind of provisional or preliminiray heaven", to be linked with "the *locus amoenus* of the pastoral"[282] and resulting in the restauration of personal and communal wholeness.

Connected with people too good to be sexual but at the same time perceived as a sexy disease[283], tuberculosis had already been very fashionable as early as the eighteenth century. Glamorous paleness fitted the image of the perfect aristocrat of both sexes. Women rejoiced in their hollow chests and wan cheeks while pale and thin young men found in the appearances of tuberculosis a way of promoting their selves. In the history of representations, maybe because of the number of writers's families which were actually affected by tuberculosis, people also used to connect the disease with creativity. It went to the point that the decline in artistic creativity was ascribed to the eradication of consumption. Consumption was also interesting insofar as it came to result in the appearance of ghosts and vampires in novels such as the 1847 *Wuthering Heights*.

The 1818 *Frankenstein* much relies on the various characters's diseases. One can ascribe this fact to the prevalence of affections and death everywhere in the world at that time resulting in the exploration of the gothic genre. Victor's cousin Elizabeth Lavenza catches the scarlet fever, Caroline Beaufort is contaminated and dies from the same fever. When Victor himself falls ill, he

---

[281] Charles Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby,* Gutenberg Project website, n.d., https://www.gutenberg.org/files/967/967-h/967-h.htm, accessed March 2016, chapter 49.
[282] Myriam Bailin, *The Sickroom in Victorian Fiction, the Art of Being Ill*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, 79.
[283] Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*, New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1978, 6.

is looked after by Henry Clerval. As Victor is very often ill, one may suppose that Mary Shelley uses his bad health as a sign foreshadowing the character's death as well as an element allowing her to create the sad, gloomy, depressive atmosphere characteristic of the novel.

In contrast with the numerous deaths by tuberculosis recorded by nineteenth century novels, in Thomas Wolfe's 1935 *Look Homeward, Angel*, William Oliver Gant who was characterised by his appetite, violence and thirst for adventure slowly degenerates towards impotent senility to die from cancer in the 1935 sequel entitled *Of Time and the River*. Once two of his children die, this far from innocent character -his personality was marked by excess and desire- sinks into helpless, ineffectual and therefore cancerous old age. This form of death was maybe chosen because, as Susan Sontag has it in *Illness as Metaphor*[284], a person affected by cancer is robbed of all possibility "to achieve self-transcendence" and has to undergo agony and shame for cancers often affect lower corporeal parts.

More generally, it is possible to oppose death by tuberculosis, associated with a sort of inward dissolution of the body to death by cancer, equated with (emotional) resignation. For instance, once Jack from 1996 *Last Orders* realizes that his butcher's shop maybe fittingly faces Vic's undertaker's shop, he is trapped in the general immobility of old age resulting in death and affecting the circle of friends. This immobility is ironically underlined by the name of the pub -"the Coach and Horses"- which ridiculously and ineffectually suggests movement. Understanding how handy it will turn out to have a friend for undertaker, he dies of stomach cancer.

In the 1980s, in the wake of the much mediatised Three Misle Island accident, emerged a concern with a "postnatural world" as described in Cynthia Deitering's "The Postnatural Novel: Toxic Consciousness in Fiction of the 1980s"[285]. This came to affect the conception of diseases and bodies sometimes perceived as vessels for contamination in the context of environmental pollution. Thus, in John Updike's 1990 *Rabbit at Rest*, Thelma Harrison's corporeal self is progressively wasting away under the influence of severe lupus. Rabbit cannot help noticing the deterioration of her bodily countenance as her face changes colour because of jaundice and of the characteristic butterfly rash.

Diseases, drink and social criticism.

In Anne Brontë, Elizabeth Gaskell and Charles Dickens's novels, illness may be connected

[284] *Idem*.
[285] Cynthia Deitering's "The Postnatural Novel: Toxic Consciousness in Fiction of the 1980s", *The Ecocriticism Reader, Landmarks in Literary Ecology*, Cheryl Glotfelty, Harold Fromm (eds.), University of Georgia Press, 1996.

with drunkenness and therefore imply social criticism.

Indeed, intemperance can be symptomatic of a devious society as Charles Dickens underlines in "Gin Shops"[286]. His attitude is one of understanding and tolerance for the alcoholised poor living in inferior housing condition. He calls for reforms improving the plight of the destitute to prevent them from looking for solace in gin.

Elizabeth Gaskell similarly explores the situation of a female working class alcoholic, Mary Barton's aunt Esther in the 1848 *Mary Barton*. In Anne Brontë's 1848 *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, three male characters, Mr Lawrence, Grimsby and Arthur Huntingdon, succumb to drinking. This permits the author to dwell on the role of the familial circle, in particular of the females, in situations when a male sinks in alcoholism.

Cholera among other diseases affecting all humanity regardless of wealth or social status tends to be represented insofar as it questions the structure of society and artificial hierarchies. Often, the evocation of such diseases imply a humanist and universalist reflection or a poetic contemplation comparable to what happens at the end of James Joyce's "The Dead" in which snow progressively blankets Michael Furey's grave, the whole of Ireland and all the living and the dead.

Female illness is often associated with a dangerous and silent protest as is illustrated by Désirée, Mrs Beck's daughter in *Villette*. She is the only one to be so unruly and rebellious that she even feigns illness to escape her mother's surveillance system. Which fails of course.

The neurological turn.

Charlotte Brontë's 1853 *Villette* was narrated by sickly Lucy, vaguely suffering from mental troubles identifiable as hysteria -the disease indissociably linked with the female intellectual and creative writer. Lucy also suffers from hypochondria, which for the Victorians was still a serious disease affecting both body and mind. Close and constant study could also have damaging effects on both mental and physical states as Charotte Brontë's hypochondriac Arthur Crimsworth in the 1857 *The Professor* illustrates.

In the early twenty-first century, novels concerned with altered neurological states or psychological syndromes began to abund. In the wake of James Peacock and Tim Lustig in *Diseases and Disorders in Contemporary Fiction: The Syndrome Syndrome*[287], one can mention novels such as Rickard Power's 2006 *The Echo Maker* where a comatose truck driver lost the

[286]Charles Dickens, "Gin Shops", *Sketches by Boz*, volume 1, London: John Macrone, 1836, 247-248.
[287] James Peacock, Tim Lustig, *Diseases and Disorders in Contemporary Fiction: The Syndrome Syndrome*, New York, London: Routledge, 2013.

faculty of recognizing his sister, Benjamin Kunkel's 2006 *Indecision* in which an American youth is tempted by a drug suggestively called "Abulinix". Aboulia being the nervous disorder resulting in the lack of initiative, the inability to take any decision, the drug is supposed to restore his motivation to its taker. Already, Jonatham Lethem's 1999 *Motherless Brooklyn* narrated the story of an orphan affected by Tourette syndrome -which may induce insulting or inappropriate behaviour in the sufferer- trying to find his friend's murderer.

PART 3

Operatic transversality as destabilizing form and meaning.

Chapter 1-Beyond allusion: use of remains of deep operatic intermediality as complex by nature.

1-Excessive intermediality as return to origins. Mixed forms, shared propensities and complementarity.

Instead of studying the reference to opera as some exterior artform, some heterogeneous material, here, I try to investigate how opera is to be found under the form of natural, historical operatic remains in novels and literature at large. The literary artwork with its operatic remains could then be adapted onto the opera stage. Operas and literary fictions thus seem to evolve on a certain common ground and to function in a complementary way in the elaboration of a new musical and literary art.

Thus, operas and novels bear obvious similarities in their respective inner hybridities, generic overlapping, instabilities and, above all, their overall relativist strategies[288]. That novels are from the origins of a hybrid nature was made clear in studies of Victorian works enhancing for instance the presence of "polyglot verse novels" (such as Elizabeth Barrett Browning's 1856 *Aurora Leigh*) inspiring Symbolists and Decadents[289]. Apparently, even after the romantic poets, domestic realist novels could accommodate the rebellious potential of verse.

[288] As we shall see, the relativity in opera staging more or less amounts to the relativity inherent in the staging of action and characters in novels.
[289] Dino Franco Felluga, "Novel Poetry: Transgressing the law of genre", *Victorian Poetry,* 41.4 (Winter 2003): 490-499, 493.

The assumption underlying this work is that these affinities preclude any history of the novel which would not delineate a zone of confusion, of shared representation strategies. The existence of strong relationships between literary and operatic arts is evidenced by the original pre-operatic profusion of hybrid structures, transitory works in between theatrical plays (masques) and operatic fictions such as the often mentioned *Siege of Rhodes* by D'Avenant. It is also evidenced by later hesitations between novelistic and operatic forms such as that underlying James's *Turn of the Screw* whose author was conscious of the artistically hybrid, potentially operatic quality of his writing. Still later on, Toni Morrisson's *Margaret Garner*, David Malouf's *Fly Away Peter* and J.M. Coetzee's works testify to the still lively and deep influence of opera on writing.

Shared propensities, complementarities imply borrowings.

Some parts of intellectual life are unreachable to operas though their abstract logic is by its sonic structures more often than not[290]. Opera can be a particularly relevant artistic form when it comes to expressing the subverbal and the supraverbal. Michael Halliwell using Herbert Lindenberger's words, also discusses the shared propensity of polyphonic novels and hybrid operas towards "extravagant utterance" [291].

A source of enjoyment as much condemned and governed by deconstruction as any literary work[292], the operatic structure is as unstable and unsettled as a novelistic one. The profusion of means *de facto* induces the possibility of self-contradiction. According to Linda and Michael Hutcheon: "To understand the complex and contradictory nature of this unnatural beast (opera) requires a flexible and varied arsenal of hermeneutical and interpretive instruments."[293]

One of the main interests of a novel, a short story or other literary work resides in its way of coping with social issues and the creation of corresponding aesthetics. A main social turning point in literary history occurred with nineteenth century industrialisation, urbanisation and mechanization as reflected in late nineteenth century/early twentieth century texts (Thomas Hardy, *Dickens in Hard Times*, Theodor Dreiser, D.H. Lawrence in *Sons and Lovers*, Frank Norris). Style became more objective and impersonal, resorting less to accumulations of adjectives, the supernatural and the imaginative.

Another turn happened when Eudora Welty, William Faulkner, Flannery O'Connor or Carson Mac Cullers explored the nefarious social consequences of the emergence of a post-civil war ruined "white trash", composed of physically and morally corrupt people, possibly doomed by

---

[290] Michael Halliwell, *Opera and the Novel: the Case of Henry James*, *op.cit*., 55.
[291] Michael Halliwell, *Opera and the Novel: the Case of Henry James*, *op.cit.,* 50.
[292] Sometimes librettist and composer have divergent strategies because of their ideological differences, as testifies the often reported case of Dryden and Purcell who tend to have opposing strategies of writing as one has papist sympathies and the other not.
[293] Linda and Michael Hutcheon, *Opera: Desire, Disease, death*, *op.cit*., XV.

God because of the inner failings of the male population fighting for the values of the antebellum South. At that moment the aesthetic form of *Absalom, Absalom!*, published shortly before the second world war, illustrated the tense transition from modernism to postmodernism as it played with its temporal structure, creating confusion from the first page, substituting for the ordinary logics of presentation inherent in the incipit the temporal logic (or illogicality) of historical sin and its repercussions.

Major parallel operatic evolutions inducing aesthetic changes occurred when Kurt Weill or Vsevolod Meyerhold decided towards the same period that opera was the perfect form adapted to their preoccupations, being strong enough to undergo an intense and useful questioning of its efficacy in front of changing social issues. As a popular entertainment, it was a natural vehicle for ideological and artistic interaction. Opera as social vehicle is still an ongoing issue with operas such as *Fallujah, Margaret Garner* or *The Exterminating Angel*.

Another interest of associating novels and operas and investigating structural parallels between the two forms may reside in the symbiosis or attempts at symbiosis between music and dramatic meaning, through the use of leitmotives or other devices which occur during the operatic spectacle and in the course of the novel.

For Peter Conrad speaking about the Wagnerian form of music-drama's influence on the novel:

> My argument is that music and drama are dubious, even antagonistic, partners and that opera's actual literary analogue is the novel. Drama is limited to the exterior life of action, and romanticism increasingly deprecates both the tedious willfulness of action and the limits of the forms which transcribes it. The novel, in contrast, can explore the interior life of motive and desire and is naturally musical because mental. It traces the motions of thought, of which music is an image. Opera is more musical novel than musical drama.
> So, novel is more opera than drama…[294]

Peter Conrad also reminds his reader of the proximity of Wagner's music-drama (in particular *Das Rheingold*) with Ibsen's works (which he calls p.2 "intellectualised morality plays", in which "characters have no existence beyond their opinions" and "action is the dialectic of their opposed ideas"). He also likes to show that the librettist Shakespeare composers transform into properly operatic substance is a novelist rather than a playwright (display of feelings, emotions, see the differences in operatic and dramatic Macbeth[295]…).

2-Excessive intermediality as literary strategy to codify or disrupt.

In fact, the contemporary novel, focusing on I narrators, compares well with operas as far as

[294] Peter Conrad, *Romantic Opera and Literary Form*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1977, 1.
[295] *Ibid*., 3.

the elaboration of a simple presence from which musical ideas and characters spring. The only difference resides in the fact, already noticed by Laurent Feneyrou[296], that novels are drammas in musica in which no performance, narration or writing is to occur on a real stage, where both the sense of the tragic and the sense of a subject are dramatically undermined.

As it is in itself so deeply intermedial, the participation of opera in literary texts under the form of explicit or implicit allusions represents a case of excessive intermediality. Possibly to be associated with the necessity or dream of inventing a loud and clear form of expression, operatic intermediality as a whole can both be read as a subservience to the tyranny of strongly codified artistic influences as well as a radical attempt at freeing language from stereotypes[297] and at deconstructing it.

If no single media can be enough for an author to express him/herself, the creation of some impure form of thinking somehow unbinding the artform can be thought interesting. Within the framework of an operatic reading of literary works, tensions may occur between what is purely musical in the narrations and what the novel takes from what belongs to the realm of performance which engraves the discourse on a more concrete, theatrical, cinematographic, experimental, theoretical or ideological stage[298]. These tensions occur in James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*.

In this novel, the pure musical line of the text contrasts with the moment of operatic performance when music is somehow degraded by staged passion[299]. The latter is mainly conveyed by expressive onomatopoeias and linguistic complexity[300] but also by references to and textual representations/intrusions of actual operatic characters such as Falstaff or Aida and of actual operatic scenes or staff such as Caruso in the park. In a more contemporary novel such as Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, opera and literature are so intimately fusional that it led to the elaboration of a jazzthetic[301] passion expressed on the novelistic and the operatic stages. This seems to have been a driving force directly leading to the novel's adaptation into Richard Danielpour's *Margaret Garner* mingling jazz and operatic inspirations. Toni Morrison declared:

> If my work is faithfully to reflect the aesthetic tradition of Afro-American culture, it must make conscious use of the characteristics of its art forms and translate them into print: antiphony, the group nature of art, its functionality, its improvisational nature, its relationship to audience performance, the critical voice which upholds tradition and communal values and which also provides occasion for an individual to transcend and/or defy group restrictions.[302]

---

[296] Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et dramaturgie: esthétique de la représentation au XXe siècle*, *op.cit*., 15.
[297] Célia Vieira, Isabel Rio Novo, *Inter Media: littérature, cinéma et intermédialité,* Paris: L'Harmattan, 2011, 34.
[298] Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et dramaturgie: esthétique de la représentation au XXe siècle*, *op.cit*., 15.
[299] *Idem.*
[300] See the representation of the fall, among other vocal passages destined to be read by Joyce.
[301] Lars Eckstein, "A Love Supreme: Jazzthetic Strategies in Toni Morrison's "Beloved", *African American Review*, 40.2 (Summer 2006): 271-283.
[302] Toni Morrison, "Memory, Creation and Writing.", *Thought*, 59 (1984): 385-90.

In Lars Eckstein's wake, one could assert that it is the novel's porous generic nature, its musical antiphonic structure as well as its transformation into opera which permit it to fully reflect the condition of pain[303].

Of course, however, one can only talk about "remains" because some of the writers who appear to be the most "operatic" ones at first sight such as librettist novelist David Malouf would disavow having begun writing their novels with a real operatic ambition in mind or with any awareness of creating operatic works. Even if an operatic reading is possible, a "simply" musical one could be very often thought safer:

> *Helen Daniel:* In his review of *Curlow Creek* in *Australian Book Review* Nick Jose talks about the operatic qualities of the novel. Were you conscious of this operatic form while you were writing?
> *David Malouf:* Operatic is probably not the word I'd first have used. Musical, I think that's certainly true. But I think that's true of the way all my books are shaped. I don't usually think of the forward drive of the book as having to do with plot, but with exploration of things which are announced first, sometimes almost like metaphors in a poem, say. You then explore both ends of the metaphor and let those spawn other oppositions, other comparisons, and then explore those. I think that's the way almost all my books work, and I think I learned really to shape a novel the way I'd learned to shape a poem. I sometimes referred in the past to the books therefore having a kind of poetical structure in that kind of way, or musical, of if one wanted to say that.[304]

Though maybe not enough. If one takes into account the 2007 *Typewriter Music* whose title is an obvious allusion to Leroy Anderson's *Typewriter Symphony* and therefore the concretely musical dimension to writing, the writer seems to be a sort of go-between between the act of writing and the act of composing. David Malouf's collection of poems contains "Mozart to Da Ponte", a poem featuring Mozart addressing a fictive mental letter to his librettist, Da Ponte. The letter reflects the Mozartian side of an imaginary ongoing mental conversation between the two men and the two arts, of composing an opera and writing a libretto.

Mozart sees Da Ponte as a mere "finder of words"[305], implying that the rest is his, also evoking the impossible connection between music and words ("the gap, which is not always silence, where words and music fail, and must always fail to connect"[306]). Words have a social function contrary to music perceived as a primeval state of innocence, which can dare to be more realistic than words.

Only the author assuming the Mozartian persona seems able to really connect music and words together by his imagination. By imagining the composer's side of the conversation, David Malouf the librettist-poet-novelist bridges the gap separating words and music as he already did in the 1980s when proposing the libretto to transform Patrick White's *Voss* into a 1986 opera, mainly

---

[303] Lars Eckstein, "A Love Supreme: Jazzthetic Strategies in Toni Morrison's "Beloved", *op.cit.*, 273.
[304] Interview Helen Daniel/David Malouf, Australian humanities Review website, n.d.,www.australianhumanitiesreview,org/archive/Issue-Sept-1996/intermal.htmlal, accessed March 2017.
[305] David Malouf, *Typewriter Music*, University of Queensland Press, 2007, 48.
[306] *Idem.*

because of the unspoken, inherently musical nature of the relationships between Laure and Voss, geographically -if not mentally-separated from one another.

Some reactions of authors against the operatic material they unconsciously use and situation of my work within the context of performing/performance arts.

Many authors, such as Mark Twain or Ambrose Bierce rejected the operatic form and particularly the excessive utterance implied, involving a divorce from artistic realism:

> Opera: a play representing life in another world, whose inhabitants have no speech but song, no motions but gestures and no postures but attitudes. All acting is simulation and the word simulation is taken from simia, an ape; but in opera, the actor takes for his model simia audibilis (or Pithecanthropos Stentor) the ape that howls. The actor apes a man, the opera performer apes an ape.[307]

However, opera as based on the principle of the epiphany, or of concentrated expressivity echoes with a certain literary tendency to use progressions following the pattern of revelation (Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*, *Great Expectations* where Pip becomes conscious of who he really is…). Ascendancy, stream of consciousness, exaltation as areas in connection with the development of emotions constitute a common ground for operatic and literary undertakings.

Both operas and literary fictions in general share a propensity to be centered on patterns of unconcealment and interpretation. In a literary text, the reader has to interpret what he sees at the surface as well as in the depths of the text. He has to go beyond the explicit while on the operatic stage, the spectator has to consider events, actions, responses, gestures and behaviours, sounds, voices, change of tones and rhythms to decide what is going on at the implicit level.[308] Sight is hence associated with a philosophical process of discovery, of going beyond appearances.

My undertaking at investigating operatic intermediality is to be inscribed in the evolution leading to the present day state of performing and performance arts as well as of literature.

Following the growing importance bestowed on self expression in the nineteenth century industrial age due to the felt inhumanity of the machines and T.S. Eliot's modernist rejection of performance (the development of closet drama and of tightly regulated theatricality[309]), one

---

[307] Ambrose Bierce, *The Devil's Dictionary*, « opera » section, 1906, *Alcyone systems*, 1995, http://www.alcyone.com/max/lit/devils/o.html, accessed April 2017.

[308] Julia A. Walker, " The Text/Performance Split Across the Analytic/Continental Divide", David Krasner, David Saltz, *Staging Philosophy: Interactions of Theatre, Performance and Philosophy*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006, 19-40, 23.

[309] *Ibid*., 21.

presently witnesses a sort of revival of performing/performance arts since the early 1970s[310]. Certain critics assume that this revival at the time of Artaud's elaboration of his "Theatre of Cruelty" is due to the progressive erosion of text as a priviledged cultural metaphor[311]. Though the devaluation of text as first and foremost vehicle of culture took all the more time as writing was historically so slow to take preeminence over speech and gain credit.

3-Towards Luciano Bério: the ambiguities of melodrama in operas and novels.

For the notoriously unsentimental poet Giovanni Guarini in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, there was no need for tragical scenes aiming at exorcising terror and pity as religion already proposed such spiritual reformation in the gospels. Therefore, in his perspective, drama or musical drama existed only for the sake of pleasure and no extreme atrocities should have their place onstage[312]. One could certainly extend this theory to the novel which some continue to see as mainly entertaining. Authors often say that the impulse behind novels is the pleasure of storytelling though the deep link between novels by Henry James or Honoré de Balzac and the "melodramatic imagination" has been well documented by Peter Brooks[313].

The elaboration of staged dramatic actions as a means of creating pleasure and admiration in the spectator was theorized by *Il Corago* which however also distinguished a social and moral purpose to theatrical art[314], something also noted by Italo Calvino when he gave his impressions of the opera *La Vera Storia* by Luciano Berio:

> Maintenant que j'ai en main le livret complet [de l'opéra La Vera Storia], je suis frappé par la tension grave et obscure, miroir d'une époque où des nouvelles tragiques continuent d'arriver de chaque continent d'un monde condamné à tourner sans issue dans un cercle de violence et d'oppression. Cela sur le plan de l'énonciation verbale dans le spectacle, les teintes sombres voleront en éclats sous l'énergie vitale de la musique[315].

Numerous theoretical, explanatory, satirical or polemical writings either praise or at once reject the use of melodrama considered as disproportionate and monstrous. These writers

---

[310] *Ibid.,* 24-25.
[311] Julia A. Walker, "Why Performance? Why Now? Textuality and the Rearticulation of Human Presence", *op.cit.,* 149.
[312]Battista Guarini, *Opere*, Torino: Utet, 1971, 778.
[313] Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Henry James, Balzac, Melodrama and the Mode of Excess*, Yale University Press, 1976.
[314] *Histoire de l'opéra italien*, Liège: Mardaga, 1995, 21.
[315] Italo Calvino, Extract from the Program of the Creation of *La Vera Storia*, Milano, Teatro alla Scala, 9 March 1982, 31 quoted in Marzio Pieri, « Opéra et littérature », *Histoire de l'opéra italien,* Liège: Mardaga, 1995, 275-350, 275.

constitute a sort of anti-history of the genre[316].

*

However, the term "melodrama" is rather ambiguous as it is both a generic term designating any form of syncresis between words and music[317], music and acting -sometimes assuming the shape of an accompanied declamation piece maybe more appropriately termed melologos[318]- and an excessively expressionist emotional rendering of pathos within a dramatic/operatic work[319]. The term "melodrama" can also be used as a substitute for "opera" and designate an eighteenth/nineteenth century theatrical tradition inspiring subsequent cinematographic melodramas.

The excentric show of passion may imply the most fantastic complications such as the irrupting volcano in which the dumb Fenella throws herself at the end of Auber's 1828 *Muette de Portici*[320]. Floods and fires require an important display of stage machinery and, very often the interruption of the (eu)catrastrophic *deus ex machina*.

