



THE DEJECTED MARIANA: ELEGY IN WORDS AND BRUSH STROKES

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PREFACE

The Victorian era saw the emergence and intensification of a peculiar relationship between the sister arts, literature and painting. Contemporary critics emphasised the need for poets to engage in visual arts to improve their skills; at the same time, visual artists were encouraged to perform the interpretation of lyric poems and plays, owing to their ability to detect the “dramatic potential of a poet’s imagined picture” (Hulea, 2013, p. 127). Naturally, the age also gave rise to an abundance of paintings that were inspired by literary texts. According to Richard Altick, the number of paintings illustrating Shakespeare’s works alone was above two thousand – which merely formulated one fifth of the total sum of literary paintings emerging in Britain in the nineteenth century (Hulea, 2013, p. 127).

Alongside Shakespeare, Keats and Milton, Alfred Tennyson appeared to be the most influential thematic source for contemporary visual artists. William Emory Smyster referred to him in his essay as “[p]ainters’ poet (...), who gave to art a richer series of subjects than almost any poet before or since his time” (Smyster, 1910, p. 505). His early poetry drew on romanticism and especially medievalism, and his unique word-painting techniques appealed especially to the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

Sir John Everett Millais, one of the founders of the Brotherhood, was particularly inspired by the subject matters offered by Tennyson’s poetry. In 1851, twenty years after the Victorian poet’s first volume, *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical* was published, Millais completed his painting which depicted a scene inspired by Tennyson’s poem, ‘Mariana’. The peculiar relation holding between the literary work and the poem, the transformation from the medium of poetic language to visual art, the altered technical devices available in the two forms of artistic expression pose the question how the aesthetic qualities of the poem were transferred into the visual language of the painting.

The present paper ventures on examining this question by providing a comparative analysis of the two works of art. The research question focuses on how the literary genre manifests in the painting, investigating the various poetic and visual tools applied by the two artists. In an interdisciplinary approach, the theoretical background of intersemiotic translation, literary criticism and aesthetic criticism shall be outlined. The study of Tennyson’s poem shall be carried out within the framework of the *morphé-based* analysis (Bús 2008), while the interpretation of Millais’ painting will rely on the “great abstract-realistic frame of reference for interpretation” (Bätschmann 1998).

CHAPTER I: DRAWING THE OUTLINES OF THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1) From literature to the visual arts – transposition and intersemiotic translation

The term “translation”, in its most general sense, denotes the act of “carrying across the meaning from one language to another” (Chew&Stead, 1999, p. 3). However, currently academic fields have seen the widening of the contexts in which “translation” is conceived of and utilized as a theoretical framework. The same efforts motivate the contributors of the volume entitled *Translating Life* (1999), an ambitious collection of apparently distinctive studies focusing on literary analysis, linguistic translation, cultural studies, visual arts and theatre adaptation. The link that connects all these theoretical fields is the complex act of translation: as is explained in the Introduction, there is a possibility “to multiply perspectives on the concept of translation, making it intellectually generative, an invaluable prompter to (...) fresh theoretical reflections on pertinent critical issues.” (Chew&Stead, 1999, p. 1). This can be achieved via the reinterpretation of the definition of the term and the recognition of its relations to other concepts that, although applied in different senses, seem to possess a common ground with translation.

One of the possibilities, which is also contained in the chief perspective of *Translating Life*, is to regard translation in its metaphorical sense, “as a process of change or a passage from one state to another” (Chew&Stead, 1999, p. 3). By comparing it to the definition and functioning of metaphor¹, Chew and Stead emphasise that translation is an act of transformation which involves substitution, resulting in a duality of a “left over” meaning and new senses or meanings. This aspect of translation also corresponds to the term “transposition”, which literally denotes the movement of objects, or people from one place to another. In a figurative sense, transposition also signifies any act of transferring texts or works of art between remote cultures or media. It is the latter sense in which the present paper aims to view translation and adopt it as a theoretical framework, that is, as intersemiotic translation.

Intersemiotic translation involves the transposition of meanings from one medium into another. Illustrations of this type of transposition include the transfer of a play into an opera or a play into a film (Chew&Stead, 1999, p. 5). Although both examples cover a transformation into relatively novel media, intersemiotic translation is not a new phenomenon. It has its roots in the arts evolving as early as ancient times, when the invention of writing produced the code of written language as a means to record events or stories that previously existed in either

oral, or pictorial forms. In the Middle Ages, the translation process was reversed: in Western Christian culture, visual arts served religious purposes by becoming a means to illustrate passages or happenings narrated in the Holy Bible². This created the possibility of tracing back the majority of paintings, engravings etc. of medieval origin to a particular text. Even after painting became more secular and drew its subject matter from other fields of life, portraying myths, legends, or aspects of literary works remained an essential component of the visual arts. Consequently, the intersemiotic translation of written, language based meanings into visual means is almost as old as art itself.

The major aim of this paper is to examine the intersemiotic translation carried out by Sir John Everett Millais when he performed the visual transformation of Alfred Tennyson's lyric poem, 'Mariana'. The comparative analysis focuses particularly on the transfer of genre-related qualities from verbal into visual means. In order to provide a theoretical framework for the analysis, the following sub-chapters compare and contrast the artistic means available in both literature and painting, which will be followed by the introduction of the methodology adopted to study literature and painting.

2) Literature and Painting – Orientation

In the literary and artistic criticism of the Victorian period, literature and painting were often alluded to as "sister arts". This term illustrates contemporary aesthetic trends suggesting the need for the two forms of art to inspire and influence each other. Artists were expected to engage in both activities in order to deepen their art, and their evaluation often rested on the fulfilment of this criteria. However, a comparative analysis of the characteristic features underpinning the two modes of expression reveals fundamental differences in terms of categorization, structure, compositional techniques and other artistic tools. Thus literature and painting appear to be sisters that share merely a limited degree of resemblance.

This ambivalent kinship is effectively illustrated by the categorization of the Arts in Erzsébet Tatai's work on art history³. Literature constitutes verbal art in itself, whereas fine arts include several branches such as architecture, painting, graphics, and sculpture. According to the manner in which language is organized into a text, verbal art can be classified into literary forms, or modes such as the epic, lyric and drama, while paintings can be distinguished into figurative and non-figurative. Yet painting and literature overlap when it comes to genre: based on thematic, structural, technical or functional aspects, literature has

novels, songs or tragedies, and paintings can be grouped into genres like landscape, still life, or portrait (Tatai, 2002, p. 13).

Another viewpoint in contrasting the sister arts focuses on composition techniques, in particular the interpretation process of the structure. According to Tatai's grouping, two primary categories exist: arts whose composition relies more on temporal aspects, and arts where the composition is chiefly defined by spatial features. The former includes film, music and literature, while the latter encompasses architecture, sculpture and painting. As it is plain to see, the "sister arts" fall in separate groups. Literature is argued to have more essential temporal ingredients than spatial, owing to the necessity of interpreting its components – the words, sentences describing the happenings of the plot or thought structure – in linearity, that is, by preserving their original direction throughout the process of reading. At the same time, in visual arts spatiality gains a more significant role, meaning that the reception of a painting is not restricted to an obligatory "direction" of viewing its elements (unlike reading, where starting with the end would distort the whole work, a painting can be viewed from any starting point)⁴.

