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Ideology at the Crossroads of Arts

Ideologija na križišču umetnosti

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IZVLEČEK

Izhajajoč iz koncepta družbeno imaginarnega in fiktivnega v literaturi v članku definiram ideološki poziv kot možno funkcijo umetniškega dela. Pri tem poudarjam podobnosti, ki vznikajo iz dvojnega referencialnega sistema tako v literaturi kot v glasbi. Zdi se, da so zunajglasbeni dejavniki bistvenega pomena za vzpostavitev naracijskosti in posledično ideološkosti. Izhajajoč iz slednjega analiziram ideološki diskurz »douceur du foyer« v dveh izbranih opernih libretih.

ABSTRACT

Proceeding from the notions of the social imaginary and the fictive in literature, the paper defines ideological interpellation as a possible function of works of art. Similarities in creating meaning by double referencing are highlighted, both in literature and music. Extra-musical elements seem to be necessary to establish a narrative and to trigger an ideological interpellation. With regards to this claim, the paper examines the ideological discourse of the »douceur du foyer« in the genre of opera.

1. Introduction: Ideology, the Generalist View, the Discursive View, and Relations of Power

When researching ideology we cannot possibly disregard the work of Louis Althusser and his followers in the early 1970s. Even at the very start, their research opened the path both to the study of linguistic, sociological and cultural issues as well as to the practical application in the fields of (particularly) literature and visual arts. With literary theory as the main point of reference, my paper is based on classical theories of ideology, discourse and, especially, the imaginary. These notions will be applied to musical examples from the 19th and the 20th centuries. Yet the focus in discussing musical

examples will be the discursive mechanisms by which they operated as ideological interpellation. This is particularly true since I shall also argue that (narrative) referentiality is crucial for ideological interpellation.

One of the central theses by Althusser describes ideology as »imaginary«. In particular, ideology is an imaginary relation of an individual to the material conditions of his existence. But ideological attitude is not treated merely as a possible cognition of the world, instead it is defined as an inevitable consciousness, since each relation to the world is conscious and it is given as an imaginary relation.¹ Ideology is a mechanism providing »evidentness of meaning«, that is to say, individual is given an »evident truth« on how things are to be understood. Hence, in Althusserians' opinion, individual is presented with seemingly only one possible signification, one possible understanding of the given signifier.²

These evident truths provide the ground for individuals to identify with an utterance. But the meaning of an utterance is dependent on what Michel Pêcheux calls the inter-discourse, a set of discursive formations which are themselves »imbricated with the complex of ideological formations«.³ The signification of utterances therefore comes into being according to the position their speakers (users) assume in relation to ideological formations. A discursive formation, along with its relation to ideology, is the one that determines »what can and should be said«.⁴ Such reasoning raises at least two objections. Firstly, is the ideological relation the only possible relation of a subject to the world? And secondly, is there a place in such a conception for an autonomy of a subject?

Althusserians understand ideology as constitutive for a subject's identification, and vice versa, the subject is constitutive for ideology, since ideology is in itself acting through a subject, it is an ideological interpellation of an individual *as a subject*.⁵ For Althusser, individual is therefore an abstract category, furthermore, he even claims that ideology is centralised by an »Absolute Subject« which interpellates a limitless number of individuals. Individuals become an acting force only as interpellated actants of one centralized Subject. Within such thinking, ideology is conceived as general ideology that supposedly permeates both the entire social system as well as each of the subject's identifications.⁶ A subject's relation to the world, his/her ability of the imaginary is uniform, and ideology becomes the only possible form of the imaginary.

However, we have to be careful in determining the relation between the imaginary and ideology. As I have made clear in my previous publications, the imaginary cannot be understood in only one possible way.⁷ It is especially important to note that

1 Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001), 158–65.

2 Michel Pêcheux, *Language, Semantics and Ideology: Stating the Obvious*, trans. Harbans Nagpal (London: The Macmillan Press, 1982), 105–6.

3 *Ibid.*, 113. Discursive formations, according to Pêcheux, are sets of communications that produce discourses.

4 *Ibid.*, 111.

5 Althusser, *Lenin and philosophy, and other essays*, 170–82; Göran Therborn, *Ideologija moči in moč ideologije* (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1987), 29.

6 Along with Althusser's work cf. specifically Therborn, *Ideologija moči*, 2, 5.

7 Marcello Potocco, *Nacionalni imaginariji: Literarni imaginariji različice nacionalnega poziva v literaturi in v literarnih kontekstih* (Pedagoški inštitut, 2012), 15–26, www.pei.si/UserFiles/Upload/file/digitalna_knjiznica/Dissertationes_20_ISBN_978-961-270-132-1_PDF/DK_CC%202.5_Dissertationes_20_ISBN_978-961-270-132-1.pdf.

the imaginary as a primary ability of an individual to build an arbitrary link between the image and its signification must be limited by a kind of social institution. This is why it is useful to follow Cornelius Castoriadis' explanation of the role of the imaginary within a society. Castoriadis argues that the imaginary mostly manifests itself as an institutionalizing set of representations common to a society, and for such sets he introduces the term 'the social imaginary'. It is only through such sets that a society is seamed together, as we can understand each other only by using a set of common representations.⁸ Paradoxically, ideology can be understood as an order of such institutionalizing sets. In addition, we can think of ideology as a modern manifestation of the social imaginary which proceeds from the social itself instead of referencing to a transcendent realm in a way traditional societies did.⁹

Althusserian definitions would lead us to think that an ideological relation is given as an *a priori* relation to the world. Pêcheux interprets social relations as a set of interrelated discursive formations that are themselves imbricated with the complex of ideological formations. In such a set, each active subject becomes a »subject-form« sustained by a »dominant complex whole« of discursive formations, this being achieved by the subject's identification with the meaning defined by the inter-discursive whole.¹⁰ In other words, the process of ideological interpellation achieved by means of identification produces an empty space in the inter-discursive set, and the subject necessarily fills in the empty space. A similar stance was later taken by Michel Foucault. The problem of meaning, i.e., the relation between the signifier and the signified, is fundamental to understanding both ideology and the role of an individual. While the imaginary – in its primary existence – is open to any possible link between the signifier (the image) and the signified, ideology, on the contrary, attempts to close this gap and establish a fixed meaning. Due to this tendency, ideology can be defined as a discourse of modernity, since discourses of modernity strive for the suppression and elimination of differences and ambivalences, using rational control and acting.¹¹