From French melodramas to the Victorian melodrama on which Dickens more often than not relies, let us question this dubious ingredient in the novels, with its culture of feelings we have lost and have to recover to understand it.

3-a-From France to Victorian England: the invention of dubious melodrama.

In France, appeared a self-contained genre called "melodrama" in the wake of the revolution and of romanticism. A very often mentioned seminal example of this genre are Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Georg Benda's respective *Pygmalion*s, spoken monodramas interrupted by music during which Pygmalion successively and emphatically laments the loss of his artistic gift, the difficulty to give a more interesting shape to the veil Galatea is wearing without spoiling the whole artistic endeavour and the apparent impossibility of interacting with his beauteous stone

[316] *Histoire de l'opéra italien*, *op.cit*., 9.
[317] Jacqueline Waeber*, En musique dans le texte, le mélodrame de Rousseau à Schoenberg*, Paris: Van Dieren, 2005, 10.
[318] *Ibid.,*11. The melologos can be accompanied either by an orchestral or instrumental comment.
[319] Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess, op.cit*., "All is overstated", 41.
[320] The favourite opera of melodrama specialist Sarah Hibberd defining the genre in her book: *Melodramatic Voices: Understanding Music Drama*, Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2011.

statue. He finally utters the wish to be Galatea herself and then, realising that it would make it impossible for him to admire her externally and to love her, he desires her to be alive and he to be some other external person. His wish is finally fulfilled as Galatea replies to him and leaves the stage hand in hand with the sculptor.

The work is a sort of pantomime implying an emphasis laid on the gestures of Galatea and Pygmalion and the new display of excessive emotions. In fact, it illustrates a particular disaffection of the sung voice as a vehicle of meaningful expression best described by Sarah Hibberd in her book[321].

Never are music and text perceived simultaneously. Instead of the expected superposition, Rousseau designed a sort of new dialogue between the two as if he were frightened of the expressive powers of music[322]. At the same time, a duality seems to be at the core of the artistic endeavour. Pygmalion's thoughts as represented in the tragical monologue imply the projection of a double of the character communicating with his own deep self. As Jacqueline Waeber states in *En musique dans le texte, le mélodrame mimodramatique*[323], the main character is forced to resort to *prosopopeia*, which consists in staging the absent, the dead, the supernatural creatures or inanimate objects to have them projected, act, speak, answer (Medea staging Jason in Benda's *Medea*, Hérodiade and her nurse in Hindemith' s *Herodiade*).

Subsequently, in the Victorian era, before it came to result in silent movies, melodramas which would compose a theatrical/cinematic genre, were characterized by a Manichean tale featuring stock characters (hero, heroine, sidekick, aged parent, villain, faithful servant, an idiotic villain accomplice) and resorted to improbable coincidences. After the taste for artistic extremes had declined, many criticised the popular melodrama's crude structure[324] as Dickens did poking fun at the sudden binary alternations of comic and tragic material though resorting to it himself:

> It is the custom on the stage, in all good murderous melodramas, to present the tragic and the comic scenes, in as regular alternation, as the layers of red and white in a side of streaky bacon.[325]

However, Dickens, among others, also authored a kind of melodrama then called "a burletta". Indeed, the young Dickens got to know young composer John Hullah through his very musical older sister, Fanny; and they very soon collaborated together on such pieces.

---

[321] *Ibid..*, 219.
[322] A possibility envisaged by Jacqueline Waeber in her *En musique dans le texte, le mélodrame mimodramatique*, *op.cit*., 40.
[323] *Ibid*., 90.
[324] Martha Vicinus, "Helpless and Unfriended": Nineteenth Centry Domestic Melodrama", *New Literary History*, 13. 1 (Autumn, 1981): 127-143, 127.
[325] Quoted in Robert M. Maniquis, "Review of *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess* by Peter Brooks", *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, 32.4 (March 1978): 483-490, 486. Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, chapter XVII, Gutenberg Project website, n.d., https://www.gutenberg.org/files/730/730-h/730-h.htm, n.pag., accessed February 2017.

Is She His Wife? Or Something Singular (1837) was a comic burletta taking place in the countryside and implying an old bachelor and two couples whose members tried to inspire jealousy in his/her spouse by feigning to be interested in the other's lover. This burletta appeared not very long after Dickens's wedding. Another piece in the same musical vein appeared one year earlier, *The Village Coquettes* (1836), a historical romance which only knew limited success. In melodramas in general and in the Dickensian melodramas directly inspired by the author's novels, comedy, farce, parody could be combined.

Victorian melodrama, inasmuch as it sided with the powerless[326] and appealed to the restauration of a familial order, seemed to have been assigned a social role of containment. The family and family values seemed to provide some refuge from the world of industrialisation, growing capitalism and its culture[327] based on the alienation of personal and professional selves. The ideal home was built around old values of sacrifice, self-sacrifice, empathy and emotions reassuring people in front of the modernising society. Archetypal family stories revolving around the Oedipal complex began to be written and published.

One can witness the early influence of melodrama on Jane Austen. In 1817 *Northanger Abbey*, Catherine Morland obviously reads too much melodrama as she strove to become an heroine. According to Robert M. Maniquis in 1847 *Jane Eyre*, while dealing with Edward Rochester, Jane sometimes sounds melodramatic:

> He paused for an answer: and what was I to say? Oh, for some good spirit to suggest a judicious and satisfactory response! Vain aspiration! The west wind whispered in the ivy round me; but no gentle Ariel borrowed its breath as a medium of speech: the birds sang in the tree-tops; but their song, however sweet, was inarticulate.[328]

Authors like James or Balzac were also wavering between melodrama, a popular genre and high brow bourgeois culture[329] according to Peter Brooks.

3-b-Dickens refusing adaptations of his works into staged melodrama while integrating melodramatic ingredients into his novels.

If Dickens inevitably resorts to melodrama in his own works sometimes drawing on

[326] More often than not the orphan, the poor mother, the children.
[327] Many Victorian melodramas, siding with those in distress, have a domestic plot featuring progenies being misunderstood by their parents and having to prove their goodness by their actions.
[328] Cited in Robert M. Maniquis, "Review of *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess* by Peter Brooks", *op.cit.*, 486.
[329] *Ibid*., 483.

emotionalism and sensationalism[330] (*Oliver Twist*), in his own time, he used to complain that his work was frequently adapted into staged melodramas including *tableaux vivants* even before he had completely finished publishing them in instalments. Edward Stirling, W. T. Moncrieff, T. P. Taylor, and Charles Webb all capitalized on Dickens's gifts and particularly on his *Christmas Books*. Adaptations of *Oliver Twist* with its frequent alternations of satire, melodrama, journalistic passages depicting urban London's corruption, its implicit debunking of Manichean views of the world underlying the melodramatic genre[331]- were staged very early.

In fact, Dickens's works were mainly structured around the binary oppositions (humble/proud, poor/rich, moral/immoral, rebellion/conversion[332]) typical of the melodrama of the time as some characters were diametrically opposed (Nancy/Rose representing vice and virtue) and episodes of extreme violence and misery quickly succeeded to comic episodes thus giving a certain crude theatrical rhythm to the work. Sometimes, Oliver was seen as miserable sometimes he met with more benevolent characters (Rose, Mr Brownlow, and maybe Mr Sowerberry to a certain extent). For Peter Brooks:

> Melodramatic dilemmas and choices are constructed on the either/or in its extreme form as the all-or-nothing. Polarization is both horizontal and vertical: characters represent extremes, and they undergo extremes, passing from heights to depths, or the reverse, almost instantaneously. The middle ground and the middle condition are excluded. ... Good or bad, characters are notable for their integrity, their thorough exploitation of a way of being or of a critical conjuncture. They exist at a moment of crisis as exemplary destinies.... Polarization is not only a dramatic principle but the very means by which integral ethical conditions are identified and shaped, made clear and operative[333].

Pathos and the viewer's empathy could be exaggerated as the young boy went friendless, was beaten and wrongly accused.

The situation rather than the characters or their motivations[334] seemed to be at fault as the main protagonist's misery began in his cradle. Retribution and the triumph of virtue over vice is another characteristic featuring in the novel as Fagin is hanged, Nancy dies in the hands of Sikes and Oliver finally discovers himself to be related to Monks's father who, before having a liaison with Oliver's mother, had married a wealthy woman. The nasty Monks will finally be forced to

---

[330] Dickens was recently discovered to have penned a defense of sensationalism

[331] In some authors of Victorian melodrama such as George W. M. Reynolds, the powerful are invariably depicted as evil and the good have to show they are able to acquire a measure of power too. See Martha Vicinus, "Helpless and Unfriended": Nineteenth Century Domestic Melodrama", *op.cit.,* 132. Also see when when Fagin is sentenced to death in Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, *op.cit*., chapter 52.

[332] Wylie Sypher ("Aesthetic of Revolution: the Marxist Melodrama", *The Kenyon Review*, 10.3 (Summer 1948): 431-444, 431) pointed out the similarity between Dickens's binary structure and that found at the time in philosophy, history, social criticism, music and painting.

[333] See Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess*, *op.cit.*, 36.

[334]For a definition of melodrama along similar lines, see Michael Booth, *English Plays of the Nineteenth Century,* I, Oxford University Press, 1969, 24-25.

share with Oliver half his inheritance and Oliver will stay with his benefactor, Mr Brownlow. For Michael Booth:

> The tendency of much nineteenth-century fiction is to the same extremes of vice, virtue, sensationalism, and pathos that one finds in melodrama. . . . The main features of melodrama are familiar: the concentration on externals, the emphasis on situation at the expense of motivation and characterization, the stereotypes of hero, heroine, villain, comic man, comic woman, and good old man, physical sensation, spectacular effects . . . marked musical accompaniment, the rewarding of virtue and punishing of vice, the rapid alternation between extremes of violence, pathos, and low comedy.[335]

Oliver's predicament at the beginning of the story, from the archetypal baby farm to the adoptive family, from his subsequent removal from this family to the workhouse where he was born and from his pseudo rebellion for food at the workhouse to his resulting employment at an undertaker's readily offers itself to staged melodramatic treatment. It clearly found an echo in and played with the audience's prior knowledge of poverty and its dreadful social consequences in the Victorian society. As Philip V. Allingham mentioned:

> Like many of Dickens's early novels, melodramas were often both escapist and realistic: on the one hand, they presented a world in which virtue is ever triumphant in the final scene; on the other, they presented familiar London scenes, domestic themes, and current social problems in a manner that reflected the audience's fundamentally anti-landlord, anti-aristocratic, anti-landowner, and even anti-employer bias.[336]

3-c-Dickens, Sterne, and dubious melodrama.

Charles Dickens (1812-1870) who was inspired by the works of Smollett (1720-1771), Sterne (1713-1768) and Fielding (1707-1754) was well known as a sentimentalist writer. Imbibed with eighteenth century sentimentalist culture, he certainly helped fashion operatic sentimentality as it is expressed in such operas as Alban Berg's *Lulu* (1937) or Pietro Mascagni's *Iris* (1898) through the misfortunes undergone by the female heroines.

Dickens must have been acquainted with Sterne's famous death scene of Lieutenant Le Fever in book VI chapter 6-7-8 of *The Life and Opinion of Tristram Shandy Gentleman* known to have been derided by Oscar Wilde for reading as a typical vignette displaying excessive sentimentality. In fact, it is true that Toby's generosity towards young Billy is very touching. Indeed, but for him, young Le Fever would be forced to join in the ongoing battles and surely die in action as he is too heavily afflicted by the death of his father to be able to fight.

---

[335] *Idem.*.

[336] Philip V. Allingham, "Dramatic Adaptations of Dickens's Novels", *Victorian Web*, n.dat, http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/dickens/pva/pva228.html, accessed March 2017.

Some other melodramatic excesses could be felt when Trim, Toby and Le Fever appeal to their common feeling of belonging to soldiership though they never really knew of each other before. Of course, the final passage depicting the progressive intervention of death in Le Fever can be read both seriously if we feel sympathy for his son and comically as its voyeuristic use of the dashes mimicking the irruption of nothingness mainly sounds ridicule:

> —the film forsook his eyes for a moment,—he looked up wistfully in my uncle Toby's face,—then cast a look upon his boy,——and that ligament, fine as it was,—was never broken.———— Nature instantly ebb'd again,——the film returned to its place,———the pulse fluttered———stopp'd———went on——— throb'd———stopp'd again———moved———stopp'd———shall I go on?——No.[337]

The automatic derision of the cult of sentimentality[338] in the *Life and Opinion of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* and in *A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy* must have warned Dickens of the dangers of rendering emotional extremes. It is almost impossible to read the episode with the fille de chambre totally seriously in *A Sentimental Journey* as the work abunds with double entendres. In most cases, the strongest feelings and emotions are always represented next to extreme physical sensations thus devaluating sentimentality in the novel.

Yet, paradoxically enough, true sentimentality appears in the relationships between the reader and narrator as the author wishes to elicit sympathy by giving a faithful account of the emotions which move him.

Laurence Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* whose title was surely partly meant ironically also inspired a whole tradition of books with the same title. As remarked by John Mullan in "Sterne's comedy of sentiments"[339], it is the possibility of being taken seriously which Sterne the writer really enjoys.

3-d-A culture of feelings we have to feel again.

As Edgar Johnson has pointed out, we are now out of touch with the full range of emotions that literature makes possible, and must consciously recreate a sensibility attuned to the psychological truths of sentiment and melodrama. The history of operas, melodramas and novels share a common culture revolving around the historical development of our conceptions of what feeling, emotions, sentiment and reason are.

---

[337]Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinion of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, Münich: Günter Jügensmeier, 2005, 385.
[338]As noted by John Mullan in "Sterne's Comedy of Sentiments", *Bulletin de la société d'études anglo-américaines des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, 38, 1994, 233-241.
[339]John Mullan, "Sterne's Comedy of Sentiments", *op.cit*., 235.

First the organisation of psychological and intellectual phenomena began to be understood differently in the eighteenth century.

Feelings used to compose the basis for moral life. The cult of sensations at the center of our apprehension of the world found its roots in John Locke's seventeenth/eighteenth century philosophy as well as in the refinement of medevial spiritualization of sex into courtly love. "Sentiments" soon began to be synonymous with "moral principles" before being associated with "feelings"[340] in the late eighteenth century. A major issue in the eighteenth century was how to harmonise rationality with individual feeling at the base of morality. Intellect and emotions, feelings gradually suffered a sort of distanciation.

Sentiment in the eighteenth century onwards had the particularity of being distinctively gendered[341]. Females could assume a certain degree of authority if they followed moral principles but deprived of the masculine means of going outside and truly acting, their only power was to influence and thus control the male.

David Hume (1711-1776) conceptualized feelings in his various treatises. For him, reason was a particularly calm state of feeling. Soon reason was no longer perceived to rule on our whole system, as feelings and emotions came to share a joint domination in our choices. Thought was commonly perceived as being a mixture of emotions and conceptual thinking[342]. Passion was seen with suspicion as the Bible declared it sinful[343]. After Hume, Wordsworth (1770-1850) devised an ontology as he imagined a communication between the inside and the outside of the human being, between the cosmos and the inner emotions.

Sympathy which is more often than not reduced to pity used to have a deeper meaning in the long eighteenth century. Funding a school of ethics, sympathy was equated with fellow feeling and emotional communication. In Adam Smith, sympathy was to be accounted for by an instinct of self preservation and self love: by feeling for the other, one felt for oneself.

Though Victorian sensibility came to be intricately connected with maudlin excesses, one can notice attempts at saving a certain art of sentimentality as the example of Alfred de Musset 1857 "Après une lecture" testifies. This poetry is well known for its praise of simplicity, frankness and efficiency in literary works. It literally pits the talkative pedants against the simple author of popular melodrama.

Sympathy designated an operation of the imagination aiming at bridging the gap between

---

[340] Michael Bell, *Sentimentalism, Ethics and the Culture of Feeling*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000, 19.
[341] *Ibid*., 24-25.
[342] Michael Bell, *Sentimentalism, Ethics and the Culture of Feeling*, *op.cit*., 24-25.
[343] *Idem.*

oneself and another. This sympathetic act of imagination took all the more importance as it was inextricably linked with the rise of the novel from Lawrence Sterne to George Eliot[344] and even to Graham Swift who praises the act of imagination it takes to bridge the gap between himself and the others.

Being able to feel what one identifies as the feelings experienced by a radically different other person can appear as one of the most fascinating aspects of fiction writing. It also has an obvious utilitarian function: guaranteeing social cohesion.

Such a dynamics of sympathy can also be found in a specific parallel operatic tradition leading to the humanist 2016 *Fallujah* composed by Tobin Stokes and using various musical material to ellicit sympathy for ex-opera singer Christian Ellis and those afflicted with PTSD in the wake of the war in Iraq. Opera can nowadays be envisaged as therapy to heal veterans by exploring their stories and restoring a form of communication around the traumatic event.

*

Writing very early imposed itself as the vehicle for the expression of feeling though it also constituted one for imagination. More generally, as Michael Bell notices, we are still now constituted by the "affective turn"[345] as human feelings and the culture of sentiment have composed our collective unconscious.

We can notice a sort of evolution from a full endorsement of melodrama -in theatrical melodramatic adaptations of eighteenth/nineteenth century novels and in staged melodrama- to a gradual distanciation from it during the modernist period[346] and the postmodernist one. However, some, like Henry James in *The Turn of the Screw* -which he structured around the notion of perspective and diverging viewpoints- still continued to reveal how narratives inevitably draw on the affects of a narrating eye/I. If Joyce and Beckett seem to clearly propose anti-melodramas, postmodernist authors such as Paul Auster in *The Book of Illusion*, Graham Swift or Salman Rushdie in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* still write texts with a clear melodramatic ingredient.

Defying operatic conventions, Luciano Bério created an artform meant to evolve in a world marked by rapid transformations as far as information/communication technologies are concerned. Operatic works were an opportunity for analysing this evolving world; expressing his own fears

---

[344] George Eliot, "The Responsibility of Tolerance Lies with Those who Have the Wider Vision.", *The Mill on the Floss*, Oxford University Press, 1980, 188.
[345] Michael Bell, *Sentimentalism, Ethics and the Culture of Feeling*, *op.cit.*, 11.
[346] See T.S. Eliot attempting at dissociating from the emotions and the use of objective correlatives: T.S. Eliot, "Hamlet and his Problem", *The Sacred Wood*, www.bartleby.com, n.d., http://www.bartleby.com/200/sw9.html, accessed August 2016.

and his position as a human and artist[347]. They were no longer really melodramatic.

4-Operas, novels, from the wonderful/supernatural to the creation of local colour and reality effects.

Operas contain both the supernatural and local colour or verist reality effects. This seems to have inspired a representation history linking opera to literature.

4-a-Operas, novels, religious rituals. The relationships to God and divinities.

Music being intimately connected with religious and pagan rituals, operas, like baroque drama, have a natural tendency to be strongly marked by rites and ceremonies[348]. It appears that in all societies, rituals require the accompaniment of music as natural speech is not sufficient to support them.

The first operas which were intimately linked to baroque drama as well as subsequent operatic works in their wake revolved around conflicts between man and divinities, be they celestial entities or infernal demons in a Christian perspective[349]. Thus, Orlando is haunted by the image of Proserpina raped by Hades and whose mother has disturbed the seasons. From the very beginning of the opera, intensively observed by Zoroastro, the paladin's actions seem to be illustrating what fate the eternal hieroglyphs had designed for him. Similarly, Semele is confronted to the complexity of having a love affair with a God, Jove.

Carl Dahlhaus considers a double antagonistic motion at the heart of staged drama at the baroque period and afterwards. As supernatural events -to be contrasted to reality effects- implied the action of divinities purposefully coming down from the Olympus, a vertical movement characterizing the baroque inspiration soon contrasted with the horizontal unfolding of staged events[350]. With Richard Wagner, frontiers between horizontal and vertical dimensions soon became confused as both mythological divinities and men, sharing the same preoccupations, were

---

[347] See website of the French Centre de documentation de la musique contemporaine, n.d., www.cdmc.asso.fr, accessed March 2017.
[348] Ruth Bereson, "Opera Considered as State Ceremony", unpublished doctoral thesis, City University London, City University London open access, 1997, http://openaccess.city.ac.uk/8053/, accessed March 2017.
[349] Carl Dahlhaus, "The Dramaturgy of Italian Opera", *History of the Italian Opera, Opera in Theory and Practice, Image and Myth*, University of Chicago, 2003, 73-150, 76.
[350] *Ibid*., 110.

to be found on the same stage[351].

One could compare this to the supernatural invading English medieval romances and then to John Milton's inspiration in *Paradise Lost* (1667) and *Paradise Regained* (1671). For Samuel Johnson, Milton's genius resided in his power "of displaying the vast, illuminating the splendid, enforcing the awful, darkening the gloomy, and aggravating the dreadful."[352] In the eighteenth century, though the Enlightenment was hardly compatible with irrational displays of supernatural forces, many novels tried to go beyond the materialistic assumptions governing the mainstream new, modern way of thinking. If the eighteenth century novel mostly rejected miracles left unexplained by the intervention of natural physical laws, angelic or divine apparitions, fairy godmothers, it also staged desires for transcendence such as Clarissa's in Richardson's fiction[353]. Soon, the novel began to be haunted by debates about the new modern society (the topical issues of the time included inheritance laws or female power) and irrational emotions began to occupy center stage of the fiction[354].

The gothic, originally a literary genre created by Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, came to inspire the operatic world as well, first culminating in composer Samuel Arnold's 1781 *The Banditti or Love's Labyrinth*. This opera - the story of a nobleman transforming into an outlaw -, which first imposed itself as a major failure, was finally turned into a success when it was refined into the 1782 *Castle of Andalusia*. It included the major gothic ingredients - the old castle, the villain, the dark forest. Later, William Shield's *Mysteries of the Castle* imposed itself as an adaptation of Ann Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho* and teemed with horror scenes though it was mainly comical. The 1789 *Haunted Tower*, based on a book by James Cobb staged a scene in a tower and the spirit of a dead baron.

Music having an essential specific ability to evoke wonderful supernatural events alongside other spectacular events, operas long continued to evoke the struggle between man and supernatural forces. In fact, from a musical point of view, it is more difficult to evoke human conflicts[355]. Associated with the imperative to shed light on the characters' affections, the representation of supernatural events has been at the heart of operatic aesthetics from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries even if it suffered a certain number of ideological distortions[356]. In fact, either an operatic work focuses on affections, or on wonderful/supernatural

---

[351] *Idem*.
[352] Samuel Johnson, *Lives of the English Poets,* New York: Octagon, 1967 quoted in John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, London: Harmondsworth, 2000, XVI.
[353] See John Richetti, *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth Century Novel*, Cambridge Univesity Press, 2006, 3.
[354] E.J. Cléry, *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction, 1762-1800*, Cambridge University Press, 1995, 1.
[355] Carl Dahlhaus, "The Dramaturgy of Italian Opera", *op.cit*., 98.
[356] *Ibid*., 101.

events.

4-b-Towards verism and novelistic realism.

Except in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, except in some scenes from beyond the grave, the creation of supernatural events in operas goes hand in hand with the elaboration of a local colour[357]. Thus, created in 1822, *Der Freischütz*, has a supernatural content (see the devil's cave, the magic bullets, the suggested paranormal intimate relationships between the dove and Agatha) accompanying the recreation of a German identity marked by its direct relationships with the forest and hunting. At the end of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century, a musical sense of local colour appeared while supernatural events disappeared (see *Aida* and the Puccini operas).

At a time when cinema began to supplant opera, the young school ("Giovane scuola") of Italian operatic composers with Puccini at its head - and including Pietro Mascagni, Ruggero Leoncavallo, Umberto Giordano, Alberto Franchetti, Francesco Cilea - began to propose a realistic brand of operas. As Alan Mallach suggested in *The Autumn of Italian Opera, From Verismo to Modernism 1890-1915*[358], this new operatic tradition corresponded to a more general historical transition of society to a sort of positivist state, after what was felt as the scientific inaccuracy of theological and metaphysical approaches to life in community. Science was triumphing over theological fantasies and metaphysical speculation[359].