The final distinction proposed by Tatai is concerned with the mental and/or sensory dimensions of the reception process. Based on its articulation through language, literature is considered to be an artistic form where the reception process is defined by concepts and notions⁵, emerging from the individual words that encode them. Tatai provides the following explanation: "(...) whether you hear the work of literature or see it (when reading it), the composition built up of words (...) gains priority, even if the words enter our thoughts as images." (Tatai, 2002, p. 14). In contrast, visual arts rely primarily on direct perception⁶, meaning that the image appearing in the mind of the beholder is not a mental version of a concept encoded in a symbolic system, but a visual experience achieved by using senses, in particular sight. "Sight and music chiefly affect your senses, they do not influence you through concepts, although their processing does not lack conceptual thinking." (Tatai, 2002, p. 14).

In sum, the sister arts appear to be created and interpreted in fundamentally differing manners. While literature has literary modes, painting is a branch of fine arts on the level of literature. Composition in literature is founded on temporal aspects and linearity, when painting in contrast is more essentially spatial. Whereas literature is interpreted by means of reading words that evoke mental images, paintings are beheld by relying on senses. In the light of these contrasts, the question arises how the transformation process can be carried out without losing essential dimensions – such as genre-related qualities of a lyric poem – of the

original work of art. The answer is to be sought in the artistic instruments the sister arts utilize. These, although conflicting on the surface, may also provide the overlappings that justify the kinship between the sister arts of literature and painting.

3) Literature and painting – artistic means

To a certain extent, the artistic means used in the process of creation mirror the differences listed in the previous sub-chapter. Literature is composed through the medium of language. Generally speaking, language in its everyday use is a symbolic system signifying concepts of the world, serving primarily communicational aims. The language of everyday use, however, differs from its version applied in literature, a feature which has been in the centre of discussion among literary scholars and linguists alike. In his influential work *The Rule of Metaphor*, Paul Ricoeur contends that the unique characteristic features of poetic language are provided by the presence of a fusion of meaning and senses; the disappearance of referential function of language thus becoming similar to some kind of material (or “stuff”) building up the discourse like marble builds up a sculpture, which means the formulation of “an object closed on itself” (Ricoeur, 2006, p. 309)⁷; the ability of this language to present a fictional experience; and the iconic nature of sense and the chain of images evoked by the course of reading a literary text. This means that beside the denotative meaning of the words and phrases used in a literary work, their connotative meaning and further dimensions of interpretation should also be considered. In the meantime, painting applies tools that are physically palpable, unlike the abstract concept of language: lines, shapes and colours, which are heavily dependent on their exact chemical features (whether the paint is oil, ink etc.) as well as application techniques (grounding, the brush strokes, and so on). Moreover, features such as light, shadowing and perspective direct the movement of the eye, highlighting certain figures or positions that are meant to draw the beholder’s attention.

Nevertheless, there is an important aspect in which the artistic tools overlap: the use of tropes, that is, the combination of their ‘lingual’ or ‘physical’ means with symbolism and metaphor. Symbol as a trope has been commonly applied in both literature and painting, it was merely the technique of their realization that divided them (the same shared cultural symbols were evoked through words in literature and by portraying them in painting). An additional aspect of symbolism is present in visual representation through the connection of its non-figurative components (such as perspective) with a symbolic meaning or role in interpretation. As regards metaphor, poetic language is defined by Aristotle as one being

inherently metaphorical; moreover, despite the fact that painting chiefly applies visual symbols, Oskar Bätschmann also points out the existence of “metaphorical processes” in a painting (Bätschmann, 1998, p. 136-138).

An interesting overlapping between literary and visual artistic instruments can be detected among Alfred Tennyson’s personal techniques critics often refer to as ‘word-painting’. According to Rhoda Flaxman, word-painting denotes “extended passages of visually oriented descriptions whose techniques emulate pictorial methods” (Flaxman, 1987, p. 10). The uniqueness of Victorian word painting is that poets do not merely use it as a tool for depicting landscape, but rather as blended details of landscape with the plot, characters and topic (Flaxman, 1987, p. 23). It is interesting to note how the metaphorical use of “painting” appears in a literary context among the means to convey moods and feelings, initiating an additional one for preserving the essential aspects of the original throughout the act of intersemiotic translation.

4) Methodology

In order to examine Alfred Tennyson’s poem, the present study adopts the theoretical framework provided by metaphor theory⁸ and the theory of the verbal icon proposed in *Metaphor in Theory and Practice* (Bús, 2008). The essays opening the chapters *The iconic aspects of the literary modes* and *Interpretation of the macro- and micro-levels of the verbal icon* introduce a terminology describing the different levels on which literary works can be analysed. According to the essays, all written literary texts, or as the author suggests, verbal icons, have two major constituents: a *skhéma*, that is, the outer shape, or outline and the *morphé*, a so-called ‘inner form’ (Bús, 2008, p. 61, 147). The interpretation of a literary text may focus more on one of the two parts, thereby resulting in two perspectives of literary analysis. Firstly, the *skhéma*-based approach investigates the shape of the text (both in a literal and metaphorical sense), on the basis of which it recognizes one of the archetypal activities that can be associated with works. The three possible archetypal activities (travelling, supplication and combat) shed light on the literary mode the given work belongs to (epic, lyric and drama respectively). Secondly, the *morphé*-based approach – which is adopted by the present essay – concentrates on the ‘inner form’, that is, the general and particular imaginative forms the world of the text can realize (Bús, 2008, p 61, 79). It investigates aspects of the integral parts building up the *morphé*: the *muthos* (the plot structure), the *dianoia* (the thought structure), made up of micro-elements. By studying the metaphorical

shape of the *muthos*, and the thoughts represented in the *dianoia*, the *morphé*-based analysis may help in recognizing the genre of the literary work.

As regards the methodology of analysing paintings, the paper adopts a multi-methodological approach, combining aspects of two major perspectives in aesthetic theory: a more general approach emphasising the need for considering the circumstances of the birth of a painting (the life of the painter, personal motivations, historical/social/cultural context) and the formalist approach concentrating on what the picture as a picture conveys (what the elements such as line, shading, colours and composition signify, without considering outer influence). The works of four authors have been considered: Erzsébet Tatai's study on art history already mentioned earlier as an illustration to the first viewpoint, René Berger's *Discovery of Painting 1-2* belonging to the formalist tradition, Rudolf Arnheim's *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye* on the formalist side with a psychological approach, and Oskar Bätschmann's *A Guide to Interpretation: Art Historical Hermeneutics* combining aspects of the two tendencies.

Under the heading entitled "Factors defining the artistic work", Tatai makes the following observation: "In order to understand a work of art, one has to be aware of the circumstances of its creation. This is not to be understood as a historical "background" serving as a scenery, but rather as a medium without which the work of art cannot be created"⁹ (Tatai, 2002, p. 23). She continues by enumerating certain phenomena influencing the creation process, including available materials, the spirit of the age (religion, ideology, arts, philosophy), the abilities and schooling of the artist, etc., comparing the importance of the environment for a work to the nurturing effect of soil, sunshine and air for trees (Tatai, 2002, p. 24).

A radical opposition to the idea articulated by Tatai is the approach adopted by René Berger, whose study argues against the influence of the artist's personality and life on the possible meaning of the work. By quoting Marcel Proust, he illustrates his point by comparing art to literature, where a novel, poem or a play "is the product of another self [of the writer], not the self that manifests in our customs, society and sins" (Berger, 1977a, p. 120). He also adds that biographies may provide a distorted image of the artist and that comments made by the artists about their own work can also be misleading. An artwork becomes legitimate as soon as it "breaks away from its creator, and starts an independent life in the world of forms, among its viewers"¹⁰ (Berger, 1977a, p. 116).