However, Stuart Hall claims that the link between the signifier and the signified can never be completely closed, and, consequently, that meaning can never be totally fixed.¹² This means that even in discourses of modernity a subject may not comply to identify with one meaning only. Hall, thus, argues for the autonomy of a subject that was denied to an individual in the Althusserian thought. Pêcheux, for example, does not allow for a subject's free response within the notion of the inter-discourse. Michel Foucault adopts Pêcheux's notion of inter-discourse, yet Hall rightfully observes that Foucault in his latter works notes the autonomy of a subject as a problem. In parallel to an interpellation provided by the discourse, there must exist a subject's response, a praxis through which »individual constitutes and recognizes himself *qua* subject«,

8 Cornelius Castoriadis, *Imaginary Institution of Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), 359–64.

9 Claude Lefort, *Les Formes de l'Histoire: Essais D'anthropologie Politique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978), 295.

10 Pêcheux, *Language, Semantics and Ideology*, 113.

11 Cf. Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence* (New York: Ithaca, 1991); Peter Wagner, *A Sociology of Modernity: Liberty and Discipline* (London: Routledge, 1998), 44–46.

12 Stuart Hall, "Introduction," in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, ed. Stuart Hall (London: Thousand Oaks: Sage; Open University, 1997), 10.

»as a subject of desire«.¹³ This is why Foucault also substituted the notion of discourse with the analysis of power in the structure of discourses as well as in institutions. Terry Eagleton agrees and takes a step further: if a subject were but an effect of discourse or power, there would be no reason for the ideological control of a subject and there would be no possible way to oppose an ideology.¹⁴

This brings us to the core problem with regard to ideology. If a subject is given autonomy of response, discourse must be laden with a discursive authority to interpellate the subject. Moreover, if the subject is given autonomy, a relation must exist not only between the subject and discourse, but also between discourse and ideology. Diane Macdonell defines discourses as specific ranges of the use of language that »differ with the kinds of institutions and social practices in which they take shape, and with the positions of those who speak and whom they address.«¹⁵ In her view, a discourse is invested with meaning by ideological positions in which it takes shape, and her crucial argument is that »meanings are to be found only in the concrete forms of differing social and institutional practices«.¹⁶ Ideologies and discourses are therefore interrelated in that ideologies may operate only when inscribed into a discourse. On the other hand, the discourse always takes shape within a specific social institution and/or social practice governed by the power of an authority. Thus, it could be said that ideologies are inscribed into a discourse by the intervention of power. As Terry Eagleton puts it: »ideology marks the point at which language is bent out /.../ by the power interests which impinge upon it /.../ so that ideology becomes a set of effects internal to particular discourses themselves«.¹⁷

Each system of social practices, then, is crucially determined by struggles for power, and each such system – Pierre Bourdieu calls it a field – is structured as a struggle of institutions or individuals to become dominant. Institutions or individuals enter into the struggle either as orthodox actants in an attempt to preserve their monopolist position or as heterodox subjects attempting to achieve the right to enter and change the structure of the system.¹⁸ Although Eagleton correctly observes that Bourdieu does not explicitly address the question of ideology, ideology is a crucial set of effects in the power struggles in systems of social practices.¹⁹ Bourdieu emphasises symbolic capital as a basic generator of power, yet it would be a mistake to dispense of any material praxis in the working of ideology. Althusser, in the first place, highlights the material existence of ideology. The subject always adopts a certain kind of material behaviour within social practices governed by ideology. Furthermore, each social praxis is, according to Althusser, entangled with material rituals governed by the ideological apparatus.²⁰ One of the basic effects on the ideologically

13 Stuart Hall, "Who Needs 'Identity'?" in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. Paul DuGay and Stuart Hall (London; Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1996), 12; Michel Foucault, *The History Of Sexuality 2: The Use Of Pleasure* (New York: Pantheon, 1985), 13, 225. Foucault understands discourse not only as linguistic practices, but also as social practices that cooperate in constituting knowledge.

14 Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (London; New York: Verso, 1991), 45 ss.

15 Diane Macdonell, *Theories of Discourse: An Introduction*. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 3.

16 *Ibid.*, 3, 110.

17 Eagleton, *Ideology*, 129.

18 See, e.g., Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, Reprint. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 37–104, 105–62. Hence it comes as no surprise that Eagleton defines ideologies accordingly as dominant and oppositional ones.

19 Eagleton, *Ideology*, 45.

20 Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*, 165–69.

interpellated subject is – beside the rituals – the matrix of material stimulation and punishment.²¹ Debacle, imprisonment, bankruptcy, excommunication and death are but a few of the possible punishments; on the other side, material wealth, rise in position etc. are typical ideological stimulations.

We have come to define ideology as an intervention of power by the use of material and non-material sets of effects onto the interpellated subject. Power intervenes in order to force a subject to identify with a discursive formation. Thus, ideology as a set of effects intervenes in an attempt to close the gap between the signifier and the signified, that is, in an attempt to mobilize the uniform meaning which will sustain the existing relations of power.

2. Ideology and Literature/the Arts: The Circle of the Production and the Reception Code

Conforming to the traditional Marxist belief, the Althusserian school defines social relations as a necessary base that conditions a work of art.²² Pierre Macherey defines literature as a phenomenon that simultaneously depends on ideology – in as much as it borrows its language and conceptions from its discourses – and breaches it, as it shows ideology from an estranged point of view.²³ While it is difficult to oppose the understanding of a work of art as borrowing from discourses present in a society, its dependence on the actual »dominant whole« of ideological discourses is less obvious. Firstly, we can think of a work of art as a manifestation of various functions, the ideological function being just one of them. And, secondly, production and reception codes vitally determine a (non-)ideological reading of a work.

Wolfgang Iser believes that the imaginary is in its primary existence defined by indeterminateness and it can be hardly thought of as existing at all. Castoriadis defines it as a magmatic, constantly changing flux of images, but Iser suggests that the tie between any two images becomes a defined and determining tie between the signifier and the signified only through external activators. The imaginary therefore exists only as a manifestation, while its external activators include the social imaginary, the fictive etc.²⁴ For the time being, the term 'fictive' can roughly be equalled to »the aesthetic effect«, and I have already pointed out that ideology can be defined as a type of a social imaginary inherent to the discourse of modernity. The logical consequence seems to be that ideological interpellation in literature – and in music – is possible only within the discourses of modernity, roughly speaking, within the society of – and following the rise of – Enlightenment.