The development of verist operas and of the naturalist artistic inspiration was concomitant with the rise of sociology as a science revealing how human societies should be governed.[360] Now, there was no longer any moral order or fixed moral system, and life appeared at its crudest as governed by the survival of the fittest in a sort of universal struggle. According to Alan Mallach, one can contrast Verdi's fixed moral system as it is to be found in *La Traviatta* where Violetta has to undergo the consequences of her acts with Pietro Mascagni's absence of any moral ethics in Iris.

The girl, who is kidnapped by a man and a pimp, is characterized by her helplessness. Her

[357] *Ibid*., 102.
[358] Alan Mallach, *The Autumn of Italian Opera, From Verismo to Modernism 1890-1915,* Boston, Northeastern University Press, 2007, 12.
[359] *Ibid.,* 10.
[360] *Idem.*

blind father's rejection as he is certain she has abandoned him kills her. The old man's regrets at the end of the work seem equally pointless.

Similarly, Alan Mallach notices the lack of moral judgment in *Cavalleria Rusticana*. The new verist operas are more often than not built around situations than around fully-fledged plots. This allows the librettist and the composer to do away with complex characterization and to focus on the use of popular songs and dances, on the representation of regional customs.

The assimilation of romantic and then realistic music in opera could be compared with the novelistic integration of supernatural and realistic elements. Beside the emergence of the Gothic trend and the popularity of early fantastic (ghost) stories circulated in pulp magazines, one can mention the 1760s translations of Ossian by Macpherson which contributed to shape romantic images of tragic heroes in mountainous settings, fighting against stormy nights as well as gaelic identity.

One can recall Walter Scott's concern with the difference between romance and novel in "Essay on Romance"[361] which was somehow blurred and bypassed in borderline cases such as Lady Morgan's *The Wild Irish Girl*, *O'Donnel*, *The O'Briens and the O'Flaherty* or Charles Maturin's *The Wild Irish Boy* and *The Milesian Chief*[362]. Indeed, colourful incidents, wild adventure, a disregard for likelihood and a romantic fascination for the marvellous coexisted with the fabrication of an order of the world true to the life we know in theses narratives.

Then, literary realistic techniques of writing could include erasing any subjective point of view from the surface of the text, describing objects and real facts rather than feelings, using as many adjectives as necessary to give a direct access to the world depicted[363]. Theories deriving from a social Darwinism corrupting Darwin's thoughts underpinned many literary texts such as the opening pages of Theodor Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*. The author depicts the circularity of fate for individuals naturally predestined by their individual qualities and shortcomings to become poor or rich[364]. The characters's place in the world seems dictated by the survival of the fittest.

In operas, incidental music - coexisting with lyrical music - accompanying or illustrating staged actions seemed to participate in the realism of the artwork. Contributing to the insertion of reality fragments or of fictional parts of another type than those developed till then[365], incidental

---

[361] Walter Scott, "Essay on Romance", *Essays on Chivalry, Romance, and the Drama*, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1972, 226-269, 226.
(This is a contribution he offered to the fifth edition of *Encyclopedia Britannica*).
[362] J.Th. Leerse, "Fiction Poetics and Cultural Stereotype: Local Colour in Scott, Morgan, and Maturin", *The Modern Language Review*, 86.2 (April 1991): 273, 284.
[363] (See the first pages of Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* cited below focusing on the materialism of the young woman)
[364] Theodor Dreiser, *Sister Carrie*, New York: Barnes and Noble, 2005, 40.
[365] Carl Dahlhaus, "The Dramaturgy of Italian Opera", *op.cit*., 133.

music testifies to the generic instability of operatic works. It also has a structural role as it is unable to represent the characters' inner conflicts and inner world and has to represent the exterior. As Carl Dahlhaus underlines it, in *Tristan and Iseult*, fanfares with horns representing the world of tumultuous hunting associated with King Mark[366] foreshadow the pastoral love scenes which are provoked by Iseult.

Traditionally, a number of *topoi* have been established over the centuries. Onstage trumpets may announce kings and queens as well as wars. Drum rolls may announce a funeral procession, horns a hunt, trombones are associated with the afterlife, harps and lutes with epic or lyrical singing. For Carl Dahlhaus though, these *topoi* appear as if they were quotations from the symbolic theatrical tradition mentioned above (horns for hunting, trumpets for the arrivals of the King, …) inserted in the operatic text rather than from exterior reality[367]. Indeed, there are diverse sorts of quotes with varying proximity with the real and the unreal. The trumpets evoking the arrival of monarchs and belonging to the real-life feudal tradition appear on the opera stage at the same esthetic level as the mythological trombones imaginatively symbolising hell. There are also dances and marches transferred directly onto the operatic stage[368].

In literature, reality effects can especially be found in post second world war fictions revolving around trauma - fictions by such authors as Graham Swift, Pat Barker or Anne Enright. As Jean-Michel Ganteau suggests[369], many postwar fictions aim at creating an "efficient" traumatic realism, one which is no longer concerned with merely representing trauma but which chooses to reveal the unsayable gaps generated by trauma instead.

5-Inner generic instability in operas and novels created by the integration of popular forms and imagination.

As Carl Dahlhaus suggests, in the operas which are not "classical operas" but for instance baroque, realistic, romantic artworks, songs and lieders - forms that are more popular - may be integrated even though they are stylistically very different[370]. Thus in baroque operas, comical pieces have been inserted in dramma per musica. Shepherds and shepherdesses may sing as they do in Handel's *Acis and Galatea*. In romantic operas, when songs are heard they generally express considerations coming from daily life (see the hunters' chorus in Rossini's *William Tell*) as

[366] *Ibid*., 134.
[367] *Ibid.,* 135.
[368] *Idem.*
[369] Jean-Michel Ganteau, « Horizons de l'inassimilable : du réalisme traumatique dans le roman britannique contemporain. », *Etudes Britanniques Contemporaines*, 40, 2011, 105-120.
[370] Carl Dahlhaus, "The Dramaturgy of Italian Opera", *op.cit*., 103.

opposed to what directly refers to a supernatural universe[371].

The variety of the designations meant to refer to operatic subgenres testify to the variety of popular forms - dances, lieders interrupting dialogues in Singspiels, ensembles, leitmotivs meant to link past, present and future - having nothing in common either from a musical or a dramatic point of view. Oratorios, operas, Singspiels, antioperas, serenades, azione, musical theatre, all these terms also refer to a special combination of dances, processions, rituals especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and in azione sepolchrale. Theatricality (what happens on stage) and dramaticity understood as the relationships between drama and music are of equal importance in operatic artworks[372].

From the English ballad opera tradition to the Brechtian works, an important effort to make operas accessible and valuable as an artistic means of communication relevant in their contemporary world can be noted. Singers are also sometimes made to sing in their natural voice.

Novels can comparably oscillate between a high brow culture and a more popular vein. Thus, many novelists play with the conventions of detective stories even if their serious works only use the genre rather than take it for a model. According to Stefano Tani:

> Serious novelists do not even try to improve upon detective fiction, but rather use the form as a scrapyard. . . . The detective novel cliches are like pieces of an old car that cannot run any more but, if sold as parts, can still be worth something.[373]

For Stefano Tani as well as for others in his wake, serious contemporary novels impose themselves as anti-detective fiction creating three subclasses: that of the Innovative, which do not exactly subvert the rules; the Deconstructive, which entirely subvert them and the Metafictional, which is "only in a very general way anti-detective"[374]. Among anti-detective writers, one may mention Thomas Pynchon, Vladimir Nabokov and Paul Auster as his *New York* trilogy seems built around the Derridean principles of deconstruction to deconstruct the detective story[375] though the author himself often denies the influence.

Among the more popular genres involved in serious experiments on the novel, one can mention journalism and staged comedy as Dickens, who wrote in instalments to please the general readership, seems to have been influenced by actor and theatre director Charles Matthews who taught him about the comic voice. Dickens himself, like Jonathan Swift retained a close link with popular literature.

---

[371] *Idem.*
[372] *Ibid*., 108-109.
[373] Stefano Tani*, The Doomed Detective: The Contribution of the Detective Novel to Postmodern American and Italian Fiction*, Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984, 34.
[374] *Ibid*., 43.
[375] Alison Russel, “Deconstructing the New York Trilogy: Paul Auster’s Anti-Detective Fiction”, *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, 31.2 (Winter 1990): 71-84, 71.

Many serious experimentalist writers also use the romance.

Chapter 2-Brechtian operatic evolutions of plays and literature in English: towards modelling deconstruction.

"I'm not regularly musical, but I always think of my books as music before I write them"[376] said Virginia Woolf in her letters. Shortly before and after Brecht, Wagnerian leitmotives with fixed meaning - inspiring the various prolepses giving rhythm to novels and introducing characters, situations or themes - tended to favour a kind of associative discourse (D.H. Lawrence, Woolf, Joyce). However, conventional uses of plots still coexisted[377].

Leitmotives become part of the alternative means[378] of ordering a fiction aesthetically now that its conventional shape has been questioned and destroyed. Once he read Marcel Proust, E.M. Forster remarked: "The book is chaotic, ill-constructed, it has and will have no extemal shape; and yet it hangs together because it is stitched internally, because it contains rhythms." He particularly notices the little phrase in Vinteuil's music which recurs in *La Recherche*[379].

The kind of rejection of teleological structure and adoption of a psychoanalytic regression characterizing *The Ring* can be found in Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*. Circularity becomes a hallmark as well as the abandon of newness - the fictional material are always the same, subjected as they are to constant re-discovery. A sense of Wagnerian fusion and synthesis around the sea motif and its moral implications may have occurred in the wake of surrealism. As André Breton stated:

> Tout porte à croire qu'il existe un certain point de l'esprit d'où la vie et la mort, le réel et l'imaginaire, le passé et le futur, le communicable et l'incommunicable, le haut et le bas cessent d'être perçus contradictoirement.[380]

In *Lord Jim* as in operas in Adorno's perspective, nothing new ever happens, only old material are constantly rediscovered or re-explored[381]. Thanks to their emphatic quality and their certain intensity, Wagnerian operas are characterized by a fusion and synthesis which could never occur in old operas where uncertainty was somehow compensated by a degree of imitative

---

[376] Virginia Woolf, *The Letters of Virginia Woolf, 1936-1941*, Boston: Mariner Books, 1982, 426.
[377] Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et dramaturgie: esthétique de la représentation au XXe siècle*, *op.cit.*
[378] David Lodge, *The Modes of Modern Writing. Metaphor, Metonymy, and the Typology of Modern Literature*, Chicago: Arnold, 1977, 46 lists among the other alternative means: "allusion to or imitation of literary models or mythical archetypes, and the repetition-with-variation of motifs, images, symbols".
[379] Burkhard Niederhoff, "E. M. Forster and the Supersession of Plot by Leitmotif: A Reading of *Aspects of the Novel* and *Howards End.*", *Anglia* 112.3-4 (1994): 341-363, 341.
[380] André Breton, *Second Manifeste du Surréalisme*, 1930, n.d., https://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/Page:La_Révolution_surréaliste,_n12,_1929.djvu/7, accessed February 2017.
[381] Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et dramaturgie: esthétique de la représentation au XXe siècle*, *op.cit.,* 141.

harmony[382].

Brechtian techniques of staging, historicising, his V-effect, A-effect among other specific techniques illustrated in *The Flight Across the Ocean* (1927), *The Threepenny Opera* (1928), *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (1930), *Der Jasager and der Neinsager* (1930), the agitprop Lehrstück *The Decision*, the half opera *The Good Person of Szechwan*, and *Lucullus* obviously influenced a few playwrights in the United States[383] and many in the United Kingdom (Keith Johnstone, Ann Jellicoe, Arnold Wesker, John Arden, Sarah Kane, Edward Bond, Howard Brenton, Caryl Churchill, John Godber and possibly Samuel Beckett…)[384]. In addition, these theatrical techniques may have substantially influenced the conception of novels such as Graham Swift's *Last Orders* or his other polyphonic, theatrical works[385].

One may also find parallels with some Nigerian writers's works (Wole Soyinka, Femi Osofisan). Thus, when studying the relationships between Wole Soyinka's work and African story-telling, one must consider parallels with Brecht's innovations concerning staging and acting in operas[386].

Social activism, the fall of the fourth wall and the evolutions of empathy all had an obvious incidence on novel writing. One should try to recapitulate some of the major features of Brechtian operas (that are often features of Brechtian plays too) that possibly influenced subsequent literature in English. It is all the more important to study the impact of Brechtian operatic thoughts as operas are thought to have modelled the German thinker's theoretical writings as well as his plays. First it is necessary to point out that the operatic in Brecht not only includes actually finished operas to which he collaborated but also unfinished operas, the operatic pattern having always interested Brecht as his continuous preoccupation and engagement with the potentialities of the Wagnerian artwork[387] testify.

1-Music as a starting point and, paradoxically, a structuring force.

---

[382] *Idem*.

[383] Even though, owing to the conservativeness of Broadway and Brecht's Marxist allegiances, he was rather frustrated by his experience in the United States. He noted the impossibility of doing away with the fourth wall and of creating an art designed to make people think and interact with their world.

[384] Janelle G.Reinelt, *After Brecht British Epic Theatre*, University of Michigan Press, 1996, 13.

[385] One may think about the character's way of directly addressing the reader. Although he says that he picked up his method of grasping the reader's attention from Babel, one may see the Brechtian influence as well, in particular through the intense activity of self questioning in which the characters indulge.

[386] Sandra L. Richards, "Wasn't Brecht an African Writer ?: Parallels with Contemporary Nigerian Drama", John Fuegi and al (ed.), *Brecht in Asia and Africa*, University of Hong Kong, 1989, 168-185.

[387] See Joy H. Calico, *Brecht at the Opera,* Berkeley, London, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008, 1-2.

Brechtian Lehrstücks are often identified as school operas designed for amateur performances. These Lehrstücks have to be opposed to real operas by Brecht (*The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* and *The Threepenny Opera*) but both Lehrstücks and operas are at the roots of Brechtian performance practice Joy H. Calico argues all through her book[388]. One could draw a parallel between this opposition and the two types of works one finds in novelist Graham Swift's production (one focusing on the dramatic rendering of various characters' thoughts, the "conversational" kind which could be assimilated to Lehrstücks, and one focusing on a single character's emotional rendering of the intricacies of life which could be assimilated more easily to the operatic form[389]).

For stage director Vsevolod Meyerhold (1874-1940) who takes music as a starting point for staging and who inspired Brecht, the opera stage director must have a part in writing the music, and works directly in collaboration with the composer. In fact, the stage director extracts the music from the text so that there are scores for his mise en scène.

With Meyerhold[390], the stage no longer has a decorative function but is only perceived as a place where to perform operas. The stage only includes stairs and a multilayered building erected on the stage…

Like Japanese actors, Meyerhold's actors have to know how to move according to the music (to express ecstasy/rapture...). It is only once the music has been played that the stage director and his assistants begin to take notes to organise the staging and compose scores for it. For Meyerhold, a mise en scène is "a spectacle constantly moving forward" and time during a spectacle is dynamic[391]. Counterpoint and fugue constitute a model as diverse melodies intervene and develop either in opposition or in accordance to one another[392].

Meyerhold knows how to use the structuring power, the abstraction, and the emotional, lyrical, critical impact of music[393]: « La généralité, l'abstraction de la musique rendent l'émotion également générale et abstraite, la vident de son contenu concret, et l'amènent à se dévorer elle-même. »

---

[388] *Idem.*

[389] It is maybe understandable therefore that more often than not in the novelist's theatrical works rendering various characters's thoughts there are references to popular music (see *Last Orders* abunding in references to The Beatles and other radio successes) and in a novel focusing on a single character's thoughts (*Ever After*), the musical references tend to be operatic (the whole novel seems to be modelled on a sort of novelistic rendering of *Cosi fan Tutte*).

[390] *Tristan und Isolde*, *Orphée*, *Elektra*, *L'invité de Pierre*, *Le Rossignol, La Dame de Pique.*

[391] Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et dramaturgie : esthétique de la représentation au XXe siècle, op.cit*., 55.

[392] See the model of the musical variation too (each part -intonation, situation, music, jeu de scène, nuances, cues...- is presented, developed as a dramaturgic theme and is transformed, distorted. A visual and sound universe is built around it which conditions the spectator's perception...) but also that of the sonata model (the relationships between the various themes are built on the model of the conflict, create tensions...each theme is constantly opposed to other visual, rythmic or intonation elements). (Adapted from *Ibid*., 57)

[393] *Ibid*., 48.

Novelists such as Graham Swift, Kazuo Ishiguro or David Malouf could be said to work as the Meyerhold type of stage directors in their own works and to resort to music to shape their novels. Just like Graham Swift, David Malouf, acting as both a poet-librettist and a novelist, loves reading his works aloud "so the audience can catch the music of the words and phrases"[394]. Thereby, he seems to do away with the usually impassable physical barrier between reader and author, the way Brecht could do away with the fourth wall in his operatic works and his theatre.

Yvonne Smith goes on saying that (like Graham Swift again) Malouf "uses the dynamic, lyrical (song-like; musical) qualities of language to highlight the many shades of meaning in words"[395]. For Stephen Benson in his article entitled "David Malouf's *Moments Musicaux*", "Music [in David Malouf's Schubertian poem "An die Music"] is both natural space and natural language: ''wordless'', it creates ''a space we might re-enter / in innocence''[396].

Music in Graham Swift's "conversational" novels or in *Tomorrow* can emanate from the intervention of a pivotal character turning on the radio (Ray in *Last Orders*, Paula in *Tomorrow* listening to Otis Redding's song) and acting as a stage director mis en abîme, one possible form of the authorial figure. Music in his more traditionally shaped novels, giving access to a single character's point of view becomes more synonymous with giving rhythm to sentences and whole paragraphs, rendering the construction of the work meaningful for the reader.

2-From the heroic to the epic and private scenes. From the master narrative to operatic deconstruction and ostranenie. The "envoiced landscape"[397].

> L'art critique est celui qui ouvre une crise ; qui déchire, qui craquelle le nappé, fissure la croûte des langages, délie et dilue l'empoissement de la logosphère ; c'est un art épique qui discontinue les tissus de paroles, éloigne la représentation sans l'annuler.[398]

Brecht opposed Wagner inasmuchas he wanted to take distances with a hypnotic art where the spectactor is caught up in strong emotions he cannot escape and in which he loses himself without being able to actively react to what he has seen.

Brecht decided to substitute a simpler art to the irrationality of such a plight, to what he perceived as the unmotivated tyranny of well-prepared pure timbres and vocal power, leaving the

---

[394]Yvonne Smith, *David Malouf's Ransom*, Insight Publications website, 2010, 2, https://insightpublications.com.au, accessed August 2016.
[395]*Idem*.
[396] Stephen Benson, "David Malouf's *Moments Musicaux*", *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, 38.1 (2003): 5-21, 6.
[397] Kimberley Rose Fairbrother Canton, *The Operatic Imperative in Anglo-American Literary Modernism: Pound, Stein, and Woolf*, PhD Thesis, Department of English of the University of Toronto website, 2009, III, https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/32007/1/FairbrotherCanton_Kimberly_R_200911_PhD_Thesis.pdf, accessed August 2016.
[398]Roland Barthes, *Brecht et le discours : contribution à l'étude de la discursivité in œuvres complètes,* III, Paris: Seuil, 1995, 261.

audience powerless.

As an alternative to the total artwork where musical meaning dissolves to leave room for the suffocating expression of an irrational destiny[399], Brecht proposes a vision inspired by Mozart's *Don Giovanni*[400]. The structure of this opera substantially relies on the historicization of the customs (powerful males doing whatever they want with the women in their surroundings) and the complicity with the audience which is built from the very beginning of the opera and appears through the very idiosyncratic Leporello somehow working as an intermediary on stage between Don Giovanni, what he does to the others and the audience. His necessarily partial neutrality, his tendency to imitate his master ("Madamina e catalogo e questo"), his informed bias against Don Giovanni somehow echo the spectator's conscience; his comments, his complaints about the role his master makes him play invite the spectator further in the world on stage while somehow alienating Don Giovanni, creating a distance with this character who becomes an object of contemplation with whom we cannot really empathize. We are sometimes led to observe and judge his actions more than his character.

From the beginning, Leporello[401] seems to have the function of introducing us to the struggle between good and evil on stage. Moreover, simple peasants are present (Zerlina and Masetto's world) to show the potentially devastating effect of aristocratic brutal power on the common man, identified with common goodness which had to be rewarded.

One could also say that playing sentinel with sarcastic Leporello prevents us from immediately identifying with Donna Anna and we could feel the impact of a sort of distanciation effect avant la letter. What is more Brecht sees music as "an acoustic exercise of feelings" (*Théorie de la musique*)[402], which it is in *Don Giovanni*.

The epic technique of acting which Brecht opposes and prefers to the dramatic one allows him to substitute distance to the viewer's empathy. This technique was maybe partly inherited from Chaplin, and also from Brecht's own perception of "the street scene", the natural re-enactment of an accident by a witness for another person[403].

One could draw parallels between Brecht's conception of the street scene and of course Langston Hughes and Kurt Weill's *Street Scene* where one is led to think about the events and their social implications rather than about the characters.

---

[399] Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et dramaturgie : esthétique de la représentation au XXe siècle, op.cit*., 97.
[400] *Idem.*
[401] This character seems to have a similar pivotal role to Ray in Graham Swift's *Last Orders*, as he somehow organizes the events.
[402] Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et dramaturgie : esthétique de la représentation au XXe siècle, op.cit*., 97.
[403] Bertolt Brecht, *The Street Scene, A Basic Model for an Epic Theater*, translated by John Willet, Semantic Scholar website, n.d., https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/bf8a/64691ff221c577bf660b3605c9feec1b5b3a.pdf, accessed August 2017.

In Brecht's works, gests socially mediate the character's experience so that events on stage cannot be viewed as real:

> The actor doesn't have to be the man he portrays. He has to describe his character just as it would be described in a book. If Chaplin were to play Napoleon he wouldn't even look like him; he would show objectively and critically how Napoleon would behave in the various situations the author might put him in.[404]

The inability to truly indulge in the suspension of disbelief forces the audience to criticize the form of what they have just seen. In the end, their perception of the everyday real is defamiliarized too by the use of poetic speech as a means of "deautomization" of perception[405]. Unable to experience the real as they did before, their sensibilities are jarred and they want to interact with their environment and change the society they live in.

Though didactic, because Brecht's work disapproved of any kind of polarization, he was a deconstructionist skeptical "towards the great narrative, the great danger, the great hero, the great wrong, the great goal"[406]. He believed that humans produced contradictions when confronted with the real and that somehow they had to resolve them.

Brecht's creation of the defamiliarized real certainly owed to Vakhtangov's fantastic realism - reconciling Stanislasvki's and Meyerhold's views of the real. Vakhtangov thought that in the new cinematographic age, a naturalist theatre (maybe Stanislavski's was too naturalistic) should not have its place.

According to Oleg Mirochnikov, for Vaktangov:

> Theater must not simply photograph or recreate reality but deepen our perception and understanding of it. This can only be achieved by revealing truth through lies and the probability in the improbable. In other words the theatre should freely turn the reality inside out in order to reveal it in all its complexity[407].

After Brecht's attempts at intervening at the level of mass culture through his revolution of operas and returning to a literary tradition anchored in Russian literature (Shklovsky uses the example of Tolstoy's "Kholstomer, the story of a horse" defamiliarized as narrated by a horse, but one may also think of the first section of *The Sound and the Fury* told by a mentally deranged narrator), many authors came to resort to ostranenies, to the creation of literary estrangement. They thus enriched the "envoiced landscape" Kimberley Rose Fairbrother Canton deals with in her PhD. An "anti-patriarchal, enabling alternative to teleologically driven narrative that defeats

---

[404] Bertolt Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre*, trans. John Willett, London: Methuen, 1964, 47-51, 68 cited in Jennifer Michaels, "Chaplin and Brecht: *The Gold Rush* and *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*", *Literature/ Film Quarterly*, 1980, vol. 8, 170-179, 46.