In addition, the major hypothesis articulated by Berger is that the goal of interpreting a painting is not primarily the recognition and description of its theme, but rather what "the

work of art implies in its quality as a work of art” (Berger, 1977a, p. 143). By introducing the method of “aesthetic viewing”, he proposes to investigate objects in the painting as shapes within the plasticity of the painting. By comparing painting to literature, he posits that the way words build up a play is similar to how a painting is constructed of its own, specific language. Elements of this language – which should form the basis of analysis – are surface, line, colour, composition, proportion and rhythm. (Berger, 1977a, p. 165, 200)¹¹.

A similar approach forms the basis of Arnheim’s book, *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye*, however, an essential difference is that it adopts an interdisciplinary approach by including the findings of psychology in order to explain the visual experience evoked by a painting. His introductory remarks reveal a cautious rejection of traditional analytical methods, blaming contemporary cultural background (the 1970s) for producing an abundance of theories and explanations misinterpreting and misjudging works of art. The major goal of his book is to provide an analytical overview of certain processes accompanying the act of seeing in order to refresh the “innate ability of understanding through sight”, which falls into the scientific field of psychology (Arnheim, 1979, p. 9). The structure of the book echoes the formalist division of the elements of “artistic language” proposed by Berger, with chapters including “Balance”, “Shape”, “Form”, “Space”, “Light” and “Colour”¹².

The author who appears to combine aspects of all three critical thinkers listed so far is Oskar Bätschmann, who calls upon hermeneutics to formulate a systematic, yet general methodology to analyse paintings. Following a detailed elaboration on previous practices of visual interpretation (including ambiguities of terminology, the issue of linguistic dominance and the limits of “reading” a painting like a text), he concentrates on the individual steps of interpretation. His findings are summed up in what he calls “the great abstract-realistic frame of reference for interpretation” (Bätschmann, 1998, p. 142-143). According to this system, there are four major viewpoints from which a work of art is to be considered: from the perspective of the artist, from the viewpoint of analysis, the subjective conditions and general, historical conditions. On the side of the artist, the subjective conditions consider the work of the painter, with issues such as artistic intention and the process of creation. On the same side, the general-historical conditions cover aspects like the education of the artist, traditional themes, as well as available production methods. On the side of the analysis, the subjective conditions comprise the argumentative justification of the ideas articulated by the critic about a work of art, which fundamentally requires the analysis of the so-called “pictorial processes”.

Finally, on the same side the general-historical conditions demand a background knowledge of concept of picture and the relations between text and picture, reading and seeing. While explaining the system, Bättschmann emphasises that the individual steps may be applied in an arbitrary order, since they do not form a hierarchy or gain a different weight in artistic analysis. He also stresses that further steps not listed in the system may also be added on condition that their relevance to the analysis is logically justified by the critic. (Bättschmann, 1998, p. 141).

Owing to the general, yet systematic approach Bättschmann's method involves, the present paper adopts his frame of reference as the theoretical framework of its methodology. Since the primary concern of the analysis is to detect how literary genre is translated into visual expression, certain steps of the system fall beyond the scope of the present study. The analysis of the painting chiefly concentrates on the individual pictorial processes, which serve as tools for articulating the qualities of genre. These pictorial processes in Bättschmann's understanding include: relations of light and shadows; lines and figures; colour relations; composition, structure and story; expression and representation of textual source; and metaphorical processes¹³.

CHAPTER II: TENNYSON'S 'MARIANA': A VERBAL ELEGY

1) Mariana in the Moated Grange: A Story of Loss

The *muthos* of the poem, when viewed in isolation, can be summed up in a few sentences. A woman (merely referred to by “she” in the poem) spends her days and nights in a moated grange, waiting for a specific (though unnamed) person. Weeks, months, maybe years pass, but he does not appear; this, however, does not prevent the woman from expecting his arrival. The endless waiting dominates her life, she engages in no other meaningful activity than staring out of the window and letting the stimuli of the landscape, colours, sounds, etc. drag her into a dreamy, gloomy state of mind. In each stanza she utters the same words, acknowledging day by day that the ‘he’ does not come and that she wants to die because she is tired of living. Her distress is expressed by two lyric selves: the first eight lines of each stanza are spoken by an outsider lyric person, giving an account of the woman's days through the imagery of the landscape, while the final four lines of each stanza are uttered by the woman herself, whose refrain-like sighs are separated from the outer lyric self by punctuation (quotation marks) and viewpoint (first person perspective).

George Brimley, whose analysis focuses primarily on the pictorial effects of the poem, sums up his impressions about the plot by declaring: “the woman who suffers is vague and indistinct; we have no interest in her, because we know nothing about her story or herself in detail” (Brimley, 1882, p.12). The statement is accurate when the poem is viewed in isolation: the characters seem “vague” because they are anonymous, concealed by the personal pronouns “she” and “he”. However, the title and the epigraph “Mariana in the moated grange – *Measure for Measure*” reveals that the missing parts of her plot are to be traced in another literary work, namely in William Shakespeare's play. In *Measure for Measure*, Mariana is the virtuous sister of a nobleman who dies at sea several years before the actual plot of the play starts. Since then, Mariana has lived her life in exile in the moated grange of Saint Luke's, mourning not only the loss of her brother, but – primarily – the loss of her fiancé, Angelo, who abandons her after her dowry is destroyed in the shipwreck. Tennyson appears to adapt this particular period of Mariana's plot, elaborating on her lovelorn longing towards Angelo. This also sheds light on new layers of the *muthos* and the *dianoia* alike: Mariana is betrayed by her fiancé, Angelo, and forced into exile, however, she still loves him and spends her days waiting and hoping he will change his mind and reunite with her.

2) Mourning in Eternal Loneliness

The play sheds light on the fact that the desperate woman in the poem is longing for a man who is not dead, but abandoned her out of his own will. His departure, however, burdens Mariana's soul with the same intensity as if he were dragged away from her by death: her daily laments reiterating the phrase "he cometh not" echo her bitter foreboding that his absence is an irreversible state, and although he still exists to other people in the world, he is dead to Mariana. Thus her hopelessly faithful longing towards a man who never returns resembles certain features of mourning: her thoughts circulate around that one particular person, the intolerable nature of his loss and absence overwhelms her, she sees and hears him in everything that surrounds her, and shows a lack of interest in anything else. Even her cherishing the hope that he might come is reminiscent of the phase in mourning when one expects the deceased to enter the room any moment, being unable to grasp the reality of having lost the person for ever.

Mariana's mood, which makes her constantly yearn for death, is a result of a whole set of emotions all present in her soul and vividly represented by the landscape of the moated grange she resides in. One of these feelings is a consequence of her isolation: loneliness. As Keith Sagar remarks in his essay, the landscape of Mariana is "deserted and sterile like the woman herself." (Sagar, 2002, p. 5). Or as George Brimley points it out, "The minute enumeration of detail [in the landscape] (...) is an excellence here, because no other means could so forcibly mark isolation" (Brimley, 1882, p. 10). This "excellent" expression of loneliness throughout the poem manifests on two levels. On the one hand, words literally signifying isolation are "strange" ("The broken sheds looked sad and strange"), "lonely" ("Upon the lonely moated grange" and "About the lonely moated grange") and "forlorn" ("In sleep she seemed to walk forlorn"). On the other hand, beside the explicit words there are several metaphors embedded in the text. Firstly, the word "dreary" occurring in Mariana's every utterance, which is originally used as a synonym for "bleak", "desolate" and "barren" to describe landscape. The emptiness of such a landscape symbolises both the emptiness of her human relations and the void in her soul left behind by the "he" she longs for. The power of this metaphor is strengthened by the regular occurrence in Mariana's utterances: it is first used as an epithet describing Mariana's "life", then the "night", the "day" and eventually Mariana herself: "I am very dreary", with "very" laying a final stress on it. The second metaphor for Mariana's loneliness is the "moated grange", which signifies a land separated from its surrounding and closed within itself by fosses. Her residence in such an area is symbolic of