Iser's conception provides us with a base to think of different manifestations of the imaginary as coexisting in a work of art. In my previous research I have shown that

21 Cf. Therborn, *Ideologija moći*, 50 ss.

22 Etienne Balibar and Pierre Macherey, "On Literature as an Ideological Form," in *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*, ed. Robert Young (London: Routledge, 1990), 83–87.

23 Pierre Macherey, *A Theory of Literary Production*, trans. Geoffrey Wall (London; Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), 39–60.

24 Wolfgang Iser, *The Fictive and the Imaginary: Charting Literary Anthropology* (Baltimore: J. Hopkins University Press, 1993), 181–85, 222–24; Cf. also Castoriadis, *Imaginary Institution*.

manifestations of the imaginary are closely tied to the existence of various functions in a literary work.²⁵ Jan Mukařovský defined such a function as a relation between an object and an objective, co-forming an individual's attitude to the world.²⁶ If we agree that these functions cooperate in forming one's attitude to the world, and by doing so, that various activators of the imaginary manifest in a work of art, we can also acknowledge the existence of non-aesthetic functions in a work of art, including the ideological function. Hence, the potentials for an ideological interpellation and for an aesthetic reading can co-exist.²⁷ Yet, if 'function' is defined as forming an attitude towards a particular domain within which an individual experiences reality, this leads us to conclude that both the ideological and the aesthetic can be activated only inside a specific circle between the structure and the reception of the work.

On the one hand, Althusser claims that an aesthetic effect is related to a cognitive or experiential identification.²⁸ This would mean that – on the production side – a structure of a work which imposes identification with a certain historical society also emphasises the social imaginary over the fictive, and in such case an ideological reading prevails. But according to Hans Robert Jauss, experiential worlds of individuals are only valid by sharing the same attitude towards the same experience.²⁹ Hence, a structure in itself is not sufficient to impose any type of reading, as it has to be supported by a correspondent reception code.

Nevertheless, let us take a short glance at the production code of a fictive and/or a possibly ideological a work of art. In his reading of a literary structure, Northrop Frye seems to propose one of the most universal assumptions about the work of art's production mechanisms. He claims that all verbal structures contain a centrifugal force directing the recipient toward external reality and a centripetal force focusing the receiver onto the relations between elements of the structure.³⁰ The latter may be understood as the core of aesthetic reception, while the former is the main force behind an ideological reception of a work of art. Macherey and Etienne Balibar, too, emphasise the role of »the real world« in the production of an ideological stance in a literary work; they likewise stress the duality of »the real« and »the fictional« in a literary work as fundamental to its ideological reading.³¹ Ideological interpellation is built precisely upon the duality of the fictive *as if* objective utterances (judgements) found in a literary work and its extra-discursive references pointing to the »real world«. In other words, an individual will be subjected to the ideological interpellation only if he/she will be able to build his/her attitude toward what has been read or perceived through a work of art, this being possible only by recognizing the utterances, judgements or signs perceived as something »real«. Even if we do not share the opinion that each work of art is an ideological interpellation, this brings us to conclude that a relatively dominant

25 Potocco, *Nacionalni imaginariji*, 45–48.

26 Jan Mukařovský, *Studie, I* (Brno: Host, 2000), 64, 88, 177.

27 The relation between functions and the experiential domains is a complex one and cannot be further elaborated here. For a more complex outline see my cited research. Potocco, *Nacionalni imaginariji*. 45-56.

28 Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*, 221–24.

29 Hans Jauss, *Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 117–21.

30 Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 73 ss.

31 Balibar and Macherey, "On Literature as an Ideological Form," 91–93.

practical-experiential identification in the perception of a work of art is a necessary basis for an ideological interpellation. The possibility of such interpellation thus develops when the centrifugal force (in the reception of a work) prevails, directing the recipient to identify with external reality.

Furthermore, an aesthetic effect is, according to Mukařovský, defined by the dynamisation of structural elements into a whole in which contradictions are not suppressed.³² Floyd Merrell also suggests that an aesthetic effect is confined to the tension between two poles of a system.³³ The lack of tension, i.e. of internal contrasts, would therefore be a typical feature of an ideological work, both at the level of form as well as at the semantic level, as it would lead to a uniformity of meanings, which is convenient for ideological use. Drawing on Paul Ricoeur's notion of narrative identity, I have already noted that each ideological identification is primarily a narrative identification;³⁴ at the semantic level a basis needs to be given to create meaning at all. This needs to be highlighted since the semantic potential obviously is not the same in different fields of art, that is to say, the signification (of a sign) or rather sense is not always created in an equally determinate or even the same way at all.

This is particularly true of music. Let me quote an example used by Raymond Monelle: the sound of a cuckoo may denote a bird, it may signify the coming of spring, or symbolise the whole of nature as in Mahler's *First Symphony*.³⁵ It would not be productive to deal with Monelle's work in details here, apart from mentioning that in his view music produces meaning by means of internal, structural relations rather than by referring to »external«, »universal« objects. It would be a mistake to think that this characteristic attributed to music by Monelle is deemed endemic to music. For example, Iser's notion of the fictive denies the direct reference of a literary sign to the extratextual world, although it keeps the external world as an interpretive framework, i.e. as a separate sign system. His notion of the doubling structure – a cross-signification of the two »mutually exclusive sign systems« – invokes a constant returning of the reader, in the process of searching for the external signified, to the textual structure itself. Such mutual readings, claims Iser, draw attention to signs as signs, since these no longer designate the signified; they indicate the cancellation of preestablished correlations, and thus they no longer refer to anything pre-given.³⁶ Although Iser suggests that the fictive thus rearranges the fundamental pattern of the linguistic code, the difference in regard to music is obvious. Linguistic code remains the starting point of the fictive in a literary work, and it is shared with the signification process operating within the social imaginary. Monelle claims that in musical code meanings are inherent to structure.³⁷ But a parallel to the duality of the fictive and the social imaginary, proposed in regard to the ideological functioning of literature, exists in the field of music, too. Gregor

32 Mukařovský, *Studie*, I, 146.

33 Floyd Merrell, *Pararealities: The Nature of Our Fictions and How We Know Them* (Amsterdam, NL: Benjamins, 1983), 60; Floyd Merrell, *A Semiotic Theory of Texts* (Berlin: Mouton, 1985), 176–99.