[405] See Vera Stegmann, "An Opera for Three Pennies, a Violin for Ten Francs: Brecht's and Stravinsky's Approaches to Epic Music Theater", James K. Lyon, Hans-Peter Breuer (eds.), *Brecht Unbound*, University of Delaware Press, 1995, 119-134, 129.

[406] Elizabeth Wright, *Post-Modern Brecht, A Re-Presentation*, London: Routledge, 2016, 2.

[407] Oleg Mirochnikov, *The Vakhtangov Technique*, University of the Arts London, Teaching and Professional Fellowship 2006-2007, UAL Research online website, 2006-7, http://ualresearchonline.arts.ac.uk/510/1/The_Vakhtangov_Technique.pdf, accessed March 2017, 3.

authorial control by way of play" was generated[408].

Vaktangov's and Brecht's legacy found its way through late modernist and postmodernist surfiction[409]. For instance, in Graham Swift's *The Sweet Shop Owner*, Willy Chapman constantly insists on playing the role of the sweet shop owner and not being the "true thing". In the first chapter, the reader is presented with Chapman's usual morning transformation. "A toy in a box", he routinely plays to become the sweet shop owner, which echoes with the description of the Vaktanghovian actor-singer who must play at becoming his character and never strive at really embodying him. It is important that traces of the actor-singer's critical perspective on his role sift through.

If other Swiftian characters seem built around this notion of artificiality, D.H. Lawrence's *Women in Love* already focused on the ambiguity of real-life theatricality through the character of Hermione Roddice/Lady Ottoline Morrell. Moreover, more generally, the interaction between real-life acquaintances of Lawrence's of whom the characters are inspired and the literary characters seem to have been inspired by a blurring of the everyday, the theatrical real and the literary real inherited from Vaktanghov.

Brecht's fascination for Chaplin playing the underdog in the 1920s finds a sort of echo in his rejection of the hero implying, as Laurent Feneyrou remarks, denying that one is terrified by a History which would be decided by others. In the wake of this Brechtian trend, the erosion of the heroic figure, the treatment of the anti-hero in novels will follow.

In 1956, the year of Brecht's death and of John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, when the Berliner Ensemble visited London, Brecht "would introduce a spate of new, outspoken, ungentlemanly authors, who had never been to Oxford or Cambridge and would call for actors of a kind then alien to the West End stage"[410]. W.H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood also began to be influenced by Brecht.

The novelistic anti-hero may be exemplified by Vic Wilcox in David Lodge' s *Nice Work*, merely illustrating at the incipit of the novel the epigraphic quote from Shirley ("[…]something as

---

[408]Kimberley Rose Fairbrother Canton, *The Operatic Imperative in Anglo-American Literary Modernism: Pound, Stein, and Woolf*, *op.cit*., III.

[409] Raymond Federman, *Surfiction*, University of Michigan: Swallow Press, 1975.
Surfiction is defined as "that kind of fiction that tries to explore the possibilities of fiction; the kind of fiction that challenges the tradition that governs it; the kind of fiction that constantly renews our faith in man's imagination and not in man's distorted vision of reality_that reveals man's irrationality rather than man's rationality" 7,
Richard Pearce adds p.48 of the same book: "The narrator is no longer situated between the subject and the reader, he no longer stands on a fixed vantage, and he no longer encloses the subject within the frame of his visual imagination…what the reader sees is no longer a clear picture contained within the narrator's purview, but an erratic image where the narrator, the subject, and the medium are brought into the same imaginative field of interaction, an image that is shattered, confused, self-contradictory but with an independent, an individual life of its own." Graham Swift's fiction truly exemplifies surfiction.

[410] *Reinterpreting Brecht: his Influence on Contemporary Drama and Film*, ed. Pia Kleber and Colin Visser, Cambridge University Press, 1990, 4.

unromantic as Monday morning, when all who have work wake with the consciousness that they must rise and betake themselves thereto."[411]). In *Nice Work*, a historicized criticism of the Thatcherian era combines with a critical rewriting of the Victorian novel. The characters come to represent the condition of England.

Man as an unheroic individual regardless of his professional occupation also appears in Graham Swift's *Ever After* or in Saul Bellow's *Herzog* where University professors are depicted in their unflattering common everyday dimension. From the 1960s in the United States, novels such as Joseph Heller's *Catch 22* describing the anti-heroism of Yossarian in the name of survival during the second world war (he pretends madness) or as Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* describing the attempts of rapist Randle Patrick McMurphy at rebelling against the mental hospital he is sent to for his crime also introduced and popularized anti-heroes.

What one can find most Brechtian is that the rise of the anti-capitalist anti-hero in the rebellious postmodern period went hand in hand "with the desire to challenge and revaluate aspects of society"[412]. For Louis D. Rubin Jr, the ideal and the reality of life had to be juxtaposed to produce incongruity.[413]

In the Thatcher years, Brechtian operas could be perceived as "a direct riposte to the each-man-for-himself, weakest-goes-to-the-wall ethic" [414] . Simultaneously, according to Karen Laughlin[415] Brecht's art contributed to give shape to the feminist theatre in America. Only a Brechtian method, a Brechtian conception of the relationships between actor and audience could allow the feminist playwright to cast light on the experience and oppression of women, on their various attempts at emancipating themselves.

In British theater[416], this may be seen in the famous dinner party in British socialist and feminist playwright Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls* where the women exchange about the birth and

---

[411]Charlotte Brontë, *Shirley*, Oxford World Classics, 2007, 5.

[412] David Simmons, *The Anti-Hero in the American Novel. From Joseph Heller to Kurt Vonnegut*, New York, Houndsmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, X.

[413] Louis D. Rubin Jr, "The Great American Joke" cited in *Ibid.,* 4.

[414] Bertolt Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre*, trans. John Willett, London: Methuen, 1964, 82.

[415] Karen Laughlin, "Brechtian Theory and American Feminist Theatre*"*, *Brecht Sourcebook*, 1990, 147-160, 147.

[416] See Elin Diamond, "Brechtian Theory/Feminist theory: toward a Gestic Feminist Criticism", *Unmaking Mimesis: Essays on Feminism and Theater*, London: Routledge Psychology Press, 1997, 69-81.
She discusses epic narrative, historicization, alienation, the gestus, the not but as ideal strategies for the feminist representation of gender which aims at the subversion of traditional mimetic realistic representation. Among British playwrights inspired by Brecht one may list Pam Gems, Sarah Daniels, Timberlake Wertenbaker, among the Americans, the Split Britches Lois Weaver and Peggy Shaw, the Spiderwomen Karen Finley and Rachael Rosenthal.
Also: -British (Cypriot descent) author Nina Rapi, a feminist playwright who wrote an article entitled "Hide and Seek: the Search for a Lesbian Theater Aesthetic", *New Theatre Quarterly*, 9.34 (May 1993): 147-158.
She is attracted to the Brechtian experiments of two other feminist theater practictioners: Monique Wittig and Zande Zeig, the creator of the synecdochic representation of gender beyond the masculine/feminine bipolarity through a complex system of gestures.

-Elisabeth Sakellaridou, "Feminist Theater and the Brechtian Tradition; A Retrospect and a Prospect", *The Brecht Yearbook*, vol. 27, 2002, 179-199.

loss of babies. Far from being introduced into a realistic, naturalistic universe, the spectator is confronted to women coming from the antiquity and presented as Pope John, Lady Nijo, Griselda…This brand of historicized feminist drama was based on the experiences, oppression and attempts at emancipation of women.

Like Brecht these authors sought a style of acting designed to reveal the working as well as the machinery of society which surround the modern playgoer in his daily life, so that the latter will notice…and criticize and change them. Like Brecht, these authors want to change Aristotle's scheme by substituting desire for knowledge and desire to help to pity and fear.

They also assume that form has to vary according to changing human needs and societal evolutions. Thus, lesbian feminists often find that the not/but technique of acting inherited from Brecht (implying that the actor or singer first anticipates the dialectically opposed emotion to that he is meant to play) very useful to stage gender distinctions and subjectivity. Indeed, the three women composing the Split Britches, the Spiderwoman theater, exemplifying as they do different races and sexual orientations - some being of native American origins, some being lesbians - try to defy expectations as far as gender identification is concerned. Through their use of Brechtian gests, they imply a possibility of going beyond mere bipolarity.

3-Opera as a model for integrating new technologies in mises en scène. Towards a simpler, more modern mode of approaching the spectator/reader.

One of the similarities of Brecht's operas with subsequent Beckett works resides in the use of new technologies[417]. From the beginning of *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (1930), Brecht uses the principle of radio interference and of sound reproduction (see the use of the loudspeakers). He also creates a sort of multimedia operatic form, in which the action is displayed on a variety of screens (posters, films, backdrops, signs, placards and banners) which forces the spectator to read while passively listening to the opera.

At the very beginning of the opera, the wanted portraits of Leokadia, Fatty and Trinity are projected, in act 1 scene 9, as people at the tavern are listening to recorded music, the hurricane over Florida is announced by loudspeakers and a film with images of typhoons is projected. In act 2 scene 15, another film showing sea landscapes appears behind the ship Jimmy built and on which he, together with Jenny and Billy, have climbed. In act 3 scene 17, the phone and newspapers prevent the spectator from being a too passive listener.

---

[417] Sue Ellen Case, "Time and Time Again: Playing Brecht and Beckett's Real Time in the Digital Age.", *The Brecht Yearbook*, vol. 27, 2002, 163-179, 163.

For Sue Ellen Case, both Brecht and Beckett separate voice from body thus "complicating the physiology of the performative"[418]. The principle of radio interference used in Faulkner's *Sound and the Fury* (1929) and reflecting the growing use of the wireless in homes will then appear in novels (see Gaddis's *Carpenter's Gothic*).

4-Operatic and novelistic formal dissolutions and decontructions. Identity dissolutions and deconstructions.

> Herr Bertolt Brecht maintains man equals man
> -A view that has been around since time began.
> But then Herr Brecht points out how far we can
> Manoeuvre and manipulate man.
> Tonight you are going to see a man reassembled like a car
> Leaving all his individual components just as they are.
> He has some kind friends by whom he is pressed
> Entirely in his own interest
> To conform with this world and its twists and turns
> And give up pursuing his own fishy concerns.
> ….
> Herr Bertolt Brecht hopes you'll feel the ground on which you stand slither between your toes like shifting sand
> So that the case of Galy Gay the porter makes you aware
> Life on this earth is a hazardous affair.[419]

Brecht somehow put an end to opera as an easy objet de jouissance conceived of as an autonomous whole. Kurt Weill's actors no longer sang in their operatic voices but used their natural voices. So as to give speech its highest intensity[420], the work came to be characterized by natural transitions between music and speech. This somehow renewed with the Greek classical ideal of the perfect half sung half spoken artwork. With Brecht, the various components of the intermedial operatic artwork regained their autonomy and no longer blended in a comforting and fluid Wagnerian unity.

It would be possible to equate the smooth vocal transitions between speech and music in Brechtian artworks with the contemporary literary modernist game on passages alternating direct, indirect or free indirect speech with a social intent too[421]. Indeed, a similar self-destruction of the artwork occurs.

We can find the premises of a Brechtian operatic revolution in Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936) for instance. In the incipit, it is the complexifying focalization, and then the subsequent de-constructing, demultiplying of the novelistic voice, composing in the reader the

---

[418] *Idem.*
[419] Bertolt Brecht, *Man Equals Man,* University of Yale online editions website, n. d., http://yaleunion.org/secret/brecht_Manisman.pdf, interlude pronounced by Leokadia, 38, accessed December 2016.
[420] Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et dramaturgie : esthétique de la représentation au XXe siècle*, *op.cit*., 103.
[421] Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*, Gutenberg Project website, n.d., http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks02/0200991.txt, accessed August 2015.

idea that he will have to reconstruct a sense of plot, of what happened before and after, a (historical) sense of character - see the aesthetic interweaving of various temporal timelines through the ghostly representation of sexual frustration - which best represents the civil war effects of the Southern discomfiture.

This incipit defeats any attempt at envisaging Faulkner's work as an easy objet de jouissance by the proliferation of effects and the diversion of the reader's attention from any sense of dramatic unity. The result is a sort of tension, of special pressure put on the reader who will soon have to make sense of his confusion.

The reader is made to feel subliminally, before he can truly understand, how the Southern Americans found coincidences between their defeat and a possible scheme of divine retribution and how this seems to form a vicious circle of entrapment. If mental and moral (sexual) dilapidation is at the source of the defeat, then the Southerners are now punished as their fortunes have evaporated and they are gradually turning into what will be known later on as "white trash"[422].

Through the aesthetically dissolute, deconstructed and defeated narrative (already beginning with an end), Faulkner dramatically makes his reader feel before he acquaints him with the true facts. The reality of the senses jars with the reality of understanding. At the end of the novel, one may wonder if narrating the end of the Sutpens had any point at all.

Moreover, the reader has to envisage the novel successively from a diegetic, an aesthetic and a moral point of view, which somehow dissolves unity and leads him to question the value of contents and formal aspects successively. The reader is haunted with a confusion of the sense of morality, of historicity, a desire of changing one's representations as a result of the mirror effect the text brings about while it questions our ways of interacting with our historical context at various (advancing) distance from the civil war.

Additionally, the social content of a novel such as *Sanctuary* is possibly comparable with the strong social content of Brechtian operas, and forces "upon us a recognition that culture shapes and misshapes the lives of readers and writers as well as fictional characters.[…]"[423]. For David L. Minter indeed:

> Having invited us to enter its horrors, Faulkner then forces us to see ourselves implicated and, indeed, collusive in them. We identify with its victims - with Tommy, Lee, Ruby, and Temple - and to them we give our empathy. In so far as we do this, it is pity that the action of *Sanctuary* evokes in us. But the action of *Sanctuary* also evokes something like terror in us by forcing us to see ourselves in our culture and our culture in our deepest

[422] Sylvie Laurent, *Du pauvre blanc au « poor white trash » dans le roman américain et son arrière-plan depuis 1920*, PhD defended under the supervision of M. Pierre-Yves Pétillon, Paris IV Sobonne University, 2007, http://lettres.sorbonne-universite.fr/IMG/pdf/BOCQUAIRE-LAURENT_Position.pdf, accessed August 2016.
[423] David L. Minter, *Faulkner's Questioning Narratives: Fiction of His Major Phase, 1929-1942*, University of Illinois Press, 2001, 110.

> selves - as the no-longer secret conspirators in, if not the agents of, terrible acts of deception and violence.[424]

Thus Faulkner seems to aim at making his reader act.

However, one can say from a certain viewpoint, that a strong feeling of unity also emanates from *Absalom, Absalom!* which seems to compose a tragic piece not unlike Wagner's.

Another conjunction between the Brechtian art of dissolution and the literary art of the Southern gothic could be the elaboration of the grotesque and the absurd which is linked to it. Comparisons have already been made between the Brechtian grotesque and the American grotesque in for instance "Notes on the Grotesque: Anderson, Brecht and Williams"[425] by James Schevill. Studies on the use of the American grotesque as a sign of modernity have already been carried out too:

> The image of America in Brecht's work is puzzling - fantastic, brutal, chaotic, materialistic, romantic, daring, primitive and sophisticated at the same time - a strange mixture of attraction and repulsion, the same attitudes that Brecht revealed in conversation about the United States. Reading Brecht's work and talking to him was a lesson in what the United States meant to Europeans in the 1920s, and a warning why the United States is still regarded by Europeans as a grotesque mixture of raw materialism and free openheartedness[426].

Brecht was notoriously influenced by Upton Sinclair, Sherwood Anderson, Frank Norris, Frank Harris, Ida Tarbell as Patty Lee Parmalee's *Brecht's America*[427] reveals.

In *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (1930), the grotesque of Leocadia Begbick, that of communal rituals of love-making, fighting, looking for death in eating contests or in trials during which lack of money is deemed more serious an offence than murdering impulses, somehow echoe the grotesque found in literary works of the Southern gothic vein.

The grotesque execution is reminiscent of the depiction of the virtually unmotivated beating of Wing Biddlebaum (Sherwood Anderson, "Hands" in *Winesburg, Ohio*, 1930) by a saloon keeper thinking him guilty of sexual assault on one of the boys he was supposed to teach. The community coming to hang the teacher and then pitying him for his frailty associates the American West with an image of crude miscarriages of justice possibly dating from Mark Twain's *Roughing It*[428] (1872) staging an improvised execution carried out in a legal noman's land. It may also draw on the newly discovered Melville's *Billy Budd* (dating back from the end of the nineteenth century but posthumously published in 1924) similarly preoccupied with a confined seaman's universe where justice is carried out almost impulsively.

---

[424] *Idem.*
[425] James Schevill, "Notes on the Grotesque: Anderson, Brecht and Williams." *Twentieth Century Literature*, 23.2 (May 1977): 229-238.
[426] James Schevill, "Notes on the Grotesque: Anderson, Brecht and Williams.", *op.cit*., 233.
[427] Patty Lee Parmalee, *Brecht's America*, Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1981.
[428] Mark Twain, "A Trial", *Roughing It*, chapter 50, Gutenberg Project website, n.d., https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3177/3177-h/3177-h.htm, accessed August 2017.

If Brecht was influenced by America, America, though obviously skeptical of his talents was obviously somehow influenced by him, as he seems to have contributed to the subsequent development of the Southern Gothic aesthetics. Thus, Flannery O' Connor or Eudora Welty's later works resonate with the Brechtian sense of the absurd as the society described in these works is haunted by a wish to retrieve the forever lost glorious past.

The creation of Mahagonny first seems to emanate from a quasi-biblical attempt at founding an ideal city. Except of course, that instead of being placed under the authority of God, the city, dedicated as it is to the unrestricted production and consumption of pleasure, seems more governed by a sort of Magog which the fake toponym Mahagonny seems to evoke. Mahagonny thus re-connects the urban man to primeval sensual abandon in front of threats of impending death. This also seems to fix Mahagonny as a sort of Sodom and Gomorrhea.

As the one portrayed in *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*, the society depicted in Southern gothic fictions is one of misfits (see Jimmy, Jakob…) and narrow-minded people. In the literary tradition, characters newly made poor by the Southern defeat in the civil war sometimes go as far as committing suicide. Clytie, fascinated by faces, beginning by her own, is possibly striving very hard to find her lost mother's gaze in her own reflection, as she ends up drowning in a water barrel, devoured by her inability to find love in the others and final self-denial.

Another theme intimately connecting novelistic and Brechtian operatic dissolutions is the criticism of technical progress bringing for instance the gradual development of railways as represented in Frank Norris's *The Octopus* (1901), often analysed as suggesting the Mussel Slough Tragedy[429].

The Brechtian American fragment entitled Joe Fleischhaker was also inspired by Frank Norris's *The Pit* (1903), a novel opening in an opera house and interweaving Jadwin and Laura's love story[430] with the description of Jadwin's irremediable fascination for wheat speculation[431].

Comparisons between the dissolution and deconstruction of the self avant la lettre in Bertolt Brecht's early plays (*Baal* in 1923, *die Massnahme* in 1930) and later deconstructions have already been drawn too. One could draw a lineage going from the image of the young poet sinking into moral abjection in *Baal*, the ritual execution of the young outsider in *die Massnahme*, the experiment on human fungibility in *Man Equals Man* to the dissolution, fragmentation, dehumanization of the self represented in the post-World War II literary fiction[432]. Carnivalisation,

---

[429] See wikipedia, n.d., en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mussel_Slough_Tragedy, accessed August 2017.
[430] (One of separation and subsequent reconciliation once wheat speculation has proved a doomed enterprise after financial strokes of luck and episodes of insolvency).
[431] James K. Lyon, *Bertolt Brecht in America*, Princeton University Press, 2014, 49.
[432] One may evoke Graham Swift's *Shuttlecock* insisting on the interchangeability of Prentis's father, reduced to a nickname reifying him (Shuttlecock). Prentis's father also appears to have been dehumanized by the Nazi

pastiche, montage of the self[433] appear mostly in *Man Equals Man* (1926) which may be seen to foreshadow Dos Passos's authentic but (/for) fragmentary biographical approach in *The Big Money*, relying on Eisenstein-inspired collage, quotations, fragments of songs. In this literary work, emphasis is laid on the way the consumerist mediatic society really gives birth to a disjointed individual whose language is impoverished by its futile though utilitarian standardization[434]. Brecht's dealing with interchangeability may also announce Graham Swift's parallel treatment of wartime human interchangeability from his first novel, *The Sweet Shop Owner*, in which man easily becomes a painted skittle or a number. Graham Swift's later novels will moreover implicitly portray man as a rat or, literally, as a perforated creature (Harry from *Out of this World*) identifying himself by juxtaposing newspaper cuttings and photographic reminiscences.

Instead of having a novel composed of novelistic clichés or having operas built around "musical clichés, and of standardized melody, euphony and psychologization"[435], authors and composers began to reelaborate rhythm and harmony. In the wake of Bertolt Brecht, Kurt Weill, both authors and composers progressively opted for a blurring of the boundaries between high brow and low brow materials. They also opted for richer artforms, clearly distanced from any culinary practice thus paving the way for Rushdie's Vina, singing rock as well as *Orfeo*[436].

Brechtian musical works also seem to anticipate the musical sense of absurd historical (self) destruction displayed in Styron's *Sophie's Choice* (1979) and partly elaborated out of various musical materials (a certain emotional sense of selfhood can be seen to emanate from the use of Brahms's alto rhapsody or of Mozart's sinfonia concertante).

5-Post-Brechtian operatic and literary absurd. Towards the post-human discourse.

One of the modes of Brechtian distanciation that appeared in the wake of Brecht is the absurd as an esthetic principle. More particularly, in the operatic world, the absurd contaminated the works fostering humanistic satires, atonality and dodecaphony. For Martin Esslin, "absurd" originally means 'out of harmony', in a musical context. Hence its dictionary definition: "out of

---

humiliations he suffered from and the implicit metaphor of the rat opening the book. Another turning-point in literary representations of dehumanization occurred more recently in Kazuo Ishiguro' s *Never Let Me Go* in which some human beings are destined to have parts of their bodies donated to others.

[433] Of course, see the epigraphic quotation to this chapter.

[434] See Mrs Anne Combarnous's lesson on *The Big Money*, Pau and Pays de l'Adour University, second semester of 2016.

[435] Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et dramaturgie: esthétique de la représentation au XXe siècle*, *op.cit.*, 141.

[436] Salman Rushdie, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, London: Vintage, 2000, 499.

harmony with reason of property: incongruous, unreasonable, illogical."[437]

This will link existentialist Erwin Schulhoff in his only for drums "Dance of the Weapons"[438] only leading to death or in his even more dramatic 1919 silent third movement of the *Fünf Pittoresken*[439], Shostakovitch in his 1930 reworking of Gogol's *The Nose*, his 1932 *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* and Beckett in the later 1952 *Waiting for Godot*.

5-a-Shostakovich's absurd. The *Nose* and *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District.*

In the wake of Prokoviev's 1929 *Lieutenant Kijé*, a devastating satire showing how a whole life may be made up just to satisfy degenerate authoritarianism, Shostakovitch's *The Nose* (1930), relies on a metonymic imagery as an absurd running metaphor to cristallise and denounce the ills of the Soviet bureaucracy as well deride the bourgeois obsession with appearances through a humanistic fable in which a man loses his nose as a symbol of alienation. The alienation of bureaucracy from man and *vice versa*, of man from himself, of the country from its inhabitants, of the symbol of pride on a man's face from man himself, of a proud thirty-seven year old with the idea of marriage has to be poetically resolved.

Shostakovich's ambiguous relationships to Stalinism [440] seem to impose this veiled humanistic contemplation of what happened to the face of common humanity under the pressure of Stallinist totalitarianism and inquisitions. As Collegiate Assessor Kovalyov absurdly loses and looks for his nose, Russian life is progressively reduced to that of a human body. By a satirical shortcut, real-life socio-political anxieties seem to directly translate into operatic dismemberment/disfigurement anxieties. Eventually, as in good Jonathan Swift-inspired humanistic fables, a sense of relativity applied to the redefinition of man seems to emerge as even the nosy assessor's human value has been truly questioned and assessed.