her exile. In addition, the poplar tree in the fourth stanza might also represent her isolation, “[f]or leagues no other tree” is to be spotted in the area, making it the only entity of its species the same way Mariana is the only individual to be found in the moated grange. When extending the metaphor to the fifth stanza, where the shadow of the poplar falls on Mariana’s curtain or bed, it can also be seen as the feeling of loneliness haunting her and overwhelming her in waves: at times it is more distant and at others it is fiercer. Finally, one of the most elaborate and dynamic metaphors expressing Mariana’s lonesome state is positioned in the first stanza: “The rusted nails fell from the knots/That held the pear to the gable-wall.” The pear as a living plant was once connected to the wall with the help of nails; however, the nails ceased to fulfil their function owing to the rust and the pears were no longer connected to the wall. This picture in general reflects the slow change of feelings tying two people together, with the eventual consequence of separation. However, it may also be seen as direct symbols of Mariana and the man she loves, with the former being the wall (static, unable to move, inanimate) and the latter being the pear (active, the person who controls the situation by abandoning the “wall”, animate, able to survive without the wall as well). This metaphor describes the background of Mariana’s loneliness and is emphasised by its position in the very first stanza, among other landscape-metaphors revealing the governing feelings and mood of the poem.

To gain a better understanding of her feelings, it is also essential to consider the peculiar way time is made perceivable in the poem. On the one hand, it appears to be a linear succession of past, present and future. The majority of the poem is narrated in past tense, expressing that an unclear yet definitely long period of time has already elapsed. This is effectively reflected in the surroundings of Mariana through words like “ancient” (describing the thatch), “gnarled” (expressing the age of the poplar) and “awearied” (signifying a long exposure to exhausting torments). As opposed to the past tense of the landscape description, Mariana’s lines are formulated in present tense (“is dreary”, “cometh not”, “am awearied”) with an additional instance of future (“will not come”). On the other hand, the passing of time can also be interpreted as a cyclical movement: the period of months or even years are perceived by Mariana through the smallest segments of time: days and hours. Although time is elapsing, it is not progressing into the future but is extended to an infinite repetition of days and nights, which she has to survive one by one, stanza by stanza. This hopeless circulation of time is expressed by various poetic devices: Mariana’s refrain-functioning utterances, with their repetitive pattern of content (“life” being mentioned three times while “night” appearing twice before “dreary”), the mentioning of animals and phenomena connected to the changing phases

of day and night (night-fowl, bats, dew, morn, eventide) as well as the metaphor of the clock ticking slowly in the final stanza, signifying not only the unbearable pace time proceeds in but, through the circular movement of its hands, the infinity of time frozen in an extended cycle. What makes the perception of time so ambivalent for Mariana is the fact that she is waiting for something: the arrival of the “he”, their reunion as a couple. Although Mariana has to admit day by day that “he cometh not”, she still ceases to give up the wait. Despite the allusions in the sixth stanza to “old faces” and “old voices”, which might be symbolic of her family, friends and life before being abandoned by the “he”, she refuses to return to them and decides to stay in the moated grange – metaphorically speaking, she is unable to put her feelings towards her lover aside. The frozenness of her emotional state is mirrored in the landscape, where the flower pots and the walls are thickly covered in moss, the thatch is “weeded and worn”, the water in the sluice is “sleeping” and, as Sagar remarks, “Everything is similarly, unnaturally, denied the possibility of performing the function for which it was created.”: the latch remains unlifted and the sheds are broken. (Sagar, 2002, p. 4).

3) Several Shades of Melancholy

The unbearable loneliness, the eternal waiting Mariana is sentenced to and her sorrow for Angelo's absence, felt as a symbolical death lingers behind one of the central moods governing the poem: melancholy and depression, expressed effectively by Tennyson's word-painting techniques. As Brimley remarks, the poetic devices describing the landscape effectively mark “the mind vacant of all but misery” (Brimley, 1882, p. 10). Even in the limited set of examples where melancholy or mourning is articulated by using words in their literal sense, these synonyms are attached to certain elements of the landscape in order to become vehicles of a metaphor. Interestingly enough, these metaphors are distanced from Mariana, whose grief is projected onto the landscape: “the broken sheds looked sad”, describing the buildings in the moated grange, and “her tears fell with the dews”, connecting her weeping to the daily cycle of nature. Moreover, her grief is also expressed by emphasising elements of the landscape that can be symbolic of masculinity, reminding her of Angelo. In the third stanza, she is woken by the “crow” of the “night fowl” and the singing of a “cock”. The word “crow” as a verb stands for the peculiar sound of a male bird, the “cock” of the next line, which not only signifies the ‘male chicken’, but any kind of male bird in general.

Apart from the landscape-metaphors and masculine symbols mirroring Mariana's distress, Tennyson chiefly applies visual tools to paint the gloomy mood. The colours

governing the poem chiefly belong to the cold spectrum. The green and the silver of the poplar's bicoloured leaves represent jealousy, death and decline (Pál & Újvári, 2001, p. 524; 134). The "blue" describing the fly in the sixth stanza can also be associated to melancholy through its informal meaning of 'sad'. In addition, the "gray-eyed morn" and "the rounding gray" emphasise the colour of melancholy, passivity and depression (Pál & Újvári 2001, p. 459). Besides "gray", black is also repeated twice in the poem, first describing the moss covering the flower pots, then being attached to the water in the sluice. Its unusual use contributes to the gloomy atmosphere of the poem, showing the colour of grief and death conquering the elements of landscape as well. Interestingly enough, the "white" of the curtain can also connote mourning and death, because it is closely connected to ritualistic features of death such as the candle and the winding sheet.

Apart from specific colours, the poem also lays emphasis on the lack of light by showing the majority of actions during the night: the word "day" in Mariana's refrain, unlike the twice appearing "night", is not repeated in the poem, there is merely one stanza (the sixth) which certainly takes place during daytime, and the words "morn" and "light" are overshadowed by the regular use of "even", "eventide" and "dark". The night traditionally symbolises death, chaos, insanity and emotional collapse (Pál & Újvári, 2001, p. 122), which is clearly in line with Mariana's attitude and feelings. This is the reason why Mariana "could not look on the sweet heaven" (stanza 2), since the poem expresses the "impression of that tear-blinded misery to which the light (...) is intolerable." (Brimley, 1855, p. 11).

Nonetheless, the melancholy in Tennyson's elegiac poem is peculiar because it is in constant duel with hope, a force that could balance her misery with the promise of redemption. Whereas Mariana's refrain appears to comment on her exhaustion and the hopelessness of her wait, the landscape-metaphors indicate the passing of time, which clearly means that Mariana has enough hope to carry on, despite what she says. The ambivalence of her feelings is further indicated through the imagery of the landscape: elements of hope and symbolic manifestations of death – which can be seen as the temptation luring Mariana towards giving up the wait and committing suicide – are both present in the poem. The pear of the first stanza may traditionally stand for health and hope (Pál&Újvári, 2001, p. 524). Leaves in general represent growth and revival (p. 138), while morning and dawn carry a promise of opportunities and hope (p. 187). On the other hand, elements like the colour black, the night and the mouse are symbolic of death (p. 146, 122, 117), along with the door and the window representing a connection between two worlds (p. 27). The bed and the fly have additional connotations of physical weakness and illness (p. 25, 312) and the mote in the sunbeam as

well as the direction West signify transience and a sense of departure (p. 397,118). Furthermore, there are elements that carry a possibility of dual interpretation: the colour green can both stand for life and death and the colour silver may mark betrayal and loyalty (p. 524,134). Not to mention the additional tenor of chaos associated to the symbols of the mouse and the night (p. 117), which characterises Mariana's thoughts and indecisiveness. The whole of the poem appears to swing stanza by stanza from day to night, from morn to eventide, from light to dark and from hope to embitterment. However, this to-and-fro movement between hope and resignation has the paradoxical effect of enhancing the power of depression: each instance of disappointment feeds Mariana's embitterment, drifting her to the brink of suicide.