34 See, again, Potocco, *Nacionalni imaginariji*, 34–35, 50–52.

35 Raymond Monelle, *Linguistics and Semiotics in Music* (Routledge, 2014), 16.

36 Wolfgang Iser, *The Fictive and the Imaginary: Charting Literary Anthropology* (Baltimore: J. Hopkins University Press, 1993), 225–26.

37 Monelle, *Linguistics and Semiotics in Music*, 112; cf. Gregor Pompe, "Ideologija v glasbi in ideologija o glasbi," *Ideologije v slovenskem jeziku, literaturi in kulturi*, 2012, 78.

Pompe draws attention to Jean-Jaques Nattiez's model of the »double referentiality« of a musical work. Nattiez suggests the existence of two separate systems: the intrinsic system which operates independently of external meanings, by means of inter- and intramusical references, and the extrinsic one in which users (composers, performers, listeners etc.) »establish connections to their lived experience and to the exterior world«. ³⁸ Arguably, the latter operates in the domain of the social imaginary; and such double referentiality could also be extended, with some modifications, to the functioning of artistic phenomena in general. It can certainly be paralleled to Iser's conception of the fictive vs. the social imaginary, since, in the process of reading, the reader's reception shifts from one mode of operation to another, where one mode is emphasised over the other.

Therefore, the specificity of musical referentiality lies in the code of the intrinsic referential system itself. In literary reception, linguistic code is shared as a base of the signification process both in the fictive and the social imaginary, even if in the operation of the fictive any preestablished correlations eventually become abolished. However, due to the same code both modes, the fictive and the social imaginary, overlap and may interact; the transfer from one to another is rather fluid. In the reception of a musical »text«, on the other hand, the transfer from the intrinsic to the extrinsic referentiality – or vice versa – is much more complex. It has to be mediated by the linguistic code, but – as Nattiez observes – with no guarantee that the interpretation of meaning will be the same for all users of the musical »fact«. In the reception of music, there are virtually no initial preestablished connections shared between the signs in the intrinsic and the extrinsic referential systems. To be more precise, the possible connections shared by the two musical referential systems depend predominantly on the potentially common cultural, philosophical, social, aesthetical etc. horizons. Musical reference thus allows for a very open creation of meaning, and this also makes it very difficult if not impossible to proceed to a higher level of the signification process, namely that of narrative identification.

Nattiez speaks of »the narrative impulse«, but at the same time dispenses with the possibility of music being a narrative, precisely due to immense interpretive freedom in musical referential systems. Narration in music, claims Nattiez, is but a virtual object: at best, music is an incitement to make a narrative, a comment. ³⁹ Nattiez also rightfully observes that in the process of musical reception, the recipient needs to be aided in creating a possible narrative, for example through the work's title or through the knowledge of the genre (e.g. symphonic poem). Creating a narrative is fundamental to ideological interpellation, and I have argued that in a literary work the ideological narrative is defined equally by mechanisms of production and reception. In the ideological interpellation of a musical composition, though, mechanisms of reception seem to dominate, as on the production side, the semantic and narrative potential lies only in the extra-musical elements such as the title of the composition, the added programme, (the author's) interpretation, libretto etc. These seem to be the main locuses of the »narrative incitement« of music and consequently of its (internal) ideological potential.

38 Jean Jacques Nattiez, *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990), 126.

39 *Ibid.*, 127–28.

Let me give a brief example. In 1948, Soviet composers witnessed the famous anti-formalist decree, a direct ideological result of the Zhdanov doctrine. While providing continuing statements on what Soviet music should not resemble, namely the modernist music of the west,⁴⁰ the decree was far less instructive on what Soviet music should be like. Sarah Cunningham calls attention to the fact that Soviet composers attempted to satisfy the demand for »socialist realism« imposed on them, but did not understand exactly what was implied by the term.⁴¹ This comes as no surprise; narrative categories used in literary descriptions of socialist realism, such as »the victory of the working class«, »the struggle between the good and the better« etc. plainly did not correspond to the intrinsic musical referential system. But the extrinsic referential system, with its network of references, was already in the process of being built for quite some time. The decree pointed out the appearance of »erroneous« tendencies, quoting Dmitrij Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. The famous editorial in Pravda on January 28th 1936 that followed Stalin's attendance of the earlier performance and changed the reception of the opera, stressed the lack of melody – the lack of simple music which would be easy to follow and remember. Such simplicity turns out to be the recurring referential locus of the definitions of – and instructions on – the art of social and later socialist realism. Shostakovich reflected on the problem of simplicity approximately two years earlier, observing that »sometimes the struggle for a simple language is understood somewhat superficially. Often 'simplicity' turns into epigonism.«⁴² These few words show that Shostakovich was aware of both the production and reception mechanisms that accompany the process of composition.

If we were to translate his statement into Mukařovský's and Merrel's terminology, it could be said that the (musical) code which tends to avoid conflict and tension in the system also counters the aesthetic effect. Nonetheless, we have to be careful when using the notions of conflict and tension. In his analysis of the Pravda editorial, Leon Stefanija notes that cognitive postulates such as 'simple'/'captivating' music, 'music easy to remember' etc. were based on the musical features of the traditional, 'classical' repertoire, especially on the major-minor tonality.⁴³ Again, this comes as no surprise. The very notion of tension in the system must be partly understood as historically and therefore extrinsically determined. Undoubtedly the tension/conflict will also arise when breaking the (traditionally) accepted norm of a structure, which is in line with Jauß's definition of the validity of aesthetic experience with the breaking of the reader's/recipient's horizon.⁴⁴ It can be argued that in social and later socialist realism such a »simplifying« type of composition predominated, as this era gave rise not merely to the use of traditional major-minor tonality, but also to the ubiquity of major harmonies and triumphant apotheoses in compositions.⁴⁵ Shostakovich obviously regarded such praxis as oversimplified. Even more so, it seems he was aware that any structural

40 "The Zhdanov Decree 1948," *DSCH Journal*, 1998, 21–24.