Zooms on Nose's life (after emphasis has been laid on pimples, patches, sniffing, running and so on) first permit to frankly enhance the universal vulgarity of human corporeality, the fact

[437] Martin Esslin, *The Theatre of the Absurd*, London: Pelican Books, 1980, 23.
[438] In 1925 *Ogelala* mainly exploring sexual impulses, death and dying.
[439] A composition of modulated rests for piano.
[440] Shostakovich was both exploited by Stalin as a showcase for his regime and accustomed to dissent in his works as he resorted to the tones corresponding to the letters of his name, as Bach used to do himself. More often than not, he seemed to act as a yurodivy, a holy fool which permitted him to affirm himself as a true individual free of any dictatorship at a second level all through his compositions. In the name of humanity, he seemed to have emulated King Lear's wise fool as the tighter Stalin's ideological control, the more complex Shostakovich's tactics for artistic survival became (use of parables, arcane symbols, see Jennifer Gerstel's "Irony, Deception, and Political Culture in the Works of Dmitri Shostakovich", *Mosaic: an Interdisciplinary Critical Journal*, 32.4 (December 1999): 35-51.

that no man can be seen as an angel. Then it comes to stand for the natural human capacity of good common sense which is somehow restored, reattributed to man. However, Platon Kuzmich Kovalyov will maybe no longer feel superior to the mainstream population, which allows him to regain a sense of orientation in social life. Momentarily disoriented, he finds orientation again at the end.

Once the assessor becomes a noseless clown on the operatic stage, making the journal editor crack stupid jokes, it is up to the others - the spectators included - to re-assess him and recover their respect of him, of his lost/errant "member' and of humanity. They are responsible for the efficient capture of Nose in the Summer Gardens. Likewise, the story of the loss of a nose is submitted to the operatic spectator's appreciation at the end of the work. As almost nothing approaches it, is it a proper subject for an opera? Everything becomes a matter of point of view as the proximity with the absurd profoundly destabilises the conception of the world, of humanity and of the operatic genre (inasmuchas we may wonder about the lofty subjects which more often than not characterise operas).

Destabilising human hierarchies and assessment procedures permits to question generic expectations. Dismemberment and disjunction contaminate the erratic poetic/aesthetic/musical structure of the work. It is a well-known fact that Shostakovitch made a sort of patchwork, using all sorts of material - traditional music, different literary works by Gogol but also by Dostoevsky.

The absurdity of the intrusive state probing into the life of suspicious human beings is derided as the nose, an object of police investigation, is strongly eroticised and poked fun at. The ridiculous member becomes autonomous, walks by itself, all of a sudden unexplicably enlarges before being beaten down to its normal shape by the police, and then, as no real nose would, refuses to adhere to its owner's face. However, it is clearly Nose "who" achieves a higher socio-professional status than his owner, the Collegiate Assessor. It no longer wants to have anything to do with the Major as it benefits from such a higher echelon. This certainly satirizes assessors under Stallinism as it implies that the only good assessor would be the one emancipating his assessing function (symbolised by the nose) from the rest of his human being. This in turn suggests that absolute objectivity, freed from humanity, has no point at all. This is why the nose is beaten down, because this would be much too scary to anyone.

At the other end of the spectrum, the traditional-looking ballet of policemen makes them resemble grotesque puppets. From the beginning the police and order are equated with excessive systematic corruption. As the policeman intercepts Ivan while he prepares to throw the nose in the river, he refuses to be bribed since there are already three barbers shaving him for free. The elusive nose, suddenly multiplying in a grotesque fashion, its likenesses dancing around the bed of the

poor Kovalyov, underlines the absurdity of the human condition as a whole. It is mostly in vain that the police or the editor run after Nose.

It is possible to question the meaning of the end: when Kovalyov circularly remarks that Ivan's hands are stinking, one may have the impression that nothing much has changed or will change. Social hierarchies will remain and man is perceived as absurdly and viciously caught in a circle of power/sexual relations. When Kovalyov loses his powerful nose, he loses connection with Pelageya Grigoryevna whose daughter is very attractive and supposes that he might be the victim of her spell as he refused to marry her daughter. Now, in the end, he can still be the assessor whose nose clearly makes the difference between social classes and can marry the right person.

More importantly maybe, the nose stands for the poetics of singing as managing the precarious balance between nasality and throat is clearly at stake when singing. The human condition is also that shared by the singer facing the impossibility of singing without their nose as well as the impossibility of positioning their voice unquestioningly "in the nose". The abstraction from any too easy nasality being part of the condition of singing.

As in all Swiftian satires, the dynamic of inversions and reflections is at the core of the humanistic undertaking.

In *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, social denunciation via the absurd takes another turn. However, the opera - though also dramatizing questions of human integrity - is less centered on the relationships of the human being to their own physical self but more on the relationships of a human coming to grips with determinism.

In this otherwise social work, the presence of Boris's ghost, signalling as it does the intervention of the irrational, and that of the nihilist and atheist whom the policemen enjoy bullying also impose to read the artwork in a more philosophical light, as if the irrational somehow always triumphed from rationality.

In *Lady Macbeth from the Mtensk District*, the absurd could be defined as underlying what happens to human life if its aspirations are irremediably destroyed from the very beginning, if very early on, hope, instead of sustaining the existence of the self, fuels its hate and pushes it to secret actions dissolving its social respectability and leading it to death.

The absurd determines the story of a woman starting her life at a dead end. This time, the physical divorce between mind and matter, body and soul, only concretely occurs at the end. It no longer opens the opera work but is a result of it and takes the form of a deadly self attempt to unite oneself to one's aspirations.

Only the mental part of the self, torn between aspirations and conventions, finally wins the day as it refuses to see the body entrapped in an undesired sensuous life. The monstrous divorce

between body and soul somehow ends the life of the incongruous female murderer, ready to do anything to escape from the future devised for her by her selfish father's will.

Katerina is one of the most absurd heroin so far, reflecting Shostakovich's possibly misogynic and fatalistic bias towards energetic feminism. Female action turns out to be particularly unsuccessful in the end as we do not see Sergei, a true - if vicarious - co-murderer dying with Katerina and Sonyetka. There is no way for woman to escape the atrocity of the frustrating woman lot, entirely dedicated to the fulfilment of paternal aspirations.

One may wonder to what extent Shostakovich's definition of humanity in *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk district* was not influenced by his wider reflection on the boundaries between humanity and animality. Indeed, one must remember that he was working on *Orango* when finishing *Lady Macbeth*. Stalin's order to his scientists to create an army of hard humanzees able to wage war without suffering in the least from cold, harm or any physical/emotional inconvenience must have forced the musician to reconsider the humanist dimension inherent in composing music.

5-b-Some examples of drama and literary works in Shostakovich's wake.

Here, refocusing on a definition of the absurd regularly applied to literature seems needed. First, according to M.H. Abrams's *Glossary of Literary Terms*[441], the literary absurd concerns the denunciation of the absurd condition of man and the conviction that the absurdity of the human lot can be best represented in absurd literary works. M.H. Abrams notes the French and German influence[442]. He also notes an evolution from a faith in rationality and intelligibility which made heroism and dignity possible to a growing post-world war two tendency towards rebellious absurdism. Post-world war two humans seem isolated and alienated from a surrounding universe characterized by the absence of fixed meaning, truth and values. M.H. Abrams draws extensively on Camus's *Myth of Sisyphus* (1942). Camus, from the opening of his book, denounces a world deprived of dreams and illusions which alienates the aspiring human being. Seing how disconnected from his private sense of meaning his life is drives man to commit suicide once the absurdity of his lot reveals itself in a sort of epiphany. This is what happens in Graham Swift's 1980 *The Sweet Shop Owner*, where the man appears to commit a sort of passive suicide, though

[441] M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, seventh edition, Boston: Heinle and Heinle, 1999, 1.
[442] 1896 *Ubu Roi*, 1920 Kafka's *Metamorphosis*.

the *angina pectoris* may make us suppose that in fact the man goes on to live in spite of all. The *angina pectoris* in question makes life an evanescent reality.

Operatic/literary sense of regression.

In Mussorgsky's 1897 *Khovanschchina*, the struggle for power between Streltsy supporting Ivan, old believers led by Dosifey and Shaklovity ends up in the nihilism of self-immolation. Round the same period, Shostakovich was composing his absurd sounding satires - the unfinished *Orango*[443] included - based on a specific twelve-tone technique. James Joyce's operatic fiction was drawing its inspiration from Dublin's sclerotic society and Eugene O'Neill was drawing a portrayal of the impossibility to move in Greenwich Village, Manhattan, or of the infernal circularity entrapping the characters of Anna Christie.

Be it in literary or in operatic works, humanity seemed to have come full circle, and to be experimenting limits and regression. Progress became uncertain as Chris and Mat from *Anna Christie* finally found themselves on the same boat and sailing the same sea while leaving Anna on her own.

The ex-prostitute was once again left to her own devices. Her plight became the same as when she had been looking for emancipation after proving unable to envisage serving as a nurse. Separated from her father and a normal family life by the cruel sea (at least according to Chris) in childhood, almost naturally made a prostitute after being raped, she naturally returns to the sea in spite of her father's repeated warnings and misgivings. It eventually alienates her from the male figures of her reconstituted family and makes life follow a pattern of regression.

Anna unable to escape her fate seems to be a younger version of Marthy who illustrates the fatality of female destiny in the world of the seamen. Marthy, Chris's female companion, served him as a whore, just as Anna is both Mat's whore and his possible wife in waiting. The circle of incest, prostitution and estrangement can never be really broken in this jarring image of family.

If the absurd is to be found in the impossibility of moving forward, it is also found in the possibility of regressing.

One can also draw parallels between Eugene O'Neill's investigation of humanity and Shostakovich's as in 1922 *The Hairy Ape* seemed to pave the way for the 1932 *Orango* (and then

[443] *Orango* is an opera about a humanzee inspired by Stalinian experimentations on crossbreedings between humans and chimpanzees actually carried out by Ivanov. Shostakovich worked on this opera at the time he was composing *Lady Macbeth of the District of Mtsensk*.

Der Junge Lord[444] (1965). In *The Hairy Ape*, Eugene O'Neill equates the low class worker with an animal. If first, Yank is proud of working in the ship while the passengers are compared to as many luggage, Mildred's arrival and her spontaneous insult, possibly resonate with a tacit feeling of recognition, and provides the character with a sense of inferiority and incomprehension triggering his downfall. He will eventually end up trying to socialize with a gorilla, … only to be crushed to death.

After seeing the red-haired dancer, humanzee Orango will similarly avow his over-powerful lust causing mad impulses. He will want to go out of his animal skin while the red-haired woman wants to put an end to the dreadful encounter.

In the prologue of *Orango*, in order to deride the Stallinian scheme for humans and humanzees, and the total manipulation of the so-called liberated labour masses, the close relationships between singer and their role are evoked as they make Orango human (he becomes the red-haired woman's stepbrother, a brilliant student journalist…).

In both *The Hairy Ape* and later *Orango*, higher and lower classes seem to inhabit two different worlds which can never more truly communicate than man and animal. One clearly has the upper hand over the other who can only respond by complying with orders.

This social rift making society absurd for lower class people appears in other plays by O'Neill such as *Long Day's Journey into Night* where Edmund's failed endeavour to downclass himself so as to gain special affinity with his father dies off in a consumption rewarding the mad life he has had since he has been expelled from college.

If Mildred, the social worker in the making, potentially comes for vivifying "vital contact"[445] with the working class, that "vital contact" takes the form of a visual rape and turns out to be traumatic for both parts.

Once man has desecrated his humanity by working in insufferable conditions and once he has decided to commit violent actions, he becomes an invisible brute excluded from human communication. He can neither be a human nor an animal and prototypically dies in complete isolation.

In *Orango*, the assembly of "emancipated" labourers no longer want to hear the kind of heavy patriotic music provided for them to answer the megalomaniac Stallinian tastes. They show

---

[444] In *Der Junge Lord*, Sir Edgar's nephew which is lashed by his German teacher proves to be an ape.

[445] Patrick J.Chura, "Vital Contact: Eugene O'Neill and the Working Class", *Twentieth Century Literature*, 49.4 (Winter 2003). According to Patrick Chura, the expression "vital contact" was much in the air when O'Neill was writing. It came to designate the experimental attempts by Harvard's students and political liberals, at bridging the gap between workers and bourgeois radicals on the assumption that only through vital contact coud the bourgeois be revivified.

their humanity when one of them asks the conductor for a lullaby and decries Orango's show as possibly uninteresting, reducing the eponymic character to a simple ape. Thus the mass of labourers appears to have subtler tastes than the dictator. The sense of hierarchy is reversed in this subversive opera as it is implicitly in O'Neill's play.

The other wonders that are enumerated to support the patriotic view that life under Stallinism is great do not really look like wonders at all. Only to the Stallinian eyes does working seem to dehumanise man as humans and humanzees can be all too easily manipulated. In contrast, Shostakovich also chooses to show real "men" whose tastes are unaffected by the Stallinian ones, who have a real critical distance with power. The announcement of the "humanzee" as a wonder is very clearly satirical and obviously aims at denouncing the Stallinian regime as absurd.

The apocalyptic absurd: from opera to literature.

After *Khovanschschina*, *The Nose*, *Lady Macbeth from the Mtsensk District*, other operas took a more apocalyptic turn (Menotti's *Consul* (1950) and *Apocalypse* (1951). *Atomstod* depicted in a rather shocking way a planet devastated by nuclear apocalypse.

The very short *Survivor from Warsaw* (1946) already dealt with the pathological, endless ratiocination of a horror event from nazi history: the reckoning of a number of people due to be gassed and an ensuing Jewish prayer. As the survivor has apparently been living in the sewers for a time, his belonging to the Jewish race makes his life seem no more than a rat's life, man becomes animalised. The stressing instinctive and emotional music reflects life in a concentration camp with the reveilles, the sergent's shouts. There is no way for the spectator of knowing what happens next to the young man telling the story. He only deals with what he remembers of this event in the concentration camp preceding his collapse and amnesia. This suggests that the spectator is at the same level as the young man and that the latter simply lives imprisoned in the memory of the event.

A sort of claustrophobia emerges as music seems to evoke what happened and the mental trauma more precisely than words. It is the whole absurd condition of man in the wake of the nazi tyranny which is zoomed on. The traumatic event encapsulates all the young man's life. Nothing comes before or afterwards.

In the nineteen fifties and the nineteen sixties when a precarious peace was maintained by a "balance of terror"[446], the first nuclear tests had already taken place. Russia was competing with

[446] Johann Stenstrom, "The Significance of Electro-Acoustic Music in the Space Opera *Aniara*", *Journal of Sonic Studies*, 26/11/2014, research catalogue website, n.d., https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/108969/108970/16/0,

the United States on that front but also on a space race which began to inspire science fiction in operatic and literary works. The theme of apocalypse in the wake of World War II atrocities became linked with the space odyssey theme. One of the symbols of this association is the opera *Aniara* (1959) by Karl Birger Blomdahl inspired by Harry Martinson's verse epic of the same title (1956, *Aniara*, *A Review of Man in Time and Space*).

As the earth was poisoned by nuclear weapons, its inhabitants have to flee either to Venus or Mars in spacecrafts carrying thousands of people. This could be seen as an allusion to the selection process in concentration camps deciding who is going to be gassed and who is going to be saved for work.

On one of the flights, the spacecraft, Aniara, is thrown off its course and its gear is irremediably damaged. Aniara will never be able to actually reach Mars or Venus. The emigrants on board are blocked in the constellation of Lyra and are told that they will remain in that constellation for the rest of their lives. Life on Aniara, as it is presented in the opera, spans twenty-four years and is increasingly frightening due to the distressing quality of the outer space. Mima, the computer aboard the spacecraft the emigrants take for a god, informs the passengers about all they have to know. However, once the earth is destroyed, Mima, endowed with a soul and the capacity of experimenting feelings, can no longer survive. Finally, the morale is seen to deteriorate and the opera focuses on the last night aboard Aniara during which the passengers, dead, are illuminated by a final beam of light before plunging into eternal darkness and oblivion.

After Russian operas and later apocalyptic operas, the futility of all action, revealed either in circular tales of the Joycean type or in works featuring suicidal-homicidal pacts, is a theme exploited in the apocalyptic *Endgame* (1957) and *Waiting for Godot* (1963) where the metonymic running metaphor is that of the foot. "Godot" is short for godillot, the French slang for "chaussure" and Estragon has trouble with his boots from the opening of the play. Estragon's injured foot becomes the symbol of the impossibility of moving which will possibly foreshadow the apocalyptic *huis clos* and the inability to move one finds in Adès's *The Exterminating Angel.*

One could see a sort of continuity between Karl Birger Blomdahl's opera, Beckett's plays and Giacomo Manzoni's 1965 *Atomtod* drawing parallels between a nuclear catastrophe and concentration camps. In this opera too, emphasis will be laid on the idea of selecting those who will survive and become immortal by inhabiting nuclear shelters while the others outside will have to witness the bomb attack and be harried by the Speaker. This is somehow reminiscent of Clov, Ham, Nagg and Nell's family sheltered from the catastrophe which has been raging outside their

---

accessed 22/01/2017.

home.

As later in Adès's *The Exterminating Angel* (2016), the characters from *Endgame* or *Waiting for Godot* seem under a spell. Unable to make Estragon or Vladimir progress any further in life, feet reveal their owner's submission to fate as Lucky is constantly asked to bring something at his master's feet. The poor dance of exhausted Lucky's feet can neither emancipate Lucky nor guarantee the slave's continued employment with Pozzo. This announces the unability of walking contaminating three characters out of four in *Endgame* since Hamm, Nagg and Nell are handicapped and dependent on lame Clov for survival.

The play is circular as the characters are trapped in absurdist repetition, like in some aria repeated *da capo*. Life or death become futile. One cannot really know for sure that Nell is dead, nor that at the end, Clov, will really leave his family behind.

Unbalanced, reversible power relationships (Clov/Ham), physical destitution (that of Estragon, old Lucky, of Vladimir with his abnormal bladder or of Nell and Nagg after their tandem accident), mental and financial poverty ending up in self derision[447] underline the pointlessness of life as if the plays somehow radicalised the social content of preceding Russian operas.

Only the entertainment provided by Pozzo and Lucky could be somehow rewarding but Lucky's plight as a personal slave and his botched up attempt at dancing fail at amusing the two men. Only waiting remains.

If the devastating relationships in *Waiting for Godot* and later *Endgame* recurrently seem on the verge of breaking (Hamm and his parents, Hamm and Clov, the boy he adopted, Lucky and Pozzo), and if sometimes the authoritarianism[448] displayed is reminiscent of the one described in Prokoviev's 1933 *Lieutenant Nijé* (Lucky/Pozzo, the boys/Godot) where Paul I's despotism ends up in the absurdity of a totally made up life (nobody can endorse being shouted at or being sent to Siberia), Beckett's use of couples (Didi/Gogo, the boy and his brother, the boys and Godot, Lucky and Pozzo, Clov/Ham, Nagg/Nell) seems to echo Shostakovitch's (the submissive Ivan/his insulting wife, the stinking servant/the ordering master, Kovaljov/his Nose). The links woven by interdependence are so complex as to be almost impossible to sever.

The contrast between a glorious and a more infamous past is also a shared structural characteristic of *The Nose*, *Waiting for Godot* and *Endgame*. In *Waiting for Godot*, we learn that Vladimir and Estragon were once respectable and accepted on top of the Eiffel Tower though now

---

[447] (The two men are about to hang themselves before they realise it is impossible to do so. They are not sure one is heavier than the other and they finally share their poor carrot).

[448] Self-centered, Hamm is always passing orders to Clov or even to his own parents. Pozzo's authoritarianism soon becomes absurd as old Lucky is forbidden, without any reason, to put the luggage on the floor.

Estragon loosing his trousers has to be told to button them up and has become a tramp who is constantly beaten up by others. In both the opera and *Waiting for Godot*, the character who is beaten up is necessarily downclassed. In *The Nose*, once Nose is beaten by a crowd of policemen down to its normal size it can no longer assume its high social status. Similarly, now Estragon is a tramp, he is beaten up by unnamed people. One cannot know if they are always the same ones. In *Endgame*, Nagg and Nell used to know better days when they were cycling on a tandem in the Ardennes near Sedan.

Both Beckett and Shostakovich's works are pervaded with sexual allusions, deal with self-division and depict man as laughing stock.

The Beckettian absence of death and baroque omnipresence of life in death seem in turn to pave the way for Luigi Nono's *Le Grand Macabre* (1978) where the corporeal microcosmos is modelled on and connected to a conception of the macrocosmos *via* the metaphor of the kingdom, a reworking of the two bodies of the king. The artistic and absurd world of Brueghelland - with its Necrotzar, drunkards, homo- and heterosexual lovers, fake apocalypses and sexual fears embodied by the ever frightened Gepopo, the insulting scatologically minded ministers - seems to be directly inherited from Samuel Beckett's world, though Nono's opera is much more populous than Beckett's plays. A notable difference in the treatment of the absurd in the two works resides in the presence of a very positive operatic morale addressed to the spectator at the end of *Le Grand Macabre*. The spectator is explicitly urged to make the most of life and never to bother about little health incidents which happen when people are young. Even when they are spectacular, they are not lethal. As for real death, one should not mind it at all as nobody can prevent it.

At the end of *Waiting for Godot*, the two characters plan to hang themselves the next day. Though they do not move and will be there tomorrow, death seems more present than life in this play. As they will be waiting for Godot to be saved and, predictably, as the latter will not come, the two men will be trapped in an endless circle of repetition. The end of *Endgame* is similar as no one can really predict if Clov, who does not set the alarm clock, will really leave the others to their own devices. Contrary to what happens in *Le Grand Macabre*, life is not perceived in a linear way, constructively leading towards death in spite of incidents but as a circle of deprivation and mutual psychological agressions.

More recently, opera as absurdist art might have found new poignancy in *Un re in ascolto* (1984) and in Thomas Adès's *The Exterminating Angel* (2016) inspired by Luis Bunuel's film. This parallels the development of the literary absurd, defined as a drift towards existentialism, nihilism, loss of any sense of purpose in life, satire, dark humour.

Therefore, it is easy to see how Brechtian absurdity paved the way for other sorts of operatic

and novelistic absurdity. One may draw a parallel between the absurd man as alternatively represented as saint, tragic hero and picaro as defined by David D. Galloway analysing works by Updike, Styron, Bellow, Salinger and the evolution of the absurd in contemporary operas.

For David D. Galloway[449], John Updike portrays in Rabbit (*Rabbit Run*, 1960) the absurd man as a saint using spiritual vigour and discontent to constantly oppose a reality which is so disappointing for him that it has become meaningless. Harry (Rabbit), a former University basketball star, makes an outcast of himself, breaking from his degrading job and family (Janice, his wife, and their children), which had made him sink into middle-class routine, to go to a prostitute and re-connect with his sportsman's ideals. Everytime Rabbit feels dissatisfied with sterile social surroundings, his athletic physical (animalised) nature seems to win him over and he runs.

This run partly seems to aim at re-discovering himself but for David D. Galloway, it is not a real solution as the protagonist always ends up contemplating the absurdity inherent in his own self[450].

The impulse of running can be seen as saintly as it is a form of healthy - active, energetic and sportive - criticism. The consumerist society Rabbit lives in is the one found in other fictions by Updike, characterized by materialism and over-abundance[451]. It is mostly meaningless and can be opposed to the ideal of achievement which Rabbit's coach puts forward. Having and winning mean nothing compared to striving to do one's best and experimenting real values instead of dulling one's senses by watching T.V. However, once again, one has to insist on Rabbit's inner vacuity - some critics even see him as a deformity, a monstrous growth springing from the corrupt society - as his double life can be seen as echoing the materialistic patterns of consumption he attempts to flee.

In this interpretation both Harry and the society which surrounds him are absurd.