4) From Mourning to Longing: A Prayer for Death

Although the *muthos* and *dianoia* of the poem imply a timeless, frozen state of mourning and the passivity of Mariana, there is a possibility to detect a slow transformation in the emotional state of the dejected woman. This is achieved by various poetic means: the movement from describing the outer landscape to elaborating on the interior of the house Mariana resides in, resulting in an effect of space closing up on her; the complex symbols and metaphors; as well as the darkening tendency of Mariana's utterances.

The word-painting of the moated grange begins with the description of the immediate surroundings of the gable-wall, with its crusted flower-pots, broken sheds and ancient thatch being conquered by the forces of nature: black moss and weeds. Then it proceeds to the view Mariana has by looking out of the window: the sky, the glooming flats, and the wall with the frozen sluice and the swaying poplar tree in the second, third and forth stanzas. This is followed by a transcendence from the outside (the wind moving the curtain, on which the shadow of the poplar is projected by the moonlight) to the room where Mariana sleeps (the shadow falling on her bed and body) in the fifth stanza. Once inside, stanza six describes the haunted house, with its creaking doors, the mouse behind the wainscot, and the old footsteps treading the upper floors. Finally, the sparrow on the roof of the *house*, the clock's ticking in the *room* and the sound of the poplar *outside* mingle in the seventh stanza, illustrating Mariana's confusion and falling apart. The narrowing of space, the movement from the distant flats to the crumbling house can be seen as a metaphor of falling into oneself, an introverted retreat from the miseries of life.

Apart from the poetic trope of space folding in on itself, the poem also contains an elaborate metaphor which encompasses symbols expressing gender qualities as a means to

communicate Mariana's longing for death. As it was mentioned earlier, the majority of the events take place during the night, which means that there is a domination of darkness and a lack of light – which, in consequence, also means a lack of the Sun, which is regarded to be a masculine symbol (Pál & Újvári, 2001, p. 348). On the other hand, the Moon is mentioned several times in the poem, which in contrast is a feminine symbol (Pál & Újvári, 2001, p. 216). As it is pointed out in their collection of symbols, moonlight is a mere illusion since the Moon is only capable of reflecting the rays of the Sun (Pál & Újvári, 2001, p. 216). Viewed from this perspective, the Moon is not only powerless without the Sun but also dependant on it: without the light of the star, it is invisible. Supposing that the Moon is symbolic of the femininity of Mariana and the Sun of the masculinity of the "he", an assumption might follow that Mariana feels incomplete without her lover and his absence causes her to long for her own death.

The most effective technique of portraying Mariana's slow orientation towards death, however, is applied in the refrains. Mariana's utterances are clear manifestations of her attitude and recur at the end of each stanza with slightly altered contents. The first six refrains reflect on the passing of days and nights, which can either be interpreted as a linear movement forward or as cyclical perception. However, the elements changing in the refrain also carry a repetitive tendency: In the clause "My [...] is dreary", "life" appears thrice, "night" is inserted twice and "day" merely occupies the position once. This indicates a darkening tendency – which, in symbolic terms, means a darkening tendency of Mariana's mood and the weakening of hope. Her depression and hopelessness reaches its peak in the final stanza, which stands out owing to the high number of alterations made in its structure and content. Firstly, now it is Mariana herself that is "dreary", with "very" giving extra emphasis never applied in the utterances before: "I am very dreary". Secondly, the sentence "He cometh not" is altered to "He will not come". The change of the archaic verb form expressing present tense into its future form by adding the modal auxiliary "will" implies an alteration in the sensing of time as well: from a general statement the sentence evolves into a bitter prediction foretelling that the wait is unnecessary since the future will not change. Moreover, the word "will" also carries connotations of willingness: Mariana appears to understand and acknowledge that Angelo is not *intending* to come, which makes her wait hopeless. Furthermore, the final change of placing God before the death-wish ("O God that I were dead!") implies a more certain attitude. The longing for death is no longer a bitter sigh but it is addressed to the divine being, who possesses the power of taking away Mariana's life.

In the light of the analysis, Alfred Tennyson's 'Mariana' appears to carry the thematic

features pertaining to elegy¹⁴. Mariana mourns the loss of Angelo as if she were grieving for a dead person: her agony is portrayed through her isolation, her cyclical sensing of time and the dreamy, melancholic mood she remains prisoner to. On the other hand, her dramatic inner duel of hope and resignation ironically results in an articulated death-wish; thus, while she pities the metaphorical death of her lover, she longs for death to take her as well. Bearing in mind these characteristic features, the question arises how such a unique combination of elegiac qualities can be transferred into visual means to fit the medium of painting.

CHAPTER III: MILLAIS' ELEGIAC BRUSH STROKES

When tracing back the possible textual source of Sir John Everett Millais' *Mariana*, one needs to go no further than the first exhibition of the painting in 1851. According to Frances Fowl, the artwork was displayed together with a citation originating from Tennyson's poem, 'Mariana', which clearly indicates that the Pre-Raphaelite artist relied on Alfred Tennyson's work when he depicted the sufferings of the dejected woman (Fowl, 2000). Indeed, the theme and plot of the painting appears to support this argument. The artwork captures the moment when Mariana abandons her needlework and stands up to stretch her aching back. The interior with its wooden floor, stained-glass window, peering mouse and dark curtain can be identified with the room from which Tennyson's Mariana beholds the landscape surrounding her – the moated grange, with its poplar and the glooming flats in the distance. However, these are only micro-vehicles of the poem constituting a thematic overlap; in order to investigate how the elegiac quality was translated by visual means, one has to engage in the analysis of the pictorial processes building up the painting, including the investigation of light and shadow, colour relations, composition (including perspective), and metaphorical processes. This is to be followed by the pictorial process elaborating on the relation between source text and painting, which is carried out by focusing on the visual tools applied by Millais to express the various feelings and moods constituting the elegiac quality of the poem.

1) Colour relations: light and shadow, complementary contrasts and temperature

The study of light and shadow relations in Millais' illustration reveals an interesting divergence from Pre-Raphaelite norms¹⁵. Millais applies two sources of light: a major, dominating one originating from the left side of the picture (the window) and a more insignificant one in the right (the candle). These two sources of light result in an unbalanced illumination of the interior: while the objects and figures closer to the left side are heavily lit, those on the right side shade into a lingering darkness. Consequently, the form shadows on the left side are more contrasted: the white table cloth and Mariana's dark blue dress elapse into pitch black in a sudden and harsh manner. The dividing line between the brighter, more contrasted left side and the darker right side can be drawn somewhere on the vertical line of the turquoise-golden wall hanging: as the wall takes a turn, it falls into darkness so suddenly

that the pattern is practically unrecognisable. The same happens to the objects illuminated by the glimmering candle: their indefinite contours fade into darkness.