41 Sarah Cunningham, "Remembering Laughter and Tears in a Drawer," *Intersections Online* 10, no. 2 (2009): 85.

42 Laurel E. Fay, *Shostakovich: A Life* (Oxford University Press, 2005), 81.

43 Leon Stefanija, *Sociologija glasbe: zgodovina, teorija in metodologija* (Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete, 2010), 128.

44 Cf. Jauss, *Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics*.

45 See Cunningham, "Remembering Laughter," 85.

pattern fundamentally depends on its reception. A composition evading internal conflicts reduces the focus on the structure itself, thus opening the door for »an extrinsic meaning«. By giving space to the extrinsic (narrative) content, it becomes an ideal fabric that lends itself to ideological interpellation, yet when it does not, it may simply be thought of as epigonic and trivial. To use Shostakovich's own remark in regard to his 7th *Symphony*: »music, real music, is never attached literally to a theme«. ⁴⁶

The 7th *Symphony* turns out to be a great example of how important both, the extrinsic referentiality and reception mechanisms, truly are. I avoided the subtitle »Leningrad« on purpose. Along with the programme that Shostakovich first gave to and later withdrew from the symphony, the subtitle demonstrates the expectation of an ideological appropriation, and consequently, the awareness that both the subtitle and the programme would become its means. Salomon Volkov and Laurel Fay record that Shostakovich's intention for the symphony was by far more ambiguous. The symphony, presumably influenced by the *Psalms of David*, is described as a requiem for victims of totalitarianism(s). Shostakovich described it in even broader terms, speaking of »terror, slavery, the bondage of the spirit«. ⁴⁷ There is no doubt that its success owed to the programme and its »identification with the gallant Russian struggle against German invasion«, and that the many performances of the symphony in the Soviet Union and abroad strengthened the intentions of Soviet authorities, but also »matched the mood officially fostered in Britain and America«. ⁴⁸ Despite the fact that there was no official review of the premiere, there are several signs that reveal a planned ideological appropriation of the symphony, ⁴⁹ its performance being backed up by a Soviet military action, broadcast to the German lines sieging the city, and most of all, premiered on the day of the planned German celebration of Leningrad's fall. The 7th *Symphony* is thus a clear example of discursive practices by which »power intervened to fix the openness of meaning«, the central locus of power being not only the Stalinist regime but also the governments/cultural institutions of the Allies.

The structure of the work is, again, more ambiguous. Despite the apotheosis at the end of the symphony, the composition is far from being uniformly optimistic or from evading conflict, which proves that an elementary and oversimplified structure, the kind that Shostakovich spoke of in 1934, is not the only possible fabric for a work of art's ideological reception.

As such, Shostakovich's 7th *symphony* demonstrates the full complexity of the circle of production and reception. The production of the symphony was evidently not intended to construct a simple, non-conflicting structure. The ideological reception of the work was possible in great part due to an expected ideological appropriation on the receptive side, including the performances of the symphony by both Soviet and Western-based orchestras, but it was also enhanced on the production side, especially by extra-musical elements, namely the subtitle and the included programme.

⁴⁶ Fay, *Shostakovich*, 128.

⁴⁷ Fay, 128–29, cf. Solomon Volkov, *Testimony: The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich* (Limelight Editions, 2004), 184 ss.

⁴⁸ Keith Anderson, liner notes to *Shostakovich: The Complete Symphonies*. Czecho-Slovak Symphony Orchestra, Ladislav Slovák. Naxos 8.501102, CD, 2001, 20.

⁴⁹ Cf. Michael Jones, *Leningrad: State of Siege*. (New York: Basic Books, 2011).

Shostakovich thus anticipated the ideological appropriation and partly subdued to it in structuring the composition, as indicated by the dominant march in the 1st Movement and the relatively clear apotheosis at the end of the symphony. The expected ideological appropriation of the work backwardly influenced Shostakovich's production code.

This brief musical example seems to confirm Nikita Nankov's suggestion that the process of identification in literature and art in general depends on the imposed meaning or the imposed mode of reading/receiving, therefore, on the imposed unifying interpretive code. Furthermore, formation and imposition of a code of production and interpretation need to be linked with establishing a shared social identity, therefore, with the creation and organisation of shared (cultural) representations in the society; it is only thus that the basis is given for the ideologically unifying identification of meanings, events, structures and their relations in reading/receiving.⁵⁰

3. Ideological Circle: The Case of Bourgeois Marriage

By now we have seen that narrative categories seem to be fundamental to ideological interpellation. Since ideology always works through an identification with a discursive formation, ideological interpellation is vitally dependant on elements of narration.⁵¹ This is why I shall proceed with an analysis in the field which enables investigating narrative categories as well as making comparisons with the literary field, my primary field of research.

In 1856 and 1857 two major works came out in France: Gustav Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and Charles Baudelaire's *Fleurs du Mal*. Both authors were prosecuted under the charge of the books' obscenity (Flaubert) and insult to public morality (Baudelaire). As Jauß demonstrates, the reception of Baudelaire's poetry collection was ambiguous, especially since it was also censored, yet ten years later (in 1868) Baudelaire became an icon of a new poetic generation.⁵² According to Jauß, who cites Théophile Gautier, the reason for the initial refusal and prosecution of the book was Baudelaire's critique of the »ideology and morality of appearances of the society of the 2nd Empire«.

There are some common points to Baudelaire's and Flaubert's social critique, one of which is their treatment of marriage. Jauß claims that one of the main 'isles' of the ethical order of the French and European bourgeois class was marriage as »douceur du foyer«. While an introduction of a lover into the life of a bourgeois young man was an initiation into mature (love) life, this stage was followed by a wedding as an initiation into happy family life.⁵³ Both Baudelaire and Flaubert broke the norm of the bourgeois order with regard to the subject of marriage.⁵⁴ In contrast, in the musical field – to be

50 Potocco, *Nacionalni imaginariji*, 49; cf. Nikita Nankov, "Narratives of National Cultural Identity," *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* 27, no. 1-2 (2000): 94-96.