Cold war apocalyptic narratives be they science fiction or not can be seen as being inspired by the absurd. This trend went on until Graham Swift's *The Sweet Shop Owner* or *Ever After*,

---

[449] David D. Galloway, *The Absurd Hero in American Fiction: Updike, Styron, Bellows, Salinger*, University of Texas Press, 2014, 29.

[450] David D. Galloway, *The Absurd Hero in American Fiction: Updike, Styron, Bellows, Salinger*, *op.cit.,* 99.

[451] See David D. Galloway quoting from John Updike, *The Carpentered Hen*, 1958 in the chapter "The Absurd Man as Saint", *Ibid.*., 29:

I drive my car to supermarket,
The way I take is superhigh,
A superlot is where I park it,
And Super Suds are what I buy.
Supersalesmen sell me tonic_
Super-Tone-O, for relief.
The planes I ride are supersonic.
In trains I like the Super chief.

where the main narrator seems to address the reader from beyond the grave. King Prospero's death in 1984 *Un Re in Ascolto* illustrates Brecht's idea that "A man about to die is real. If, he sings at the same time, we enter the realm of the absurd."[452]

Luciano Berio uses a sense of distanciation which operated between the characters, between the singer and the event in which he was taking part, between the behaviour he is made to adopt and the texts he is pronouncing or singing, between the author and the almost bare setting designed so as to suggest several reading possibilities and not a single truth.

This may seem to reflect what happens at the level of the novel where the book both allows the reader to penetrate in the universe and even the intimacy of the characters (see the incipit of David Lodge's *Nice Work* or of William Styron's *Sophie's Choice*) and at the same time rejects them at the periphery of the artwork. It is this specific ambiguous place devoted to a reader/spectator whom it is also easy to mislead or lose in contemporary artworks[453] which permits them to produce meaning, social, historical or other type of interpretations out of an open-ended artwork.

Umberto Eco declared about Brecht's art: "The dramatic action is conceived as a problematic exposition of certain conflicts to which the distant playwright never proposes any solution"[454]. Insisting on the distance between reader and narrator, show and spectator, also implies laying emphasis, almost in a Shakespearian way, on the transience of the artwork and of the theatrical dimension of real life[455].

Of course, in this vein, in Kazuo Ishiguro's *An Artist of the Floating World*, *The Remains of the Day*, *When We Were Orphans* or in *Never Let Me Go*, there emerges a self-mystified identity (recovering a fluid sense of identity and of one's place in collective and individual history sometimes seems to be what is mostly at stake), in various states of disintegration and reunification through memory.

---

[452] Luciano Berio and Umberto Eco, "Eco in ascolto" 1986, *Les Cahiers de l'Ircam*, 1994, 6.
[453] Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et dramaturgie : esthétique de la représentation au XXe siècle*, *op.cit,* 224.
[454] *Idem*.
[455] *Ibid*., 223-224.

Conclusion: Relativism and the East.

Now we reach the end of this book, it becomes clear that close studies of operatic intermediality in specific English literary works should develop in more ways than one. Not only should more critics focus on broad thematic relationships but they should also ideally work in collaboration with operatic specialists to try to understand the deep structural influence operatic works could have on literary masterpieces. Of course, because the subject is so precise, one should always be careful not to go too far in seeing relationships between particular instances of stagings and a text but the idea of investigating potential influences between stage practices and theatricality in literary pieces seems worth pursuing.

Of course operatic help seems to be particularly relevant in historical cases but surprisingly enough, today's growing intermedial tendency of fictions at an era when works of art - sometimes themselves implying an association of media - are fastly adapted into various types of performances makes it impossible to ignore aesthetic operatic collaboration within the literary work.

If generic instabilities and characterology appear to be fruitful fields of reflexion, other paths and sub-paths than the ones suggested here have to be explored. Thus, the spatio-temporal dimension, the theme of the abject, could be worth general comparatist analyses. Works such as Viriginia Woolf's *Orlando* also seem to require an operatic reading which has never been published yet. Therefore, this work, if it gave us the opportunity of trying to review main axes around which the operatic collaboration to fiction revolves, also allows us to envisage other monographs drawing conclusions from specific analyses.

In addition to help the authors expressing themselves by diversifying their esthetic tools, operatic intermediality is and has been used so as to fulfil the moral purposes of narrations. The ethic which is displayed in operatic literary pieces is relativist as the approach of the relationships of self and other is. This relativist ethic historically found a sort of ultimate echo in the destabilization of form and meaning even before the notions of posthumanity and transhumanity began further eroding identity in contemporary science fiction (be it in intermediatic novels or operas).

"Man […] is the measure of all things, of the existence of things that are, and of the non-existence of things that are not" according to Socrates from Plato's *Theaetetus*[456]. Plato and Socrates refute this thesis by positing an objective reality of Platonic Ideas which are impossible for man to overlook. During the Renaissance, Montaigne's *Essais* supplied another relativist point of view from which the relativism at work in both the novelistic and the operatic cultural tradition often drew their inspiration. For relativist Montaigne and for the very Montaignian and operatic writer Graham Swift, there is no certain, ready to serve vision/version of truth or of the boundary between fact and fiction. Using one's reason becomes a matter of freeing oneself from the influence of accepted truth. Thus, man, if he is a healthy one, enjoying life, must constantly reinvent his identity so as to show his resilience and his ability to perfect himself.

A definition of cultural relativism would be based on the notion that what one feels and thinks can only be apprehended within one's own cultural background. In such a conception, there is no real abstract objectivity and only points of view. Cultural relativism as constituting a common ground between literature in English and operas was partly built around the representation of exchanges with the Orient, the defamiliarization and refamiliarization of an East standing for harsh and condemnable human passions and extremes (cruelty, desire, love, violence and extreme refinement).

Though the literary fascination with the foreigner originated in Antiquity, one may stress the relativist reintegration of Othello, the Shakespearian and Verdian black man in love, in the framework of white morality. This brand of cultural relativism seems to be one inciting to tolerance in spite of appearances.

The fascination and fear inspired by the unnamed Malay resistant to opium and the crushing weight of his culture in De Quincey's *Confessions of an Opium-Eater* is accompanied by an insistence on proliferation foreshadowing the Victorian association of Eastern mores and English

[456] Plato, *Theaetetus*, online edition: calibre 07.34, 115.

pornography, Victorian hidden sensuality (1828, *The Lustful Turk*).

The sensuous East of the harem around which the transartistic and sometimes operatic turquerie revolved since the end of the seventeenth century[457] constituted mirrors for the Victorians's desires, a mental space abandoned to libidinousness[458]. It allowed to stage the erotic themes of female power (see Graham Swift's "Seraglio"), free sexuality in the context of despotism and incarceration. Music both defamiliarized the East (see the use of cymbals and triangles in the alla turca Mozartian style which affects Turkishness) while refamiliarizing it by representing European refinement to the extreme.

One of the famous early Turkish characters could be Moliere's 1682 *Don Juan*. As Sganarelle insists in Act 1 scene 1:

> […] tu vois en Don Juan, mon maître, le plus grand scélérat que la terre ait jamais porté, un enragé, un chien, un diable, un Turc, un hérétique, qui ne croit ni Ciel, ni Enfer, ni loup-garou, qui passe cette vie en véritable bête brute, en pourceau d'Epicure, en vrai Sardanapale, qui ferme l'oreille à toutes les remontrances qu'on lui peut faire, et traite de billevesées tout ce que nous croyons[459].

Foreshadowing Mozart's Don Giovanni, he also seems to announce Osmin and Selim.

As Joe Snader underlined it in *The Oriental Captivity Narrative and Early English Fiction*, the oriental captivity narrative provided "[…] an effective resource for assessing colonialism's interaction with pattterns of identity formation crucial to the early evolution of the English novel."[460]. It is the sometimes operatic captivity narrative, how white people were made slaves at the hands of Oriental masters - or of Indian masters in America's rescue novels - which really foreshadowed the early structure of the English eighteenth century novel (be it narratives such as Richardson's literature of sentiment revolving around the topos of virtue in distress, the Gothic novel or the Bildungsroman).

The English identity began to define itself in opposition to the Turk or Oriental identity felt to be alien and these narratives began to relate how the white prisoners achieved autonomy and mastery over the Orientals.

From their very beginning, equating the heroic with the Greek, operas may resort to Greek plots in a relativist perspective, with the intention of focusing on contemporary psychoanalytic issues. Thus, Medea symbolises jealousy and infanticide, Elektra - also known as the protagonist in Carl Jung's Electra complex – symbolises the feminine rebellious courage needed to support the

---

[457] See Reinhard Keiser, *Mehmed II* (1693) and then of course Antonio Vivaldi's *Scanderberg* (1718) and G.F. Handel's *Tamerlano* (1719).
[458] Marie-Luise Kohlke, Luisa Orza, *Negotiating Sexual Idioms: Image, Text, Performance*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008, 69.
[459] Molière, *Don Juan*, online edition: Mozambook, 2001, act 1 scene 1, 10.
[460] Joe Snader, "The Oriental Captivity Narrative and Early English Fiction", *Eighteenth Century Fiction*, 9.3 (April 1997): 267-298, 270.

father in the face of the mother's parricidal impulses. In this function, she is represented in sharp contrast with her sister Chrysothemis only looking for domestic peace.

Therefore, resorting to foreign mythology permits to analyse the self from a historical perspective. The most intimate is made to coincide with the evocation of the most remote locations and people.

In the nineteenth century, one of the main models fashioning the Oriental narrative in operas was the following mentioned by Ralph P. Locke in "Reflections on Orientalism in Opera":

> A young tolerant, brave, possibly naïve, white European tenor-hero intrudes, at risk of disloyalty to his own people and colonialist ethic, into mysterious, dark-skinned colonized territory represented by alluring dancing girls, a deeply affectionate, sensitive lyric soprano incurring wrath of brutal, intransigent, tribal chieftain (bass or baritone) and blindly obedient chorus of male savages.[461]

If there were many variations on this pattern, more often than not, one of the protagonists always retained some of the traits featuring in this definition.

This is the model from which Meyerbeer's 1865 *L'Africaine* seems to be somehow derived, as Vasco da Gama reaches Queen Selika's island where richly adorned girls are indeed dancing welcoming the queen. Queen Selika who is in love with him and saves his life several times during the opera commits suicide sensuously inhaling manchineel flowers after she understands that he prefers remaining wih Ines. In 1871 *Aida*, one finds the beautiful Ethiopian slave princess in love with the Egyptian Radames, instrumentalised by Amonasro her father who does not hesitate to brutally require she deceives her lover.

These developments in the Oriental or exotic narrative was in keeping with the tendency in English Victorian and romantic writers to use references to the *Arabian Nights* as allusions to "the wonderful against the mundane, and the imaginative against the prosaic and the rational"[462].

Charlotte Brontë's 1847 *Jane Eyre* portrays Bertha Mason, Edward Rochester's first wife as an alienated and bestial half caste woman :

> Bertha Mason is mad; and she came of a mad family; idiots and maniacs through three generations! Her mother, the Creole was both a madwoman and a drunkard!_ as I found out after I had wed the daughter […] What it was, whether beast or human being, one could not, at first sight, tell: it grovelled, seemingly, on all fours; it snatched and growled like some strange, wild animal: but it was covered with clothing, and a quantity of dark, grizzled hair, wild as a mane, hid its heads and face.[463]

---

[461] Ralph P. Locke, "Reflections on Orientalism in Opera", *Revista de Musicología*, 16.6, "Del XV Congreso de la Sociedad Internacional de Musicología: Culturas Musicales Del Mediterráneo y sus Ramificaciones" (1993): 3122-3134, 3124-3125.

[462] Julia Kuehn, *Exoticism in Nineteenth Century Literature* on the website *Discovering Literature: Romantics and Victorians*, British Library website, 15 May 2014, https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/exoticism-in-19th-century-literature, 6 July 2017

[463] Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, online edition: e-books directory, London: transcription of the second Service and Paton edition, 1897, 490.

Animalised, two pages later, she is compared to a hyena standing on its hind feet[464]. She is no ordinary character, but rather a fantastic madwoman in the attic, an ambiguous being, neither beast nor human, neither woman nor man. Neither black nor white, she is a "fierce ragout" with red balls for eyes[465].

Besides, from the 18th century narratives, the East as well as Catholic France have often been associated with a critique of absolutism and religious authoritarianism[466]. Thus, imagining the East became political. Masculine Oriental despots are gradually replaced by reformed males and heroic female heroes who, like Sheherazade, are there to ensure that the excesses of the male despots are regulated[467].

Sometimes felt a radical example of cultural relativism, nowadays, operas such as the 1991 *The Death of Klinghoffer*, can sometimes offer access to reconciliation between people in spite of terrorism. Promoting intercultural understanding by focusing on the terrorist's traumatic childhood at the retrospective beginning of the work and by presenting choruses of Israeli and Palestinians, the opera gives the Western spectator the possibility of empathy for those he potentially never endeavoured to understand humanly. The tight relationship between the captain and the terrorist leader also permits us to focus on the human side of terrorism.

This opera is obviously based on a brand of humanism inherited from Edward W. Said in *Orientalism_Western Conceptions of the Orient* as it undoes the all-too-easy association between the Easterner and the terrorist fostered by the media. For Edward W. Said:

> Rather than the manufactured clash of civilizations, we need to concentrate on the slow working together of cultures that overlap, borrow from each other, and live together in far more interesting ways than any abridged or inauthentic mode of understanding can allow.[468]

Throughout the opera, even in the face of brutal emergency in the context of the mediatized real life event of the hijacking of the Achille Lauro in 1985, we are forced to admit a new calmer temporality in our reflexion about the Orient. This calm temporality building a common humanism allows analysis and thought to replace the "short bursts of polemical, thought-stopping fury" resulting in the creation of labels, antagonistic, polarized and belligerent identities rather than in exchange[469].

From the Antiquity, both in the literary and operatic tradition, the Orient has been perceived as a place to situate romance, exotic beings, haunting traumatic memories and landscapes to

---

[464] *Ibid*., 492.
[465] *Ibid*., 494.
[466] *A Companion to the Eighteenth Century British Novel and Culture*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005, 76.
[467] *A Companion to the Eighteenth century British Novel and Culture*, *op.cit*., 77.
[468] Edward W.Said, *Orientalism_Western Conceptions of the Orient*, London: Penguin Classics, 2003, 19.
[469] *Ibid*., 14.

reformulate what Edward W. Said announces in his book. It also permitted to represent the exacerbation of the diametrical opposition inherent in human sentiments (love, passion and incarceration, violence; refinement and cruelty, the beautiful and the macabre, the real and the imaginary (see Mozart's *Entfuhrung aus dem Serail*), masculine and feminine power). However, one of the most important contributions of the Orientalist brand of writing literature/composing operas was to forward the reflection on the self and the other, national cultural identity and to reconcile various divergent components.

Bibliography

1-PRIMARY SOURCES

A/Literary Works

Albert Camus, *Myth of Sisyphus*, Paris: Gallimard, 1985.

Alfred Jarry, *Ubu Roi*, Paris: J'ai Lu, 2013.

Alfred Tennyson, "*Maud" and Other Poems*, London: Strahan and Co, 1869.

André Breton, *Manifeste du surréalisme,* Paris: Folio, 1985.

Angela Carter, *Nights at the Circus*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1984.

Idem, "Puss-in-Boots", *The Bloody Chamber*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993.

Ann Radcliffe, *Mysteries of Udolpho*, London: Penguin Classics, 2001.

Anonyme, *Beowulf*, London: Penguin Classics, 2003.

Idem, Haec Vir: or the Womanish Man, Exeter: The Rota at the University of Exeter, 1973.

Idem, Hic Mulier, Exeter: The Rota at the University of Exeter, 1973.

Antonia Susan Byatt, "Medusa's Ankle", *The Matisse Stories***,** New York: Vintage International, 1993.

Aphra Behn, *The Rover*, Gutenberg Project website, n.d., http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/21339/pg21339.epub?session_id=58680e982cd830c23d7f4a96da4f93109e9fb720, accessed May 2017.

Baldassare Castiglione, *Book of the Courtier*, Archive.org website, n.d., https://archive.org/stream/bookofcourtier00castuoft/bookofcourtier00castuoft_djvu.txt, accessed May 2017.

Ben Jonson, *Bartholmew Fair,* Gutenberg Project website, n.d., http://www.gutenberg.org/files/49461/49461-h/49461-h.htm, accessed May 2017.

Idem, Volpone, Gutenberg Project website, n.d., http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/4039/pg4039images.epub?session_id=58680e982cd830c23d7f4a96da4f93109e9fb720, accessed May 2017.

Idem, Every Man In His Humour, Gutenberg Project website, n.d., http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/3694/pg3694.epub?session_id=58680e982cd830c23d7f4a96da4f93109e9fb720, accessed May 2017.

Idem, Every Man Out of His Humour, Gutenberg Project website, n.d., http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/3695/pg3695images.epub?session_id=58680e982cd830c23d7f4a96da4f93109e9fb720, accessed May 2017.

Bertolt Brecht, *Baal*, Paris: L'Arche éditeur, 1997.

Idem, Die Massnahme, Chto Delat website, n.d., https://chtodelat.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Brecht-TheMeasuresTaken.pdf, accessed May 2017.

Idem, Man Equals Man, Yale Union website, n.d., http://yaleunion.org/secret/brecht_Manisman.pdf, accessed December 2016.

Idem, The Street Scene, A Basic Model for an Epic Theater, translated by John Willet, Semantic Scholar website, n.d., https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/bf8a/64691ff221c577bf660b3605c9feec1b5b3a.pdf, accessed August 2017.

Idem, Brecht on Theatre, London: Methuen, 1964.

Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, Strasbourg CRDP website, n.d., www.crdp-strasbourg.fr/je_lis_libre/livres/Stoker_Dracula.pdf, accessed December 2016**.**

Célestin Monga, *Fragments d'un Crépuscule Blessé*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1990.

Charles Dickens, *Bleak House*, New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1872.

Idem, Dombey and Son, London: Wordsworth Classics, 1999.

Idem, Hard Times, New York: Signet Classics, 2008.

Idem, The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby, Gutenberg Project website, n.d., http://www.gutenberg.org/9/6/967/, accessed 2016.

Idem, Oliver Twist, London: Penguin Classics, 2003.

Idem, Oliver Twist, Gutenberg Project website, n.d., https://www.gutenberg.org/files/730/730-h/730-h.htm, accessed February 2017.

Idem, “Gin Shops”, *Sketches by Boz*, volume 1, London: John Macrone, 1836.

Charles Robert Maturin, *The Wild Irish Boy*, London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, 1808.

Idem, The Milesian Chief, Location unknown: General Books, 2013.

Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, e-books directory, transcription of the second Service and Paton edition, London, 1897.

Idem, Wuthering Heights, New York: Signet Classics, 2011.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper*, Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006.

Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta,* Indianapolis (Ind.): Hackett Publishing, 2009.

D.H. Lawrence, *Women in Love,* Hamburg ; Paris ; Bologna: The Albatross, 1936.

David Lodge, *Nice Work,* London: Penguin Books, 1993.

David Malouf, *Typewriter Music*, University of Queensland Press, 2007.

Edgar Allan Poe, “The Tell-Tale Heart”, *Great Short Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, New York: Harper & Row, 1970. “Ligeia” 175-193 ; “The Tell-Tale Heart” 384-389.

Idem, The Murders of the Rue Morgue, Gutenberg Project website, n.d., https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2147/2147-h/2147-h.htm, accessed August 2017.

Edith Wharton, *The Age of Innocence*, Merkaba Press, 2017, googlebooks website, n.d.,https://books.google.fr/books?id=0PHGDgAAQBAJ&pg=PT13&lpg=PT13&dq=%5Bthe%5D+persons+of+their+world+lived+in+an+atmosphere+of+faint+implications+and+pale+delicacies,+and+the+fact+that+he+and+she+understood+each+other+without+a+word+seemed+to+the+young+man+to+bring+them+nearer+than+any+explanation+would+have+done.&source=bl&ots=-xQ3MNR15J&sig=t_cUpJIJvxgnNm2NJoYCmLlxR8U&hl=fr&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjB8fmBy7PVAhUCPBoKHQIkC3oQ6AEIQjAD#v=onepage&q&f=false, accessed 31 August 2017.

Eugene O’Neill, *Long Day’s Journey into Night,* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956.

Idem, The Hairy Ape, New York: Boni & Liveright, 1922.

Flannery O’Connor, *Complete Stories,* London: Faber and Faber, 1990.

Ford Madox Ford, *The Good Soldier*, New York: J. Lane, 1915.

Frank Norris, *The Octopus,* London: T. Nelson, 1908.

Idem, The Pit, New York: Grove press, 1956.

Franz Kafka, *Metamorphosis,* New York: W. W. Norton, 1996.

Geffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblemes,* Menston: Scholar Press, 1969.

George Eliot, *Adam Bede*, London: J. M. Dent, 1906.

Idem, Daniel Deronda, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984.

Idem, Middlemarch, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986.

Idem, Romola, London: Smith, Elder and C°, 1871.

Idem, The Mill on the Floss, London: Cassell, 1910.

Idem, The Lifted Veil, Oxford University Press, 1999.

Grace Paley, "The Loudest Voice", *Collected Stories,* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007.

Graham Swift, *Ever After*, New York: Vintage International, 1993.

Idem, Out of this World, London: Picador, 1988.

Idem, Last Orders, London: Picador, 1996.

Idem, Learning to Swim, "Seraglio", London: Picador, 1982.

Idem, The Sweet Shop Owner, London: Picador, 1980

Idem, Tomorrow, London: Picador, 2007.

Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin***,** London: Ingram, Cooke and Co., 1852.

Henry Crabb Robinson, *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence*, ed. Thomas Sadler, London: Macmillan, 1869.

Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw,* New York: W. W. Norton, 1999.

Herbert George Wells, *The Island of Dr Moreau,* London: Penguin Classics, 2005.

Herman Melville, *Billy Budd,* London, Bombay, Sydney: Constable and C°, 1924.

Idem, Moby Dick, Princeton University website, n.d., http://etcweb.princeton.edu/batke/moby/moby_109.html, accessed September 2017.

Honoré de Balzac, *Le Lys dans la vallée*, Paris: Garnier Flammarion, 2010.

Horace Walpole, *Castle of Otranto*, London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Igor Stravinsky, *Chroniques de ma vie*, Paris: Denoël et Steele, 1935.

James Graham Ballard, "Prima Belladonna", *The Complete Short Stories*, London: Flamingo, 2002.

James Joyce, *Finnegan's Wake*, New York ; London: Garland, 1991.

James Thomson, *The City of Dreadful Night*, London: B. Dobell, 1910.

Jerome David Salinger, *Catcher in the Rye,* Boston: Little, Brown and C°, 1952.

John Dos Passos, *The Big Money***,** New York: Queens House, 1937.

John Dryden, *Mac Flecknoe*, poetry foundation.org, n.d., https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44181/mac-flecknoe, accessed December 2016.

John Lily, *Mother Bombie*, Manchester University Press, 2010.

John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Idem, Paradise Regained, London: Cassell, 1891.

John Osborne, *Look Back in Anger,* London: Faber and Faber, 1957.

John Updike, *Rabbit Run*, New York: A.A. Knopf, 1970.

Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, New York: Routledge, 2006.

Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim,* Paris: Gallimard, 1933.

Joseph Heller, *Catch 22*, New York: Vintage, 1994.

Katherine Dunn, *Geek Love,* New York: Vintage contemporaries, 2002.

Kazuo Ishiguro, *An Artist of the Floating World,* London ; Boston: Faber and Faber, 1991.

Idem, Never Let Me Go, London: Faber and Faber, 2005.

Idem, The Remains of the Day, London, Boston: Faber and Faber, 1989.

Idem, When We Were Orphans, London: Faber and Faber, 2000.

Laurence Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy,* London: Dent, 1902.

Idem, The Life and Opinion of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman, Münich: Günter Jügensmeier. 2005.

Ludovico Ariosto, *La Cassaria,* Vinegia: per M. Sessa, 1536.

Idem, Orlando Furioso, Paris: appresso M. Prault, 1768.