As far as colours are concerned, there are two basic viewpoints of investigation. Firstly, their relations including brightness and complementary contrasts as well as temperature play a key role in building up the aesthetic tensions that guide the eye of the beholder and convey aspects of the interpretation of the subject matter. Secondly, within a given cultural context each colour also carries a symbolic meaning; considering the religious typology of Pre-Raphaelite tendencies¹⁶, this also has to be taken into account.

The study of brightness contrasts in Millais' painting reveals a higher occurrence of tensions on the left side than on the right. In the former case, the light green of the leaves outside is contrasted by the darker shade of red on the stained glass; the white of the table cloth stands against the green of the leaves and the embroidery; the dark shade of Mariana's blue dress is opposed by the light green of the embroidery from the left, and the shining golden pattern of the wall hanging on the right. Although the same richness and variety of colours manifests on the right-hand as well, the delicate shades of silver, red, gold and green are evidently dominated by dark brown, dark grey, and black.

Apart from brightness, colours can also be viewed in relation to their complementary pairs, whose function is to highlight each other thereby drawing the attention of the beholder to a certain element of the painting. Two instances of complementary contrast appear in Millais' illustration: the red of the window neighbours the green leaves, and the blue of the dress is highlighted by the orange shade of the stool. In the first case, the contrast serves to emphasise the angel and the Virgin Mary on the stained glass, while the second instance contours the figure of Mariana, the main character of the painting. Both instances appear either in the left side of the picture or towards its centre – again, the right side is left without any significant complementary contrasts.

As far as colour temperature is concerned, at first sight it appears to be relatively balanced throughout the painting. The cold green of the leaves is balanced by the warmth of the red on the window, while the green background of the embroidery is decorated with red, yellow as well as white and violet flowers. Moreover, the cool shade of blue occupying the central vertical of the painting is framed by the golden decoration running almost parallel with it and the orange-brown stool, which again seem to emphasise the definite contours of the lady. However, this balance of cold and warm colours is only apparent in the left and the

centre of the painting: the right corner is dominated by cold shades, from the green and silver of the objects to the dark grey and black of the curtain and its shadow.

In addition to the techniques exploiting their visual features, Millais also lays emphasis on the culture-bound symbolic dimensions of colours. The dark blue of Mariana's dress is the colour associated with the Virgin Mary, and also has further connotations of faith, compassion, seriousness and contemplation (Fontana, 1994, p. 66; Tatai, 2002, p. 149). The white of the flower in the coat of arms – in this context – is the symbol of virginity, virtue and pureness, while the white of the tablecloth may evoke the image of the winding sheet, therefore signifying mourning and death. In addition, green generally represents peace and hope, however, it also has connotations of mortality, which might be enhanced by the red surrounding the angel and Virgin Mary, which traditionally stands for martyrdom in the New Testament. Finally, black is the universal colour of death, mourning, hopelessness and the underworld in Western culture – as seen earlier (Fontana, 1994, p. 67; Tatai, 2002, p. 149).

2) Composition, Structure and Plot

As opposed to his practice of applying two light sources, Millais rejects the prevailing trends of academic painting when it comes to composition. Instead of setting up his figures in a pyramid-shaped grouping, he places Mariana in the centre, the mouse in the bottom-right corner, the leaves in a semicircle ranging from the table to the curtain and the branches of the poplar in a random disorder. This and the arrangement of the other objects results in a so-called dynamic composition. The half-bent position taken by Mariana, who occupies the central vertical axis of the painting, results in a diagonal axis, which is associated with movement and dynamism as opposed to the stasis of a straight line. This diagonal is reinforced by the direction of Mariana's gaze, which runs downward to the left parallel to the diagonal drawn on her leaning torso. A mirror reflection of the diagonal is supported by Mariana's face, which is not shown from a perfect profile, but is slightly turned towards the beholder, thus revealing both sides of her cheek and both of her eyes.

The analysis of composition also includes the techniques applied by artists to reproduce the three dimensional space on a two-dimensional canvas. In accordance with the realistic tendency of Pre-Raphaelite painting¹⁷, Millais employs linear perspective, which imitates depth and distance by means of foreshortening. 'Mariana' in particular has one-point perspective, which means that the parallel lines formulating the basis of foreshortening converge in one single point: the so-called vanishing point, which falls on the implied horizon

line. When tracing back the parallel lines, the vanishing point can be detected at the very right edge of the painting in the dark spot next to the curtain, with the horizon line roughly intersecting Mariana's left eye. Although the act of shifting the vanishing point from the centre is not uncommon, its manifestation in Millais' artwork is rather radical: the viewer has the illusion that the right side of the picture had been cut off.

3) Metaphor as an Underlying Process

The possibility of tracing metaphorical and symbolical manifestations on a painting has already been alluded to in the chapter discussing the theoretical background of the pictorial analysis. During the process of picture description, the symbolic dimensions of the visual code appear to be studied with greater confidence than its metaphorical procedures. Oskar Bätschmann, for instance, emphasises the lack of studies venturing on the investigation of semantic metaphors found in paintings, which is partly due to the problematic nature of differentiating between symbol and metaphor (Bätschmann, 1998, p. 136-137). The present paper adopts the findings of metaphor theory to try to overcome this ambiguity, and studies the previously mentioned pictorial processes as vehicles of potential metaphors to investigate whether they can be seen as pointing beyond themselves based on similarity or analogy.

In this way, the two sides of the painting can be seen as the two alternatives formulating an inner battle of Mariana's thoughts and feelings. Her position in the middle of the painting reinforces her hesitant state between the left and the right side. On the one hand, she faces the window on the left, through which the major source of light illuminates the hopeful green of the foliage, the colourful flowers on her embroidery and the Virgin Mary symbolising virtue, prayer and heaven. On the other hand, Mariana also stretches her back and leans towards the interior with its dark corner and peering mouse symbolising decay. Her indecisiveness is also marked by her contrasted form shadow: whereas her cheeks and fair hair are illuminated, her dress is chiefly occupied by core shadow. The duel of light and shadow, the tensions between the contrasted, colourful left side and the dark, misty right side are metaphors of the inner combat of Mariana's soul between two alternatives: hope or resignation, life or death.

Apart from the colour relations, the dynamic composition also has a metaphorical dimension. The dynamic nature of the composition has significant effects on the viewer: it evokes the illusion of motion, the change in mood or intention and signifies emotion, all of which can be detected in the painting. Mariana stands up and stretches her back, which is a

movement signifying change in her pose (sitting in front of the window) and her activity (needlework). Furthermore, the new position marks a change in her attitude: she leans back towards the dark corner symbolic of death, which also reflects her ambivalent emotions of resignation, exhaustion with the pointless needlework, and her longing for death.

In addition, the peculiar manifestation of the one-point linear perspective can also be interpreted as the vehicle of a metaphor. While the majority of the objects and Mariana herself can be seen from a slight profile, the curtain and the mouse standing on the same vertical axis are beheld from front-view. Such a radical shifting of the vanishing point almost to the edge of the frame results in an unbalanced state pulling the objects towards itself like a magnet. The fact that the vanishing point falls behind the curtain (which symbolises the entrance to the underworld) reflects a viewpoint taken by the beholder that tends towards death.