51 Potocco, *Nacionalni imaginariji*, 34-35, 50-52.

52 Hans Robert Jauß, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 170-72.

53 Jauß, *Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics*, 290.

54 It is beyond my scope here to make a detailed analysis of how Flaubert questions the patriarchal norm of marriage, but when reading the novel it is clear that marriage is not for Emma nor for Charles a »douceur du foyer«.

more specific, in the genre of opera –, marriage was legitimised as a fundamental part of the bourgeois order. To use Bourdieu's terminology: realist and decadent literary works occupied a heterodox position in the dominant whole of ideological discourses, while opera, even in its veristic stage, legitimised the dominant whole, entrenched in the orthodox position. In particular, this can be demonstrated in cases when libretto was based on a literary source dealing with a contemporary subject. We will take a look at two notable examples: Giuseppe Verdi and Francesco Maria Piave's *La Traviata* and Pietro Mascagni, Guido Menasci and Giovanni Targioni-Tozzetti's *Cavalleria Rusticana*.

When discussing – in connection to *La Traviata* – Alexandre Dumas jr.'s *La Dame aux Camélias*, we should not ignore the significant relationship between the novel and Dumas' own theatre adaptation, which includes similarities as well as large differences. These differences are partly reflected in *La Traviata*, as Piave's libretto mainly follows the theatre adaptation. The main difference between the novel and its theatre adaptation – or *La Traviata* – is related to the appearance of the exemplary figure of Mary Magdalene, reiterated later in *Cavalleria Rusticana*. The figure of the penitent prostitute directly refers to the social status of prostitution and, thereby, to the relation between prostitution and marriage. While analysing the narrative elements of the two operas, I shall narrow my interest to the social situation in Italy, but I shall also base my analysis on the presupposition that opera was an eminent bourgeois genre, thus being an ideal medium of ideological interpellation.

Danielle Hipkins and Kate Taylor-Jones argue that, although rooted in its own similar tradition, Italian culture borrowed from French culture when using the Magdalene paradigm.⁵⁵ In the context of such borrowing, they draw attention to Peter Brooks' opinion that the melodramatic figure of a prostitute was introduced as a response to the French Revolution and its requirement to make the body of the individual accountable. Brooks' observation paradoxically coincides with Jauß demonstrating the counter-emancipatory idealisation of the paternal figure and consequently the reinforcement of the ideology of »happy marriage« in the post-revolutionary *le Code civil*.⁵⁶ Hipkins and Taylor-Jones reveal similar developments in Italy (especially in connection to Verdi). In 1855, the prime minister of Piedemonte-Sardinia instituted a series of regulations on prostitution which were later adopted by the Kingdom of Italy. One of the aims of these regulations was to »safeguard the health of the moralizing and increasingly complex middle class«.⁵⁷ *La Traviata* was premiered two years earlier, but we can assume that Italian regulations concerning prostitution, the opera and Dumas' literary works were addressing the same problem and can be treated as diverse materials and/or discursive practices that pertain to the same ideology. This is particularly true since *La Traviata* and *La Dame aux Camélias* also tackle the same specific problem.

According to Hipkins and Taylor-Jones, the role of Violetta in *La Traviata* – especially as sung by Fanny Donatelli-Salvini – »marked the arrival of the erotic, sexually aware«, but also sexually desirous woman on the stage. The presence of a heroine-prostitute on

55 Danielle Hipkins and Kate Taylor-Jones, *Prostitution and Sex Work in Global Cinema: New Takes on Fallen Women* (Springer, 2017), 196.

56 Jauß, *Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics*, 284–85.

57 Hipkins and Taylor-Jones, *Prostitution and Sex Work in Global Cinema: New Takes on Fallen Women*, 198.

the stage was comparable in *La Dame aux Camélias*, especially in the second staging with Sarah Bernhardt in the leading role of Camille.⁵⁸ Hipkins and Taylor-Jones note that her sexual desire for the hero (Armand, Alfredo) threatened to usurp the dominant hegemony.⁵⁹ By ‘the dominant hegemony’ they also mean the hegemony of the patriarchal institution of bourgeois marriage. This is especially true in the light of the increasingly popular cult of Madonna which emphasised the ideal of a woman’s purity in the framework of family life, particularly after Pope Pius IX’s proclamation of the Virgin Mary as immaculate. It is precisely for this reason that all three heroines – Marguerite in the novel, Camille in the drama and Violetta in the opera – must end tragically. But this is also the reason why Camille and Violetta must attract the spectators’ sympathetic attention.

This leads us to the core of the differences between the novel on the one hand and the drama and opera on the other. In the novel, Marguerite’s death is portrayed as an agony; she dies abandoned, despite her decision to end the relationship with Armand for the sake of his sister’s happy marriage. Hence, Marguerite is given no absolution. Such an ending, by pointing to her forced decision, at least partially allows for the reader’s contemplation of the validity of social roles both in the noble and the bourgeois society, including the institution of marriage. On the level of narrative, the ending discloses the tension in the system of the literary work, that is to say, the conflict between two classes and, consequently, two world views. Dumas’ stage adaptation partly retains the tension, but transfers it: Camille is given the opportunity to explain her decision to Armand, dying shortly after, while the conflict is transposed into Camille’s relation to the Duke. In the novel, the Duke is primarily her benefactor, while it remains unclear if their relationship is also an erotic one.⁶⁰ The play defines the relation as paternal without a doubt; according to Brandi L. Guined, this is done in »order to use it as an example of how a fallen woman is allowed little option but to proceed down the path laid out before her.«⁶¹ Thus, this modification again provides an opportunity for the play to be partly received as social critique.

In this respect, *La Traviata* shows a determinate change with regard to both, the novel and the play. The change in Camille’s relationship to the Duke is given up, even more so, the relation between Violetta and the baron is openly described as an erotic one, most evidently in Alfredo’s answer to Violetta, in which he threatens he could kill her »lover and protector«.⁶² The critique present in the stage version of Camille is thus absent, but it is also absent in the conclusion of the opera, as in the ending act the libretto follows the stage adaptation. Violetta is here given the possibility to speak before dying, too, yet the absolution given to Violetta or to Camille cannot be understood as social critique and does not produce a conflict in the narrative. Both moments of tension present in Dumas’ narrative

58 Brandi L. Guined, “The Remediation of Dumas Filis’ *La Dame Aux Camélias*” (Georgia State University, 2014), 23–25, https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/english_theses/168. The name of the heroine was transformed from Marguerite in the novel to Camille in the stage performance to Violetta in Piave’s libretto. See Alexandre Dumas, *The Lady of the Camélias* (New York: Penguin Books, 2013); Alexandre Dumas, *Camille: A Play in Five Acts* (New York: Books for Libraries, 1979).