Margaret Atwood, "Hairball", *Wilderness Tips*, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991.

Mark Twain, *Roughing It,* New York-London: Harper and Brothers, 1899.

Idem, "A Trial", *Roughing It*, chapter 50, Gutenberg Project website, n.d., https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3177/3177-h/3177-h.htm, accessed August 2017.

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, Oxford: Bodleian library, 2008.

Matteo Maria Boiardo, *Orlando Innamorato,* Bologna: Romagnoli-Dall' Acqua, 1906-1907.

Michel de Montaigne, *Apologie de Raymond Sebond*, Paris: Garnier Fammarion, 1999.

Moliere, *Don Juan,* Paris: J. Bricon et A. Lesot, 1901.

Idem, Don Juan, online edition: Mozambook, 2001.

Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray,* Berne-Paris-London: Scherz and Hallwag, 1947.

Plato, "Thaetetus", *Dialogues of Plato*, Boston: MobileReference, 2003-2008.

Plutarque, *Vies parallèles,* Paris: C. Barbin, 1694.

Prudentius, *Psychomachie*, Paris: unknown publisher, 1933.

Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde,* London: Parragon, 1994.

Idem, The Master of Ballantrae, New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1925.

Salman Rushdie, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet,* London: Vintage, 2000.

Samuel Beckett, *Endgame*, New York: Grove Press, 1958.

Idem, Waiting for Godot, New York: Grove Press, 2006.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "This Lime Tree Bower My Prison", Poetry Foundation.org website, n.d., https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43992/this-lime-tree-bower-my-prison, accessed December 2016.

Saul Bellow, *Herzog,* Harmondsworth: Penguin books, 1967.

Sherwood Anderson, "Hands", *Winesburg, Ohio*, Athens: Ohio University press, 1997.

Stephen Gosson, *The Schoole of Abuse*, Archive.org website, n.d., https://archive.org/stream/schoolabusecont00collgoog/schoolabusecont00collgoog_djvu.txt, accessed December 2015.

Suetone, *The Twelve Caesars*, Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Co., 2011.

Sydney Owenson (Lady Morgan), *The Wild Irish Girl*, London: Pandora, 1986.

Idem, O'Donnel, London: Wentworth Press, 2016.

Idem, The O'Briens and the O'Flaherty, London: Forgotten Books, 2017

Theodor Dreiser, *Sister Carrie*, New York: Barnes and Noble, 2005.

Theophrastus, *The Characters*, Charles E. Bennett, William Alexander Hammond (eds), New York: Longmans, Green and Co, 1902.

Thomas Dekker, Thomas Middleton, *The Roaring Girl,* London: E. Benn ; New York: W. W. Norton, 1976.

Idem, The Honest Whore, London: Nick Hern Books in association with Globe Education, 1998.

Thomas De Quincey, *Confessions of an Opium-Eater*, London: Macdonald, 1956.

Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles,* London: MacMillan, 1928.

Torquato Tasso, *Aminta,* Oxford, n.d.

Idem, Jerusalem Delivered, London ; Glasgow ; New York: G. Routledge and Sons, 1890.

Turold, *Chanson de Roland,* Paris: librairie de la bibliothèque nationale, 1895.

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway,* New York: Random House, n.d.

Idem, The Letters of Virginia Woolf, 1936-1941, Boston: Mariner Books, 1982.

Idem, "On Being Ill", *Family Business Review*, 4.2.(Summer 1993): 199-201.

Willa Cather, *The Song of the Lark.* Amsterdam ; New York: Rodopi, 2010.

William Congreve, *The Way of the World,* London: A. & C.Black ; New York: W. W. Norton, 1993.

William Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!* Pasadena (Cal.): Salem Press, 2012.

Idem, Sound and the Fury, London: Chatto and Windus, 1931.

William Gaddis, *Carpenter's Gothic,* New York: Viking, 1985.

William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Idem, As You Like It, Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Idem, Antony and Cleopatra, London: W. Kent & Co., n.d.

Idem, Coriolanus, Cambridge University Press, 1911.

Idem, Falstaff, Tuskaloosa (Al.): Borgo Press, 2009.

Idem, King Lear, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000.

Idem, Love's Labour's Lost, London: Cassell, 1899.

Idem, Macbeth, London: J. C. and EC. Jack, n.d.

Idem, Much Ado About Nothing, London: T. H. Lacy, n.d.

Idem, Othello, London: Cassell, 1899.

Idem, Richard II, London: B. Quaritch, 1916.

Idem, Tempest, London: Methuen, 1954.

Idem, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Cambridge University Press, 1921.

Idem, Twelfth Night, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001.

William Wager, *The Longer Thou Livest, The More Fool Thou Art*, Archive.org website, n.d., https://archive.org/details/longerthoulivest00wage, accessed August 2016.

William Styron, *Sophie's Choice,* New York: Random House, 1979.

William Thackeray, *The Newcomes*, London: Smith, Elder, 1888.

Idem, The Newcomes, Gutenberg Project website,n.d., https://www.gutenberg.org/files/7467/7467-h/7467-h.htm, accessed August 2017.

Idem, Vanity Fair, London: J. M. Dent ; New York: E. P. Dutton, 1948.

Idem, Vanity Fair, Pennsylvania University Electronic Clasics series, Gutenberg Project, 2000, http://gutenberg.us/Results?SearchEverything=vanity%20fair&EverythingType=0, accessed August 2016.

B/Musical Works

Agostino Steffani, *Niobe, Regina di Tebe*, premiere: Hoftheater, Munich, 1688.

Alban Berg, *Lulu*, premiere: Zurich opera, 1937/1979.

Ambroise Thomas, *Hamlet*, premiere: Le Pelletier room, Paris, 1868.

Idem, Mignon, premiere: Opéra Comique, Paris, 1866.

Antonin Dvorak, *The Devil and Kate*, premiere: National Theatre, Prague, 1899.

Antonio Vivaldi, *Orlando Furioso*, premiere: Teatro Sant'Angelo, Venice, 1727.

Idem, Scanderberg, premiere: Paris Opera, 1718.

Arrigo Boito, *Mefistofele*, premiere: La Scala, Milan, 1868.

Camille Saint-Saens, *Samson et Dalila*, premiere: Ducal Theater, Weimar, 1877.

Carl Maria von Weber, *Der Freischütz*, premiere: Schauspielhaus, Berlin, 1821.

Charles Dickens, *Is She His Wife? Or Something Singular*, premiere: London, 1877.

Idem, The Village Coquettes, premiere: London, 1836.

Charles Gounod, *Mireille*, premiere: Théâtre Lyrique, Paris, 1864.

Christoph Willibald Glück, *Alceste*, premiere: Burgtheater, Vienna, 1767.

Claudio Monteverdi, *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, premiere: Venice, 1642.

Idem, Orfeo, premiere: Mantua, 1607.

Daniel-François-Esprit Auber, *La muette de Portici*, premiere: Le Pelletier room, Paris, 1828.

Dmitri Shostakovitch, *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, premiere: Maly Theater, Leningrad,1934.

Idem, Orango, premiere: place unknown, 1932.

Idem, The Nose, premiere: Maly Theatre, Leningrad, 1930.

Engelbert Humperdinck, *Hänsel und Gretel*, premiere: Hofftheater, Weimar, 1893.

Francesco Cavalli, *Gli Amori di Apollo e Dafne*, premiere: Teatro San Cassiano, Venice.

Idem, Il Giasone, premiere: Teatro San Cassiano, Venice, 1649.

Idem, La Calisto, premiere: Teatro San Apollinare, 1651.

Francis Poulenc, *Dialogue des Carmélites*, premiere: La Scala, Milan, 1957.

Gaetano Donizetti, *Linda di Chamounix*, premiere: Kärntnertortheater, Vienna, 1842.

Idem, Lucia di Lammermoor, premiere: Teatro di San Carlo, Naples, 1835.

Idem, Lucrezia Borgia, premiere: Scala, Milan, 1833.

Georg Benda, *Medea*, premiere: Theater am Rannstädtertor; Leipzig, 1775.

Idem, Pygmalion, premiere: Court Theater, Gotha, 1779.

George Benjamin, *Written on Skin*, premiere: Aix en Provence festival, 2012.

George Bizet, *Carmen*, premiere: Opéra Comique Paris, 1875.

George Friedrich Handel, *Agrippina*, premiere: Venice Carnival, 1710.

Idem, Giulio Cesare, premiere: *King's* théâtre Haymarket, London, 1724.

Idem, Orlando, premiere: London,1733.

Idem, Scipione, premiere: King's Theater, London, 1726.

Idem, Tamerlano, premiere: King's Theater, London,1724

Giacomo Manzoni, *Atomtod,* premiere: Milan, 1965.

Giacomo Meyerbeer, *Le Pardon de Ploërmel,* premiere: Opéra-Comique, Paris, 1859.

Idem, L'Africaine, premiere: Paris Opera, 1865.

Idem, L'étoile du Nord, premiere: Opéra Comique, Paris, 1854.

Giacomo Puccini, *Turandot*, premiere: Scala, Milan, 1926.

Gian Carlo Menotti, *The Medium*, premiere: Columbia University, 1946.

Gioachino Rossini, *Barber of Sevilla*, premiere: Teatro Argentina, Rome, 1816.

Idem, La Cenerentola, premiere: Teatro Valle, Rome, 1817.

Idem, La Pietra del Paragone, premiere: Scala, Milan, 1812.

Idem, Il Turco in Italia, premiere: Scala Milan, 1814.

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi, *La Serva Padrona*, premiere: Teatro San Bartolomeo, Naples, 1733.

György Ligeti, *Le Grand Macabre*, premiere: Royal Swedish Opera, Stockholm, 1978.

Giuseppe Verdi, *Aida*, premiere: Khedivial Opera House, Cairo, 1871.

Idem, Falstaff, premiere: Scala, Milan, 1894.

Idem, La Traviata, premiere: Teatro La Fenice, Venice, 1853.

Hans Werner Henze, *Der Junge Lord*, premiere: Deutsche Oper, Berlin, 1965.

Heinrich Marschner, *Der Vampyr*, premiere: Leipzig, 1828.

Idem, Hans Heiling, premiere: Berlin State Opera, 1833.

Henry Purcell, *Dido and Aeneas*, premiere: Josias Priest's Girls' School, London, 1689.

Idem, King Arthur, premiere: Queen's Theatre, Dorset Garden, London, 1691.

Idem, The Fairy Queen, premiere: Queen's Theatre, Dorset Garden, London, 1692.

Iain Bell, *A Harlot's Progress*, premiere: Theater an der Wien, Vienna, 2013.

Igor Stravinsky, *A Rake's Progress*, premiere: Teatro La Fenice, Venice, 1951.

Idem, Oedipus Rex, premiere: Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt, Paris, 1927.

Isaac Bickerstaffe, *The Captive, A Comic Opera*, premiere: Theatre-Royal in the Hay-Market, London, 1769.

Jacques Offenbach, *Tales of Hoffmann*, premiere: Opéra-Comique, Paris, 1881.

Jake Heggie, *Moby Dick,* premiere: Dallas Opera, 2010.

Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Alceste ou le triomphe d'Alcide*, premiere: Théâtre du Palais Royal, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, 1674.

Idem, Armide, premiere: Théâtre du Palais Royal, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, 1686.

Idem, Atys, premiere: Théâtre du Palais Royal, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, 1676.

Idem, Bellerophon, premiere: Théâtre du Palais Royal, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, 1679.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Pygmalion*, premiere: Hôtel de Ville, Lyon, 1770.

Jean-Philippe Rameau, *Hypolite et Aricie*, premiere: Académie royale de musique, Paris, 1733.

John Adams, *The Death of Klinghoffer,* premiere: La Monnaie, Bruxelles, 1991.

John Blow, *Venus and Adonis*, premiere: Location Unknown, 1683.

John Dryden, *Albion and Albanius*, premiere: Dorset Garden Theatre, London.1685.

Joseph Friebert, *Das Serail, oder die unvermuthete Zusammenkunft in der Sclaverey zwischen Vater, Tochter und Sohn*, premiere: Location Unknown, 1779.

Jules Massenet, *Griselidis*, premiere: Comédie française, Paris, 1901.

Kaija Saariaho, *L'amour de loin*, premiere: Salzburg festival, 2000.

Karl Birger Blomdahl, *Aniara*, premiere: Royal Swedish Opera, Stockholm, 1959.

Kurt Weill, *Street Scene*, premiere: Philadelphie, 1946.

Kurt Weill, Bertolt Brecht, *Der Jasager and der Neinsager*, premiere: Berlin, 1930.

Idem, The Decision, premiere: Berlin, 1930.

Idem, The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny, premiere: New Theater, Leipzig, 1930.

Idem, *The Threepenny Opera*, premiere: Berlin, 1928.

Idem with Paul Hindemith, The Flight Across the Ocean, premiere: Southwest German Radio Orchestra, 1929.

La Belle Genièvre, premiere: unknown.

Léo Delibes, *Lakmé*, premiere: Opéra Comique, Paris, 1883.

Léonard Bernstein, *Candide*, premiere: Broadway, 1956.
Leoš Janáček, *Jenufa*, premiere: Théâtre Divadle na Veveří, Brno, 1904.

Louis Spohr, *Faust*, premiere: Prague, 1816.

Luciano Bério, *Un re in ascolto*, premiere: Salzburg, 1984.

Luigi Cherubini, *Medea*, premiere: Feydeau Theater, Paris, 1797.

Modest Mussorgsky, *Khovanschchina*, premiere: Marrinsky Theater, Saint Petersburg, 1886.

Nicola Porpora, *Angelica e Medoro*, premiere: Palazzo del Principe di Torella, Naples, 1720.

Nicolas Dalayrac, *Le Corsaire*, premiere: Versailles Court, 1783.

Paul Dukas, *Ariane et Barbe-Bleuer*, premiere: Opéra Comique, Paris, 1907.

Paul Hindemith, *Hérodiade*, premiere: Washington, 1944.

Peter Eötvös, *Angels in America*, premiere: Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris, 2004.

Pierre Guédron and others, *Ballet de la delivrance de Renaud*, premiere: Grand Salle du Louvre, Paris, 1617.

Pietro Mascagni, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, premiere: Rome Opera, 1889.

Reinhard Keiser, *Mehmed II*, premiere: location unknown, 1693

Richard Strauss, *Salome,* premiere: Chatelet Theater, Paris, 1907.

Richard Wagner, *The Ring*, premiere: Bayreuth, 1876.

Idem, Parsifal, premiere: Bayreuth, 1882.

Robert Garnier, *Bradamante*, premiere: Paris, 1582.

Salvatore Sciarrino, *Luci Mie Traditrici*, premiere: Schwetzingen Festival, 1998.

Samuel Arnold, *The Banditti or Love's Labyrinth*, premiere: Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, London, 1781.

Sergueï Prokoviev, *Lieutenant Kijé*, premiere: location unknown, 1929.

Idem, Love for Three Oranges, premiere: Chicago, 1921.

Stefano Landi, *Sant'Alessio*, premiere: the Palazzo Barberini ai Giubbonari, Rome, 1631.

Stephen Storace, James Cobb, *The Haunted Tower*, premiere: Drury Lane, London, 1789.

Thomas Adès, *The Exterminating Angel*, premiere: Salzburg festival, 2016.

Tobin Stokes, *Fallujah*, premiere: Long Beach Opera, New York City Opera, 2016.

William Davenant, *The Siege of Rhodes,* premiere: Rutland House, London, 1656.

William Shield, *Castle of Andalusia*, premiere: precise location unknown, London, 1782.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Cosi fan Tutte*, premiere: Burg Theater, Vienna, 1790.

Idem, Don Giovanni, premiere: Prague, 1787.

*Idem, Entführung aus dem Serail***,** premiere: Burg theatre, Vienna, 1782.

Idem, Idomeneo, premiere: Cuvilliés Theatre, Munich, 1781.

Idem, Le Nozze di Figaro, premiere: Burgtheater, Vienna, 1786.

Idem, Mitridate, premiere: Teatro regio ducal, Milan, 1770

C/Other artistic works

François Boucher, *Angelica and Medoro*, 1763, Metropolitan Museum, New York City.

William Hogarth, *A Harlot's Progress*, 1732, Ackland Art Museum, the University of Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Idem, A Rake's Progress, 1733, Sir John Soanes Museum, London.

2-SECONDARY SOURCES

A/Monographs

Alan Mallach, *The Autumn of Italian Opera, From Verismo to Modernism 1890-1915,* Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2007.

A. Robert Lee, *The Nineteenth-Century American Short Story,* Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1989.

Alexander Leggatt, *English Drama: from Shakespeare to the Restoration 1590-1660*, London: Routledge, 2014.

Anthony Synnott, *The Body Social, Symbolism, Self and Society,* London, New York: Routledge, 1993.

Anthony William Butler, *The Characterology of Nathaniel Lee: or Studying Lee's study of Character*, Diss. Melbourne: Monash University, 2004.

Antonin Artaud, *Le théâtre et son double*, « Le théâtre de la cruauté », Paris: Gallimard, 1938.

Barbara Korte, *Body Language in Literature*, University of Toronto Press, 1997.

Battista Guarini, *Opere,* Turin: Utet, 1971.

Bertolt Brecht, *Ecrits sur le théâtre*, vol. 2, Paris: L'Arche, 1963-1979.

Brian McHale, *Constructing Postmodernism*, London: Routledge, 2012.

Célia Vieira, Isabel Rio Novo, *Inter Media: littérature, cinéma et intermédialité,* Paris: L'Harmattan, 2011.

Chris Salter, *Entangled: Technology and the Transformation of Performance*, Cambridge (Mass.), London (England): the MIT Press, 2010.

Chris Wiesenthal, *Figuring Madness in Nineteenth Century Fiction*, London, Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997.

Christine Buci-Glucksmann, *The Madness of Vision: On Baroque Aesthetics*, Athens: Ohio University Press, 2013.

Courtney Miller, *The Evolution of Madness; the Portrayal of Insanity in Opera*, Honors Theses, Richmond: Eastern Kentucky University, 2015.

David D. Galloway, *The Absurd Hero in American Fiction: Updike, Styron, Bellows, Salinger*, Austin: University of Texas Press. 2014.

David Krasner, David Saltz, *Staging Philosophy: Interactions of Theatre, Performance and Philosophy*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006.

David Lodge, *The Modes of Modern Writing. Metaphor, Metonymy, and the Typology of Modern Literature*, Chicago: Arnold, 1977.

David L. Minter, *Faulkner's Questioning Narratives: Fiction of His Major Phase, 1929-1942*, Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2001.

David Simmons, *The Anti-Hero in the American Novel. From Joseph Heller to Kurt Vonnegut,* New York, Houndsmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Deniis Waskul and Phillip Vannini (eds), *Body/Embodiment, Symbolic Interaction and the Sociology of the Body*, Aldershot, Burlington: Ashgate, 2006.

Edward Burns, *Character Acting and Being on the Pre-Modern Stage,* New York: St Martin's Press, 1990.

Edward W. Said, *Orientalism_Western Conceptions of the Orient,* London: Penguin Classics, 2003.

E.J. Cléry, *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction, 1762-1800*, Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Elizabeth Wright, *Post-modern Brecht, A Re-Presentation*, London: Routledge, 1989.

Idem, *Post-modern Brecht*, Googlebooks website, n.d., https://books.google.fr/books?id=UpPgDAAAQBAJ&pg=PT11&lpg=PT11&dq=elizabeth+wright+%E2%80%9Ctowards+the+great+narrative,+the+great+danger,+the+great+hero,+the+great+wrong,+the+great+goal&source=bl&ots=mZjg_oFnnZ&sig=iSmvq44lZLf6CWSWkpEzwN7JIKc&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwivj6Hvw8bZAhVEGsAKHfHqAkMQ6AEIKTAA#v=onepage&q=elizabeth%20wright%20%E2%80%9Ctowards%20the%20great%20narrative%2C%20the%20great%20danger%2C%20the%20great%20hero%2C%20the%20great%20wrong%2C%20the%20great%20goal&f=false, accessed August 2016.

François Cooren, *Action and Agency in Dialogue: Passion, Incarnation and ventriloquism*n, Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2010.

Françoise Escal, *Contretemps musique et littérature,* Paris: Méridiens Klincksieck, 1990.

Friedrich Nietzsche, *Considérations Inactuelles 1873-76*, Paris: Gallimard, 1992.

Idem, Human too Human, consulted online at: https://www.gutenberg.org/files/38145/38145-h/38145-h.htm, accessed December 2016.

Idem, Aurore and Le Gai Savoir, Paris: Librairie générale française, 1993.

Idem, The Case of Wagner, London: H. Henry and Co., 1896.

Gary Tomlinson, *Metaphysical Song: an Essay on Opera*, Princeton University Press, 1999.

George Henry Nettleton, *English Drama of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century (1642-1780)*, New York: The Macmillan company, 1932.

Gérard Dessons (dir.), *Penser la voix*, *chant-communication-linguistique clinique-littérature-musique-peinture-psychanalyse-théâtre*, Poitiers: la licorne, 1997.

Giorgio Agamben, *Language and Death. The Place of Negativity*, Oxford, Minneapolis: the University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

Jacqueline Waeber, *En musique dans le texte, le mélodrame de Rousseau à Schoenberg,* Paris: Van Dieren, 2005.

James K. Lyon, *Bertolt Brecht in America*, Princeton University Press, 2014.

James Peacock, Tim Lustig, *Diseases and Disorders in Contemporary Fiction: The Syndrome Syndrome,* New York, London: Routledge, 2013.

Janelle G. Reinelt, *After Brecht British Epic Theatre*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996.

Jean-Pol Madou, *Edouard Glissant : de mémoire d'arbres*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996.

John Armstrong, *The Art of Preserving Health,* London: A. Millar, 1765.

John H. Calico, *Brecht at the Opera*, Berkeley, London, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008.

John R.Clark, *The Modern Satiric Grotesque and its Traditions*, Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2015.

John Richetti, *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth Century Novel*, Cambridge

Univesity Press, 2006.

Joy H.Calico, *Brecht at the Opera,* Berkeley, London, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008.

Julia A Walker, *Expressionism and Modenrism in the American Theatre: Bodies, Voices, Words*, Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Karen Newman, *Shakespeare's Rhetoric of Comic Character, Dramatic Convention in Classical and Renaissance Comedy*, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2004.

Katherine H. Burkman, Judith Roof, *Staging the Rage: The Web of Misogyny in Modern Drama*, Vancouver: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1998.

Kimberley Rose Fairbrother Canton, *The Operatic Imperative in Anglo-American Literary Modernism: Pound, Stein, and Woolf*, PhD Thesis, Department of English of the University of Toronto, 2009.

Kirsty Martin, *Modernism and the Rhythms of Sympathy: Vernon Lee, Virginia Woolf, D.H. Lawrence,* Oxford University Press, 2013.

Laurent Feneyrou, *Musique et Dramaturgie, Esthétique de la representation au vingtième siècle*, Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2003.

Linda Dryden, *The Modern Gothic and Literary Doubles: Stevenson, Wilde and Wells*, New York: Springer, 2009.

Linda Hutcheon and Michael Hutcheon, *Opera: Desire, Disease and Death,* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999.

Lionel Abel, *Metatheater*, New York: Hill and Wang, 1963.

Idem, Tragedy and Metatheatre: Essays on Dramatic Form, Teaneck (NJ): Holmes and Meier, 2003.

Malcolm Budd, *Music and the Emotions: the Philosophical Theories*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985.

Marie-Luise Kohlke, Luisa Orza (dirs), *Negotiating Sexual Idioms: Image, Text, Performance,* Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2008.

Martin Esslin, *The Theatre of the Absurd*, London: Pelican Books, 1980.

Marzio Pieri, *Opéra et littérature*, *Histoire de l'opéra italien*, Liège: Mardaga, 1995.

Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*, Paris: Gallimard, 1972.

Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 1968.

Michael Bell, *Sentimentalism, Ethics and the Culture of Feeling,* Basingstoke ; New York: Palgrave, 2000.

Michael Booth, *English Plays of the Nineteenth Century*, vol.1, Oxford University Press, 1969.