4) Text and Picture: Expression and Representation

When it comes to the pictorial process investigating the manner in which the painting represents its source text – in this case, actual correspondences to, or divergence from Tennyson's 'Mariana' – Millais' work appears to portray the *muthos* of the poem in a slightly altered manner. The exact plot of the painting, which involves Mariana standing up and stretching her aching back after long, tortuous hours of embroidery, does not take place in the poem. Firstly, Tennyson's Mariana did nothing other than staring out of the window and wandering about in the house, while Millais' Mariana invested creative energy into needlework. Furthermore, there are significant differences between the objects and animals alluded to in the poem and given visual manifestation in the painting. The stained-glass windows, the stool, the golden wall hanging with its horse and bird, the altar with its silverware, triptych and niche, the candle, and the curtain probably concealing a door are all Millais' additions serving as creative deviation from the original¹⁸ to articulate different aspects constituting the tenor of the poem.

One of the feelings governing the elegiac mood of the poem is Mariana's isolation, which also appears in the theme of the painting. The fact that she is the only human being in the room is twisted by the irony of the figures painted on the window glass in front of her. They symbolise her prayer and her dialogues with God, the only entity she can address. Yet the fact that God ceases to reply lays further emphasis on her loneliness. Her isolation and dependence upon herself alone is also effectively articulated through the narrowing down of space around her: it is not mere fosses that seal her off from society, but the very walls of the

interior. Her position within this small room is also peculiar: she stands as close to the window as possible, with her legs directly touching the table, the only physical boundary distancing her from the stained glass. Such a desperate clinging to the symbolic way out evokes the image of a prisoner clutching the bars and staring out into the free world. Her entire body appears to be trapped by objects: the table in front of her, the wall on her right, the stool behind her, the white linen of the tablecloth on her left, and the leaves scattered in all directions around her. Adding to this claustrophobic experience, the coat of arms painted on the window blocks the view to the sky. Only the blue rhombuses surrounding the angel and the Virgin Mary provide the illusion of heaven above – but, as if Mariana had realised its illusive nature, she is not looking at the window painting, but rests her eyes on a spot below it. This also echoes the line “she could not look at the sweet heaven” from Tennyson’s poem.

Another significant element of the poem adding to the elegiac mood is the peculiar passing of time, traces of which can also be detected in the painting. The illusion of time is achieved on a thematic level by using symbols and metaphors connoting its passing. One of these can be the leaves blown inside, which generally represent the cyclical movement of seasons. This symbolic property is further enhanced by compositional techniques. The two on the table point towards the two on the floor, and the remaining four compose a straight mental line directing the beholder’s eye towards the dark corner. Not only do they symbolically point to death, but they are also parts of the circle in which the painting is beheld: from the last leaf, the eye wanders to the candle, the light of which dances on the black wall pulling the eye to the left again, back to Mariana’s face and eyes, where following the direction she looks leads back to the table with the embroidery and the first leaf. This circular rhythm of the painting corresponds with the cyclical time perception of the poem, only here it is not achieved through temporal means (days, nights, etc) but by spatial ones. A further element enhancing the repetitiveness and the weight of the time trapped in the interior is the needlework. At first it may seem like a dynamic and creative activity as compared to sitting in front of the window and passively perceiving the stimuli of the outer world, as seen in the poem. However, requiring little attention after a certain amount of practice, it is in fact a sequence of repetitive movements: while the hands are at work, the mind can flow freely and Mariana can still yearn for her beloved Angelo. The elaborate pattern of flowers unfolding on the piece of material visible on the table implies that a long time has passed, which can be seen as the linear aspect of time elapsing in the poem. Thus the same duality of linear and cyclical time perception is present in the painting as in Tennyson’s work; nevertheless, it is different because the act of sewing is suspended in the painting, as if Millais’ Mariana had grown tired of the repetitive

work and the eternal waiting she is sentenced to. The peculiar position in which the needle was thrust into the material even implies frustration and sudden anger, which are feelings that were not expressed by the original poem.

When it comes to Millais' representation of melancholy, an interesting dovetailing occurs with Tennyson's poem: the painter also applies colour as a chief tool to convey the mood. As mentioned before, the colours black, white, grey and violet all carry symbolic interpretations of misery, depression and mourning (Fontana, 1994, p. 67). Tennyson and Millais both apply the symbolic meaning of light, darkness and colours to express melancholy; however, in Tennyson's poem it is mostly through their temperature (their coldness), while in Millais' work it is achieved through their symbolic meaning. Millais also applies other tools to convey Mariana's misery, which are to be detected in the theme. The stool without a back, for instance, may serve as a symbol for Mariana's suffering, as a tool of torture having caused her backache (also symbolic of her heartache). When viewing the picture from a religious perspective, the dark blue dress, the figures on the stained-glass window and the snowdrop on the coat of arms are all symbols attributed to the Virgin Mary¹⁹; together with the cross formulated by the creases in the white tablecloth, they evoke the suffering of the Virgin after the crucifixion.

The constant duel of melancholy and hope in the poem is also reflected in the painting: the opposing left and right sides symbolically stand for life and death, the ongoing cycle of seasons versus the infiniteness of the underworld, the claustrophobic prison of the room versus the mysterious space veiled by the curtain. The mouse peering in the bottom-right corner also symbolises chaos and inner decay. However, the battle between hope and death-wish appears to be won by the latter – the same way as in the poem. The symbols carrying death outweigh those conveying hope, both in number and intensity. Apart from the colours mentioned earlier, smaller thematic symbols indicate the decisiveness of Mariana's longing for death. The broken snowdrop on the crest of the coat of arms painted on the window, for instance, can be seen as standing for Mariana's shattered hope. The short Latin phrase on the coat, "*In coelo quies*", meaning "In heaven there is peace"²⁰, illustrates Mariana's longing for death to ease her pain. Combined with the angel, the crosses on the tablecloth and the window as well as further religious imagery, it also echoes Mariana's prayer-like refrains in Tennyson's poem, which are not uttered, but portrayed by visual means. Most importantly, however, the whole composition orientates towards the dark corner symbolic of death: the perspective, the vanishing point, Mariana's pose, the cast shadows of her figure and the stool, not to mention the leaves scattered on the floor like footprints leading to the corner all draw

the eyes of the beholder from the window to the depth of the interior, from the contrasted and lively left to the opaque, deadly right. This not only imitates the closing in of space upon Mariana flowing from stanza to stanza in the poem, but also the darkening tendency of the refrains, the alteration in the sensing of time (future tense in the poem, stopping the needlework in the painting) and the position of the altar in the dark corner symbolising that her prayers no longer beg for Angelo, but rather for death to end her sufferings.

CONCLUSION

The major aim of the paper was to provide a comparative analysis of Alfred Tennyson's lyric poem and Sir John Everett Millais' painting, both entitled 'Mariana'. The comparison focused on how the aesthetic features of genre prevailing in the poem are translated into visual means in the painting. Such an interdisciplinary approach required a thorough survey introducing the theoretical background of both literary and pictorial analysis. In the first half of the first chapter, the two disciplines were compared and contrasted in terms of their general characteristic features and relations to each other as "sister arts". In the subsequent pages, the methodology of literary and pictorial analysis was outlined respectively. The former involved the description of the *morphe*-based approach constituting the theory of the verbal icon (Bús), while the latter included the introduction of the "great abstract-realistic frame of reference for interpretation" (Bätschmann).

The analyses carried out in chapters II and III had two major findings. Firstly, the *morphe*-based study of Tennyson's lyric unveiled various themes of elegy constituting the tenor of the poem. Secondly, all these elegiac themes were revealed to have been transferred to the painting, and conveyed by either similar or differing artistic means.