59 Hipkins and Taylor-Jones, *Prostitution and Sex Work in Global Cinema*, 198.

60 Guined, “The Remediation of Dumas Filis’ *La Dame Aux Camélias*,” 27.

61 *Ibid.*, 27.

62 »S’ei cadrà per mano mia / Un sol colpo vi torria / Coll’amante il protettore« See Giuseppe Verdi, Burton D. Fisher, and Francesco Maria Piave, *Giuseppe Verdi’s La Traviata* (Coral Gables, FL: Opera Journeys Publishing, 2001), 38. Even if Alfredo’s answer could be thought of as his misjudgment of the situation, it confirms the alluded perception of Flora and other guests in regard to baron Douphol and Violetta.

are thus abandoned in the libretto. Such a simplification functions as a confirmation of the normative bourgeois marriage: with Violetta dying, the moral and the physical health of the middle class is no longer in danger. The sympathetic acceptance of the prostitute is thus possible only insofar as the institution of »douceur du foyer« is not threatened.

A similar strategy is at play in *Cavalleria Rusticana*. In the novella, Giovanni Verga pays far less attention to the figure of Santuzza, in comparison to Menasci and Targioni-Tozzetti's libretto as well as Verga's own stage adaptation.⁶³ Santuzza, a side character, is used by Turriddu merely to provoke Lola's response, but more importantly, she is characterised in a substantially different manner.⁶⁴ Santuzza is not a mature, sexually attractive woman but a naïve girl, and again the social motivation – her father's wealth – is emphasised in Turriddu's choosing her as an object of his exploitation. Most importantly, their relationship is not a sexual one in the novella: the core modification of the novella in the opera as well as the play is precisely the sexualisation of the relation between Turriddu and Santuzza. This change is needed in order to institute Santuzza as a figure of Mary Magdalene: she is not a prostitute, but a penitent excommunicate for being involved in an illicit sexual relationship.

The treatment of the figure of Mary Magdalene in *Cavalleria* is in many ways more complex than its introduction in *La Traviata*. The chronotope of the opera is transferred to the country, featuring a lower social class. The bourgeois marriage can hence be defended only indirectly, as an institution of marriage »per se«. And while Santuzza's promotion into a central figure may be understood as an accommodation to the structure of the genre, it is required due to the dominant discourse of bourgeois ideology.⁶⁵ By presenting Santuzza as a desired lover, a double love triangle is established: Santuzza–Turriddu–Lola, and Alfio–Lola–Turriddu. The plot paradoxically puts the second triangle to the forefront, with Turriddu and Lola breaking the norm of marriage. Such an open trespass might not be possible if the plot were not transferred out of the bourgeois class. The introduction of Santuzza as a central figure thus complicates the love relations in the plot and at the same time emphasises the breaking of the norm. This becomes evident if interpreted against the grain of systematic exclusion of social criticism in the opera. Verga suggests the importance of wealth at least three times: in alluding that Lola has married Alfio for his social status, in making it clear that Turriddu has chosen Santuzza for the wealth of her father, and finally in Turriddu's motivation for wanting to kill Alfio. The latter is also the most significant. In the novella, we read:

*Come è vero Iddio so che ho torto e mi lascierei ammazzare. Ma prima di venir qui ho visto la mia vecchia che si era alzata per vedermi partire, col pretesto di governare il pollaio, quasi il cuore le parlasse, e quant'è vero Iddio vi ammazzerò come un cane per non far piangere la mia vecchierella.*⁶⁶

63 Again we are faced with double adaptation, from the literary text to stage adaptation and – using primarily the stage adaptation – to the opera libretto.

64 See Giovanni Verga, *Vita dei campi* (Zanichelli, 2011), 50–55.

65 Santuzza as the main character is evidently needed for the soprano role, yet we have to bear in mind that the change occurred already in Verga's stage adaptation. The main motif for the change must therefore be sought for elsewhere.

66 Verga, *Vita dei campi*, 54. [By God, I know it is my fault and I would let you murder me. But I saw my old mother when I was coming here. She got up to see me, pretending to feed the chickens, almost as if she knew where I was going. And I swear to God, I'll kill you like a dog not to make the old woman cry.]

Menasci and Targioni-Tozzetti transfer this into:

[L]o so che il torto è mio: / e ve lo giuro nel nome di dio / che al par d'un cane mi farei sgozzar; / ma... s'io non vivo, resta abbandonata.../ povera Santa /.../ Vi saprò in core il ferro mio piantar.⁶⁷

The shift of Turriddu's emotional ties from his mother to Santuzza raises the question of broken marriage. But most importantly, Turriddu's trespass is devoid of social vengeance present in the novella, both, by courting Santuzza, as well as by entering the affair with Lola. His emotional instability becomes the true *hybris*, and his exclamation is but a confession of a personal, not socially motivated fault. Turriddu repents, thus with his killing the fault is redeemed and the norm of the happy marriage reinvoked, but Santuzza plays a central role in the peripeteia of the opera. Paradoxically, by clinging to Turriddu and then disclosing the secret to Alfio, she enables the catharsis needed to reinvocate the norm. And she is repaid with the neutralisation of her excommunication – in the form of Turriddu commanding his mother to watch over her. Just like Violetta, Santuzza is sanctified, although she remains partly marginalised, as she is excluded from any future social (and love) life.⁶⁸

The emphasis on the role of Santuzza thus again serves to explicate the duality of the legitimate and illegitimate love relation which is here once more resolved in favour of the dominant bourgeois hegemony. In regard to the bourgeois norm, Lola's position in the opera remains unclear. Verga's novela is drastically clearer when on his way to the duel Alfio responds to Lola: »ma per te sarebbe meglio che io non tornassi più«.⁶⁹ Alfio's words motivate a conflictual relation regarding the position of an adulterous woman and, consequently, regarding the legitimacy of marriage after the adultery. Lola's uncertain position in the opera again deliberately eludes doubt, thus putting forward the message that with Turriddu's death the *hybris* was punished and the equilibrium was restored. Paradoxically, it also reinforces the patriarchal oppression of women, since a woman is given no importance in the breaking and restoring the matrimonial tie.