Michael Halliwell, *Opera and the Novel: the Case of Henry James*, Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2005.

Monique Plaza, *Ecriture et Folie*, Paris: PUF, 1986.

Myriam Bailin, *The Sickroom in Victorian Fiction, the Art of Being Ill*, Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Niccolo Sabbatini, *Pratique pour fabriquer scènes et machines de théâtre*, Neuchâtel: Ides et calendes, Paris: 1977.

Oleg Mirochnikov, *The Vakhtangov Technique*, Teaching and Professional Fellowship 2006-2007, University of the Arts London.

Pamela Karantonis and Dylan Robinson (eds.), *Opera Indigene: Re/presenting First Nations and Indigenous Cultures*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2011.

Pascal Lécroart, Frédérique Toudoire-Surlapierre (eds.), *Eclats de voix : l'expression de la voix en littérature et en musique*, Paris: Improviste, 2005.

Patty Lee Parmalee, *Brecht's America*, Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1981.

Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Henry James, Balzac, Melodrama and the*

Mode of Excess, New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1976.

Peter Conrad, *Romantic Opera and Literary Form*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1977.

Pia Kleber and Colin Visser (eds), *Reinterpreting Brecht: his Influence on Contemporary Drama and Film*, Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Rainer Zaiser, *L'âge de la représentation : l'art du spectacle au XVIIe siècle : actes du IXe colloque du Centre International de Rencontres sur le XVIIe siècle,* Tübingen: Günther Narr Verlag, 2006.

Raphael Célis, *Littérature et musique*, Brussels: Saint Louis University Press, 1982.

Raymond Federman, *Surfiction*, University of Michigan: Swallow Press, 1975.

Richard Wagner, William Ashton Ellis, *Actors and Singers*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995.

Robert Lee, *The Nineteenth-Century American Short Story,* Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1989.

Roger Dragonetti*, La musique et les lettres : études de la littérature médiévale*, Genève: Librarie Droz, 1986.

Roland Barthes, *Brecht et le discours ; contribution à l'étude de la discursivité in œuvres complètes*, vol.3, Paris: Seuil, 1995.

Sandra M. Gilbert, Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic, The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth Century Imagination*, New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2000.

Sam Halliday, *Science and Technology in the Age of Hawthorne, Melville, Twain and James. Thinking and Writing Electricity*, NewYork, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Samuel Johnson, *Lives of the English Poets*, New York: Octagon, 1967.

Sandra M. Gilbert, Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic, The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth Century Imagination*, New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2000.

Sarah Hibberd, *Melodramatic Voices: Understanding Music Drama*, Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2011.

Sean M. Parr, *Melismatic madness: Coloratura and female vocality in mid nineteenth century French and Italian opera*, PhD, Columbia University, 2009.

Shoshana Felman, *Writing and Madness,* Palo Alto (Cal.): Stanford University Press, 2003.

Sophia Rosenfeld, *A Revolution in Language: the Problem of Signs in Late Eighteenth century France*, Palo Alto (Cal.): Stanford University Press, 2003.

Stefano Tani, *The Doomed Detective: The Contribution of the Detective Novel to Postmodern American and Italian Fiction*, Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984.

Stéphanie Craighill, *The Influence of Duality and Poe's Notion of the 'Bi-Part Soul' on the Genesis of Detective Fiction in the Nineteenth-Century,* Edinburgh: Edinburgh Napier University, 2010.

Stephen Benson, *Literary Music. Writing Music in Contemporary Fiction*, Aldershot, Burlington: Ashgate, 2006.

Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*, New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1978.

Sylvie Laurent, *Du pauvre blanc au « poor white trash » dans le roman américain et son arrière-plan depuis 1920*, PhD defended under the supervision of M. Pierre-Yves Pétillon, 2007.

Viktor Schklovsky, "Art as Device" in *Theory of Prose*, Champaign: Dalkey Archive Press, 1990.

Walter Bernhart and Michael Halliwell (eds.), *Word and Music Studies: Essays on Performativity and on Surveying the Field*, Amsterdam: Rodopi. 2014.

Willard Farnham, *The Shakespearian Grotesque, its Genesis and Transformation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971.

William M. Greenslade, *Degeneration, Culture and the Novel: 1880-1940*, Cambridge University Press, 1994.

B/Articles from Reviews and Chapters from Monographs

Alison Russel, "Deconstructing the New York Trilogy: Paul Auster's Anti-Detective Fiction.", *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, Winter 1990, 71.

Andrew S. Cairncross, "Shakespeare and Ariosto: *Much Ado About Nothing, King Lear*, and *Othello*.", *Renaissance Quarterly*, 29.2 (Summer 1976): 178-182.

Anne Carson, "Dirt and Desire: the Phenomenology of Female Pollution in Antiquity.", *Constructions of the Classical Body*, ed. James I. Porter, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999, 77-100.

Ann M. Mazur, "Tennyson's Maud.", Ilaria Natali, Annalisa Volpone, *Symptoms of Disorder: Reading Madness in British Literature 174-1845*, Amherst, New York: Cambria Press, 2016, 221-247.

Annie-Paule Mielle de Prinsac, « L'*Aminta* du Tasse a-t-elle inspiré Shakespeare? » *Etudes Epistémè*, n.6, 2004, electronic review.

Arthur H. Scouten, and Robert D. Hume, "'Restoration Comedy'and Its Audiences, 1660-1776.", *The Yearbook of English Studies*, n.10, 1980, 45-69.

Bernard F. Dick, "Ancient Pastoral and the Pathetic Fallacy.", *Comparative Literature*, 20.1 (Winter 1968): 27-44.

Bruno Nettl, "Musical Thinking and Thinking about Music.", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. Ethnomusicology: An Essay of Personal Interpretation*, 52.1 (Winter 1994): 139-148.

Burkhard Niederhoff, "E. M. Forster and the Supersession of Plot by Leitmotif: A Reading of *Aspects of the Novel* and *Howards End.*", *Anglia* 112, n. 3-4, 1994, 341-363.

Carl Dahlhaus, "The Dramaturgy of Italian Opera.", *History of the Italian Opera, Opera in Theory and Practice, Image and Myth*, University of Chicago, 2003, 73-150.

Caroline Marie, "Sense of Self and Sense of Place in *Orlando*: Virginia Woolf's Aesthetics of Pantomime.", Gina Potts, Lisa Shahriari (eds), *Virginia Woolf's Bloomsbury*, Volume 1, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, 75-85.

Catherine Cyssau, « La voix en visage. », Gérard Dessons (dir.), *Penser la voix*, *chant-communication-linguistique clinique-littérature-musique-peinture-psychanalyse-théâtre*, Poitiers: la licorne, 1997, 9-21.

Céline Frigau-Manning, "Singer-Machines: Describing Italian Singers, 1800-1850.", *The Opera Quarterly*, 28.3-4 (2012): 230-258.

Chiara Thumiger, "Greek Tragedy Between Human and Animal.", *Leeds International Classical Studies*, vol.7, n. 3, 2008.

Christian Grünnagel, « Le monstre « classique », un trompe-l'oeil? *Atys*, « tragédie en musique », et l'esthétique baroque. », *HeLix-Dossiers zur romanischen Literaturwissenschaft*, 1, 2009, 52-75.

Christophe Camard, « L'Italie selon Shakespeare et Ben Jonson : l'altérité dans un théâtre sans décor. », *LISA*, 6.3 (2008): 246-261.

Cornelia C. Coulter, "The Plautine Tradition in Shakespeare.", *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 19.1, 1920, 66-83.

Cynthia Deitering, "The Postnatural Novel: Toxic Consciousness in Fiction of the 1980s.", *The Ecocriticism Reader, Landmarks in Literary Ecology*, ed. Cheryl Glotfelty, Harold Fromm: University of Georgia Press, 1996.

David J. Rosner, "Anti-Modernism and Discourses of Melancholy.", *E-Rea*, 4.1, 2006.

Dino Franco Felluga, "Novel Poetry: Transgressing the Law of Genre.", *Victorian Poetry*, 41.4 (Winter 2003): 490-499.

Elin Diamond, "Brechtian Theory/Feminist Theory: toward a Gestic Feminist Criticism.", *Unmaking Mimesis: Essays on Feminism and Theater*, London: Routledge Psychology Press, 1997.

Elisabeth Sakellaridou, "Feminist Theater and the Brechtian Tradition, a Retrospect and a

Prospect.", *The Brecht Yearbook*, vol. 27, 2002, 179-199.

Eva-Lynn Alicia Jagoe, "Degrading Forms of Pantomime; Englishness and Shame in De Quincey.", *Studies in Romanticism*, 14.1. (Spring 2005): 23-40.

Francis Guinle, "Moros, Accius et Silena, Orlando. Trois aspects de la folie dans le théâtre pré-shakespearien.", *La folie-Shakespeare et les arts-Le tragique*, vol.7, 1989, 73-84.

Francis Sparshott, "Music and Feeling.", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 52.1 (Winter 1994): 23-3.

Georg Lukacs, « Grandeur et décadence de l'expressionnisme. », *Problèmes du réalisme*, vol.82, 1975.

Henri Meschonnic, « Le théâtre dans la voix. », Gérard Dessons (dir.), *Penser la voix*, *chant-communication-linguistique clinique-littérature-musique-peinture-psychanalyse-théâtre,* Poitiers: la licorne, 1997, 25-39.

Herbert Sussman, Gerhard Joseph, "Prefiguring the Posthuman, Dickens and Prosthesis.", *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 32.2 (2004): 617-628.

Ian Frederick Moulton, "A Monster Great Deformed": The Unruly Masculinity of Richard II.", *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 47.3 (Autumn 1996): 251-268.

James Berg, "The Properties of Character in *King Lear*.", Paul Yachnin and Jessica Slights, *Shakespeare and Character. Theory, History, Performance and Theatrical Persons*, New York: Palgrave Shakespeare Studies, 2009.

James Gifford, "Dramatic Text, Music Text: Competing Nationalist Styles in Restoration Opera.", *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies*, 14. 1 (2012).

James Schevill, "Notes on the Grotesque: Anderson, Brecht and Williams.", *Twentieth Century Literature*., 23.2 (May 1977): 229-238.

J.D. Thomas, "Tribal Culture, Pantomime, and the Communicative Face in E. Wharton's *Age of Innocence*.", *Edith Wharton Review*, 22.1 (2006) 1-5.

Jean-Michel Ganteau, « Horizons de l'inassimilable : du réalisme traumatique dans le

roman britannique contemporain. », *Etudes Britanniques Contemporaines*, 40, 2011, 105-120.

Jennifer Gerstel, "Irony, Deception, and Political Culture in the Works of Dmitri Shostakovich.", *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal*, 32.4 (December 1999): 5-51.

Jennifer Michaels, "Chaplin and Brecht: *The Gold Rush* and *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*.", *Literature / Film Quarterly*, 1980, vol. 8, 170-179.

Joe Snader, "The Oriental Captivity Narrative and Early English Fiction.", *Eighteenth Century Fiction*, 9.3 (April 1997): 267-298.

John Mullan, "Sterne's Comedy of Sentiments.", *Bulletin de la société d'études anglo-américaines des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, n.38, 1994, 233-241.

J.Th.Leerse, "Fiction Poetics and Cultural Stereotype: Local Colour in Scott, Morgan, and Maturin.", *The Modern Language Review*, 86.2 (April 1991): 273-284.

Julia A. Walker, "The Text/Performance Split across the Analytic/Continental Divide.", David Krasner, David Saltz, *Staging Philosophy: Interactions of Theatre, Performance and Philosophy*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006, 19-40.

Idem, "Why Performance? Why Now? Textuality and the Rearticulation of Human Presence.", *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, 16.1(Spring 2003): 149-175.

Julia Kuehn, "Exoticism in Nineteenth Century Literature.", Discovering Literature: Romantics and Victorians website, 15 May 2014, https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/exoticism-in-19th-century-literature, accessed July 2017.

Julien Dubruque, « Du chef de scène au chef d'orchestre. », *Musique, Images, Instruments*. *Orchestres au dix-huitième et dix-neuvième siècles : Composition, Disposition, Direction, Représentation*, Paris: CNRS éditions, 2010, 1780-1849.

Karen Laughlin, "Brechtian Theory and American Feminist Theatre.", *Brecht Sourcebook*, 1990.

Katherine Inglis, "Becoming Automatous: Automata in *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Our Mutual Friend.", Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, n.6, 2008.

Katherine Weese, “Normalising Freakery: Katherine Dunn’s *Geek Love* and the Female Grotesque.”, *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, 2010, 349-364.

Lars Eckstein, “A Love Supreme: Jazzthetic Strategies in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*.”, *African American Review*, 40.2 (Summer 2006): 271-283.

Linda and Michael Hutcheon, "Melodies and Maladies.", *Opera Canada*, Winter 1995, 14-15.

Idem, "Sexuality, Sin and the Social Order: Richard Wagner's *Parsifal*.", *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 7.3 (1995): 261-75.

Idem, "Famous Last Breaths: The Consumptive Heroine in Opera.", *Parallax* (U.K.), n.2, 1996, 1-22.

Idem, "Arias, Anxieties and Epidemics.", *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 157.12 (December 1997): 1734-5.

Idem, "'Alles was ist, endet': Living with the Knowledge of Death in Richard Wagner’s *Der Ring des Nibelungen*." *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 67.4 (1998): 789-811.

Line Cottegnies, « Princes et bouffons : aspects du grotesque dans le théâtre de Shakespeare. », *Sociétés et représentations*, 2000/2, n.10, 55-68.

Louis D. Rubin Jr, “The Great American Joke.”, David Simmons, *The Anti-Hero in the American Novel. From Joseph Heller to Kurt Vonnegut*, New York, Houndsmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Louise Viljoen, “‘I Have a Body, Therefore I Am’: Grotesque, Monstrous and Abject Bodies in Antjie Krog’s Poetry.”, Coullie, Judith Lütge & Visagie, Andries (eds.), *Antjie Krog. An Ethics of Body and Otherness*, Durban: UKZN Press, 2014, 98-132.

Marta Grabocz, « Entre naturalisme sonore et synthèse en temps réel : images et formes expressives dans la musique contemporaines.», *Archives contemporaines*, 4 November 2013.

Martha Vicinus, “Helpless and Unfriended”: Nineteenth Centry Domestic Melodrama.”,

New Literary History, 13.1, 1981, 127-143.

Michael Bristol, "Confusing Shakespeare's Characters with Real People: Reflections on Reading in Four Questions.", Paul Yachnin and Jessica Slights, eds. *Shakespeare and Character. Theory, History, Performance, and Theatrical Persons*, New York: Palgrave Shakespeare Studies, 2009.

Michael Halliwell, "Bliss: from Novel to Libretto to Opera.", *Australian Music Centre*, 18/03/2010.

Idem, "From Novel into Film into Opera: Multiple Transformations of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights.*", David Francis Urrows (ed.), *Essays on World/Music Adaptation and on Surveying the Field*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, n.d., 29-57.

Idem, "Her Throat, Full of Aching, Grieving Beauty": Reflections on Voice in the Operatic Adaptations of *The Great Gatsby* and *Sophie's Choice*.", Walter Bernhart, Lawrence Kramer (eds.), *On Voice*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, n.d., 1-27.

Idem, "Operatic Mythmaking and Bliss: Peter Carey's Novel as Film and Opera.", *Musicology Australia*, 34.2 (18/03/2010): 233-257.

Idem, "Singing from the Margins": Postcolonial Themes in *Voss* and *Waiting for the Barbarians*.", Pamela Karantonis and Dylan Robinson (eds.), *Opera Indigene: Re/presenting First Nations and Indigenous Cultures*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2011.

Idem, "Vocal Embodiment and Performing Language in Waiting for the Barbarians: Philip Glass's Adaptation of J. M. Coetzee's Novel.", Walter Bernhart and Michael Halliwell (eds.), *Word and Music Studies: Essays on Performativity and on Surveying the Field*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2014, 173-189.

Nadezda Mosusova, "Samuel Beckett and Music, an Absurd Essay about the Idea of Musicality and Musical Form in Samuel Beckett's Short Pieces - Influences and Possibilities.*", Musicology*, n.4, 2004, 113-120.

Nina Rapi, "Hide and Seek: the Search for a Lesbian Theater Aesthetic.", *New Theatre Quarterly*, 9.34 (May 1993): 147-158.

Nino Pirrotta, “Commedia dell’arte and Opera.”, *The Musical Quarterly*, 4.3 (July 1955): 305-324.

Norman Bulford, “Hybrid Monsters and Rival Aesthetics: Monsters in Seventeenth Century French Ballet and Opera.”, Ronald W. Tobin, Claire L. Carlin, *Theatrum Mundie: Studies in Honor of Ronald W. Tobin*, Charlottesville: Rookwood Press, 2003, 180-188.

Patrick J. Chura, “Vital Contact: Eugene O’Neill and the Working Class.”, *Twentieth Century Literature,* Hempstead: Hofstra University, 49.4, 2003.

Philippe Hemsen, « Sur le fameux concept de Regietheater. », Richard Wagner website, n.d., http://richardwagner.free.fr/regietheater.htm, accessed August 2017.

Pietro Misuraca, "Salvatore Sciarrino. The Sicilian Alchemist Composer." *Interdisciplinary Studies in Musicology*, vol.12, 2012, 173-189.

Ralph P. Locke, “Reflections on Orientalism in Opera (and Musical Theater).”, *Revista de Musicología*, 16. 6, Del XV Congreso de la Sociedad Internacional de Musicología: Culturas Musicales Del Mediterráneo y sus Ramificaciones (1993): 3122-3134.

Robert M. Maniquis, “Review of *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess* by Peter Brooks.”, *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, 32.4 (March 1978): 483-490.

Roman Wald-Lasowski, « Ecriture et piano. Gide, Barthes, Chopin. », Raphael Célis, *Littérature et musique*, Brussels: Saint Louis University Press, 1982.

Sam Halliday, “Science and Tehnology in the Age of Hawthorne, Melville, Twain and James. Thinking and Writing Electricity.”, *American Literature Reading in the 21st Century*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Sander L. Gilman, “Nietzsche, Bizet and Wagner: Ilness, Health and Race in the Nineteenth Century.”, *The Opera Quarterly,* 23.2-3 (1 March 2007): 247–264.

Sandra L. Richards, “Wasn’t Brecht an African Writer ?: Parallels with Contemporary Nigerian Drama.”, John Fuegi and al (eds.) *Brecht in Asia and Africa*, University of Hong Kong,

1989, 168-185.

Scott Brewster, “Seeing Things: Gothic and the Madness of Interpretation.”, David Punter, *A New Companion to the Gothic*, Malden, Oxford, Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2012.

Stephen Benson, “Contemporary Fiction and Narratorial Acoustics: Graham Swift’s *Tomorrow*.”, *Textual Practice*, 25.3 (2011): 585-601.

Idem, “David Malouf’s *Moments Musicaux*.”, *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, 38.1 (2003): 5-21.

Sue Ellen Case, “Time and Time Again: Playing Brecht and Beckett’s Real Time in the Digital Age.”, *The Brecht Yearbook*, vol. 27, 2002, 163-179.

Susan McClary, “Constructions of Gender in Monteverdi’s Dramatic Music.”, *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 1.3 (November 1989): 203-23.

Toni Morrison, "Memory, Creation and Writing." *Thought,* 59 (1984): 385-90.

Viktor Schklovsky, “Art as Device.”, *Theory of Prose*, trans Benkamin Sher, Dalkey Archive Press, 1990.

Vsevolod Meyerhold, « Entretien avec des étudiants. Juin 1938. », *Ecrits sur le théâtre*, vol.4, Lausanne: L'âge d'homme, 1992.

Walter Scott, “Essay on Romance.”, *Essays on Chivalry, Romance, and the Drama*, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1972, 226-269.

William Dodd, “Character as Dynamic Identity: from Fictional Interaction Script to Performance.”, Paul Yachnin and Jessica Slights, *Shakespeare and Character. Theory, History, Performance and Theatrical Persons,* New York: Palgrave Shakespeare Studies, 2009.

Yael Shapira, “Hairball Speaks: Margaret Atwood and the Narrative Legacy of the Female Grotesque.”, *Narrative,* 18.1 (January 2010): 51-72.

<u>Miscellaneous Website Resources.</u>

-**Ambrose Bierce,** *The Devil's Dictionary*, « Opera » section, 1906, Alcyone website, n.d., http://www.alcyone.com/max/lit/devils/o.html, accessed April 2017.

-« Craig et la marionnette », dossier de presse BnF, French national library website, 2009, http://www.bnf.fr/documents/dp_craig.pdf, 3, accessed August 2017.

-**Graham Henderson,** Review of Jessica Quillin's Book entitled *Shelley's Prometheus Unbound and the Opera Buffa.*, Graham Henderson's website, 2016, www.grahamhenderson.ca/interesting-stories/shelley-at-the-opera-jessica-quillin. 19 December 2016, accessed April 2017.

-**Johann Stenstrom,** "The Significance of Electro-Acoustic Music in the Space Opera *Aniara.*", *Journal of Sonic Studies*, 26/11/2014, https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/108969/108970/16/0, accessed January 2017.

-**Larry Wild,** "A Brief History of Theatrical Scenery.", Larry Wild's website, n.dat., http://www3.northern.edu/wild/ScDes/sdhist.htm, accessed August 2016.

-**Oleg Mirochnikov,** *The Vakhtangov Technique*, University of the Arts London, Teaching and Professional Fellowship 2006-2007, UAL Research online website, 2006-7, http://ualresearchonline.arts.ac.uk/510/1/The_Vakhtangov_Technique.pdf, accessed March 2017

-Opera atelier website, n.d., https://operaatelier.com/education/opera-lovers/about-the-art/acting/, accessed March 2016.

-**Philip V. Allingham,** "Dramatic Adaptations of Dickens's Novels.", n.d., Victorian Web, Faculty of Education, Lakehead University (Canada), n.d., http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/dickens/pva/pva228.html, accessed March 2017.

-**Pierre Flinois,** « La mise en scène d'opéra, une perpétuelle révolution. », French Institut National de l'Audiovisuel website, n.d., https://www.fresques.ina.fr/en-scènes/la-mise-en-scène-d'opéra-une-perpétuelle-révolution.html, accessed August 2017.

-**Ruth Bereson,** "Opera Considered as State Ceremony.", unpublished doctoral thesis, City University London, City University London open access, 1997, http://openaccess.city.ac.uk/8053/, accessed March 2017.

-*Understanding Drama*, Rai Technology University, Rai Technology University website, n.d., http://164.100.133.129:81/eCONTENT/Uploads/understanding_drama.pdf, accessed January 2016.

-Wikipedia on Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism,* Wikipedia website, n.d., https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anatomy_of_Criticism, accessed March 2016.

-Yvonne Smith, *David Malouf's Ransom*, Insight Publications website, 2010, https://insightpublications.com.au, accessed August 2016.

Interviews

-Helen Daniel/David Malouf, Australian Humanities website, 1996, www.australianhumanitiesreview,org/archive/Issue-Sept-1996/intermal.htmlal, accessed March 2016.

Reference books

-*A Companion to the Eighteenth Century British Novel and Culture*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.

-*Dictionnaire des Idées et Notions en Philosophie : Les Dictionnaires d'Universalis*, 2015, Hervé Barreau, entrée relativisme, relativisme moderne, n.pag., googlebooks website, n.d., https://books.google.fr/books?id=MN2KBAAAQBAJ&pg=PT1&lpg=PT1&dq=Dictionnaire+des+Id%C3%A9es+%26+Notions+en+Philosophie:+Les+Dictionnaires+d'Universalis&source=bl&ots=uJElv64kb6&sig=Q1GIIEYP1wlq2bf1cs_5RkWLpE&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiTi4bVKfaAhWBlxQKHcmxDMcQ6AEIUTAG#v=onepage&q=relativisme&f=false, accessed 2016.

-Van Gorp, Hendrik ; Delabatista, Dirk ; D'hulst Lieven ; Ghesquiere, Rita ; Grutman, Rainier and Legros, Georges**.** *Dictionnaire des termes littéraires*, Paris : Honoré Champion. 2005.