Mariana's isolation was portrayed by similar means; both artists utilized the lonely poplar, the solitary act of prayer and the moated grange, however, their methods were slightly different. While in the poem Mariana endeavoured to engage in a dialogue with God but received no answer, in the painting she set up an altar and settled beneath a stained-glass window with its holy figures gazing down at her silently. Whereas Tennyson embedded his metaphors in the outer landscape of the moated grange, Millais used the interior to visualize Mariana's lonesome state. The only significant thematic difference appeared to be the absence of the sky in the painting; nonetheless, even this served the function of highlighting the poem. The fact that Mariana was looking below the stained-glass-heaven echoed the line "she could not look at the sweet heaven".

As opposed to loneliness, the duality of time was created by applying different methods. On the one hand, the poem used linguistic tools (tense, auxiliaries), as well as metaphors and symbols to express the linear nature of the time already elapsed (elements of landscape signifying age). On the other hand, in the painting the only manifestation of language (the Latin words on the coat of arms) lacked a verb, the word class which could signify tense, and the symbols and metaphors used for the past were thematically different (the embroidery). As far as the cyclical nature of time is concerned, Tennyson achieved it by

using metaphors and symbols of temporal connotations (days and nights, clock, etc), while Millais applied spatial tools (composition, perspective, rhythm).

When it came to conveying melancholy, the two works overlapped in their use of light and darkness as well as colours – however, the particular techniques were different. While Tennyson exploited the symbolic gloom of darkness by showing the events during the night, Millais established a dark corner which was directly symbolic of death. Furthermore, in his reference to colours, the Victorian poet conveyed melancholy by relying on the effect of colour temperature (using cold shades), whereas the Pre-Raphaelite artist emphasised their brightness and symbolic qualities connoting sadness and death. An additional technique applied by Millais yet not exploited by Tennyson was religious imagery, especially symbols evoking the image of the suffering Virgin Mary.

As regards the duel between hope and death, the battle was fought by similar instruments and won by the same combatant. The imagery symbolising hope and death in the lyric corresponded to that of the painting, with only a few divergences. The painting also visualized the conflicted alternatives through the contrasted left and right side. Additionally, Mariana's final orientation towards death was expressed by the direction of description, complex figures as well as the darkening tendency of the refrains in Tennyson's lyric, while it was indicated by visual means including perspective and composition pulling the eye of the beholder towards the right corner symbolic of death in Millais' illustration. The final cry for God to end her sufferings in the poem was reflected not only by the religious imagery and the positioning of the altar in the dark corner, but also through the same tool building up the source text of the Pre-Raphaelite painting: language. The Latin phrase on the coat of arms, "In heaven there is peace", directly echoed the lines uttered in Tennyson's moated grange: "O God that I were dead!"

NOTES

- 1) By definition, metaphor is “a figure of transport”, and also has similar etymological roots with translation (‘a carrying across’) (Chew&Stead, 1999, p 3). It also comprises the act of substitution by bringing similar, yet different concepts together to function as the vehicle and the tenor of the metaphor.
- 2) Tatai, 2002, p. 18, 100-104
- 3) Tatai, E. (2002). *Művészettörténeti Ismeretek*. Budapest: Enciklopédia Kiadó.
- 4) It has to be noted that there have been discussions in aesthetic theory concerning this point. The direction of reading has a major effect on a given culture which is so deeply encoded that it manifests on other fields of life as well. Thus, in cultures where the direction of reading is from left to right, it is argued that the composition – and its reception – instinctively unfolds following the same pattern.
- 5) „fogalmi művészetek”
- 6) „érzékletes művészetek”
- 7) “a költői nyelvben a jelentés és az érzékek párosa valamiféle önmagába záródott tárgyat hoz létre (...)”
- 8) Based on I. A. Richard’s terminology identifying the parts of metaphor, all works of literature can be seen as extended metaphors, consisting of a vehicle (the text itself) and a tenor (the underlying meaning or possible interpretations of the text) (Bús, 2008, p 53).
- 9) „Ahhoz, hogy egy alkotást megértsünk, keletkezésének feltételeivel is tisztában kell lennünk. Nem történelmi „háttérrel” van szó, ami díszletként szolgál, inkább egy olyan közegről, amely nélkül nem jöhet létre a mű.”
- 10) „egy másik én terméke, nem azé, amelyik a szokásainkban, a társadalomban, bűneinkben megnyilatkozik.”; „elszakad alkotójától, és önálló életet kezd a formák világában, a nézői között”
- 11) „(...) amit a műalkotás műalkotás minőségében sugall”; „esztétikai megismerés”; felület, vonal, szín, kompozíció, arányok, ritmus
- 12) „A látás útján való megismerés velünk született képessége”; „Az egyensúly”, „Az alak”, „A forma”, „A tér”, „A fény”, „A szín”
- 13) „az értelmezés nagy absztrakt-reális vonatkozási rendszere”; “az alkotó oldaláról, az elemzés oldaláról, szubjektív feltételek, általános történeti feltételek”; “a festő munkája”, “történetrendszerbeli feltételek”, “az értelmezés igazolása – a képfolyamatok elemzése”; “a tapasztalat arisztotelészi értelme”; “Fény és árnyék; Vonal és figura; Színviszonylatok; Kompozíció, elrendezés és történet; Szöveg-kép: kifejezés és re-prezentáció; A metaforika mint folyamat”
- 14) Elegy first appears in literature as a “mode applied to an apparently occasional theme or topic”, meaning that any lyric constructed of the ‘elegiac metre’ was regarded as an elegy (Pfau, p. 547). However, in the 16th century elegy evolves into a genre of lyric poetry in English literature, essentially comprising the themes of death, human mortality and mourning, with additional topics as loss, lamentation and melancholy (Pfau, p. 547).
- 15) The major aim of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was to reject traditional practices of academic painting, and return to the norms of the artists preceding Raphael. As regards lighting, they abandoned the academic practice of setting up a dominant and a less significant source of light in their painting.

- 16) Religious themes occupied an essential role in Pre-Raphaelite art. According to D. M. R. Bentley, religious symbolism can be detected in Pre-Raphaelite paintings in three manifestations: scriptural typology, which depicts “incidents of the Old Testament (...) and the New Testament”; imaginative scriptural typology, with paintings depicting “more-or-less fictive incidents, principally in the lives of Christ and the Virgin Mary”; and extended scriptural typology, where paintings portray non-biblical events featuring “emblematic accessories whose meanings are rooted in the Christian tradition” (Bentley, 2009, p 830). Although this justifies the critical approach to investigate religious symbols in the painting – for instance, bearing in mind the symbolic meaning of colours – a certain level of caution is required. Pre-Raphaelites altered certain elements of traditional religious depiction, tending towards a more realistic approach as opposed to an idealistic one (Doyle, 2013, p 6).
- 17) Innovations in Pre-Raphaelite representation also involved a realistic approach, venturing to capture nature in a detailed and loyal manner. Figures adopted from the Middle Ages were portrayed with an ambition of authenticity, which manifested in their clothes, hairstyle and the slightest detail of their appearance (Doyle, 2013, p 13, 17, 19).
- 18) Creative deviation is an act accompanying especially literary translation, when the same creative input of the original text cannot be transformed into the target language, thus it has to be altered to convey the same artistic creativity but in a new manner.
- 19) The snowdrop can be seen as a symbol of hope and an attribute of the Virgin Mary (Seibert, 1986, p. 125).
- 20) Frances Fowl translates the text as follows: “In heaven there is rest”. The phrase “In coelo” means “in heaven”, while the word “quies” denotes quiet, calm, rest, peace and sleep (source: <http://www.latin-dictionary.net/definition/32646/quies-quietis>)

APPENDIX



Sir John Everett Millais: Mariana (1851). Retrieved from:
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:John_Everett_Millais_-_Mariana_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

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