4. Conclusion

As we have seen, *La Traviata* and *Cavalleria rusticana* can be thought of as a discourse ideologically interpellating their bourgeois spectators; a discourse confirming the common social identification with the validity of marriage and excluding the trespassing of the norm. It is by no means a coincidence that the operas were premiered in the temporal proximity of the legal codification of prostitution. Using Althusserian terminology, the latter could be defined as a repressive state apparatus, while the operatic

67 Pietro Mascagni et al., *Mascagni's Cavalleria Rusticana Leoncavallo's I Pagliacci*, 2002, 49. [I know it is my fault and I swear to God I would let you kill me like a dog. But if I do not live, poor Santa will stay abandoned. I'll know how to stab you with my knife.]

68 This is even clearer in Verga's own stage adaptation where the plot is also characterised by Santuzza's bearing an illegitimate Turriddu's child.

69 Verga, *Vita dei campi*, 54. [It would be better for you if I do not return.]

production inevitably represents a discourse into which an »ideological apparatus« had been inscribed.

Yet, the examples of *La Traviata* and *Cavalleria rusticana* demonstrate that ideological discourses are not limited to the existence of a state or of a determinate political force. They exist as realisations of any possible distribution of power which intervenes into the dominant discursive formation. By analysing ideological discourses in regard to bourgeois marriage as well as by examining the example of Shostakovich, I have tried to demonstrate that concepts and theories of ideology are, with some modifications, also applicable to the field of music. But musical elements that pertain to extrinsic referentiality are crucial for the operation of ideology, although they might not be in direct connection to the musical structure itself, that is to say, they need not be a part of what Nattiez calls 'the neutral level'. The obvious limitation in researching the ideological discourse in music is therefore that in music the ideological discourse primarily operates by means of semantics, or, to be more specific, through the elements of narrative identification. The consequence seems to be that in the analysis of ideological discourse it makes sense to focus either on the rare elements of linguistic referentiality provided along with the »neutral level«, or on the historical, political and cultural codes co-shaping the extrinsic referentiality shared by the users of a 'musical fact'.

In the case of opera, this kind of analysis evidently focuses on libretto, as the accompanying text with its linguistic code is the generator of narration. In my paper, a simplification leading to ideological interpellation was identified using the differences between the literary original and the libretto adaptation. Both libretto adaptations show no trace of class differences. Thus they are devoid of tension provoked by the intrusion of a lower class subject into a »happy marriage« and consequently into the dominant social class. This simplification led to expected, orthodox reception within the bourgeois class – a reception not that easy to inspire when reading both literary originals. Of course, it is impossible to ignore that such structure was expected by the reception code of Italian opera. The ideological interpellation of the idea of marriage was thus possible only within the expected code, the one which was co-shaped by the edicts on prostitution issued by the prime minister of Piedemonte-Sardinia.

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POVZETEK

V pričujočem članku osvetlujem umestitev umetniških praks, zlasti literature in glasbe, v delovanje ideoloških diskurzov. Izhajajoč iz obravnave literature ter iz ustreznih obravnav v literarni teoriji se bom osredotočil na klasične pojme ideologije in ideološkega. V razpravi, ki je v dveh tretjinah posvečena teoretskim problemom, se naslanjam na obravnavo ideologije pri althusserjancih, na teorijo diskurza in branje ideologije znotraj kulturnih študijev. V opredeljevanju razmerja med ideologijo in umetnostjo pa izhajam predvsem iz definicije t.i. družbeno imaginarnega (pri C. Castoriadis) in fiktivnega (pri W. Iserju), dveh konceptov, ki sta se izkazala kot izrazito produktivna pri obravnavi literature. Izkaže se, da ob razlikah obstajajo tudi znatne podobnosti v produkciji pomena/smisla v literaturi in glasbi, saj je pri obeh mogoče govoriti o dvojnem referencialnem sistemu. Spričo tega je mogoče razmišljati o referenci na zunajtekstualno oziroma zunajglasbeno realnost kot o osnovnem impulzu ideološkega delovanja. Ker je ideološko delovanje vselej razumljeno kot identifikacija s pomenom/pomeni, s pomočjo katerih posameznika naslavlja diskurz, in ker lahko identifikacijo vselej razumemo kot narativno kategorijo, je narativni impulz za ideološko interpelacijo bistven. Tudi v glasbi so zunajglasbene prvine – primarno lingvistične prvine, kot so naslov skladbe, program, libreto –

bistvene za vzpostavitev tistega, čemur Jean-Jaques Nattiez pravi »narativni impulz«, narativni impulz pa bistven za kakršno koli možnost ideološke interpelacije. Izhajajoč iz te predpostavke razprava poda kratek ilustrativni primer ob Dmitriju Šostakoviču, posebej ob njegovi 7. simfoniji. Temu sledi daljša obravnava diskurzivnih mehanizmov, ki so v 19. stoletju podpirali meščansko ideologijo zakona kot »douceur du foyer«. Ob obravnavi dveh oper, Verdijeve *Traviate* in Mascagnijeve *Kmečke časti (Cavalleria rusticana)*, se tudi opera – vsaj njen italijanski del – izkaže kot del tovrstnih diskurzivnih mehanizmov. V skladu z zgornjimi predpostavkami se razprava osredinja na analizo narativnih prvin, kar je mogoče ob primerjavi »lingvističnih« prvin, tj. ob primerjavi libreta z literarnimi izvirniki. Izkaže se, da ob prehodu od literarnega izvirnika – pisarja v prozi – že ob dramski adaptaciji, še toliko bolj pa v libretu pride do izpusta narativnih prvin, ki bi v bralcu oz. sprejemniku (gledalcu/poslušalcu) lahko rušile neproblematičen odnos sprejemanja institucije zakona in meščanske družbe. Če Hans Robert Jauß Baudelairove *Rože zla* izpostavlja kot paradigmatični primer rušenja institucije zakona kot »douceur du foyer«, se operni libreto izkaže, ravno nasprotno, kot legitimacija te iste institucije. V razpravi pa se izkaže tudi, da so bili diskurzivni mehanizmi, v katere se je vklapljal opera, podprti s tedanjimi pravnimi regulativami (Code civil v Franciji, regulative o prostituciji na območju Italije).