

Generic Dualities in Manga Shakespeare

Jelige: te csak vagány, szép és jó tudsz lenni

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*And to let all this slip past without
desiring it, seemed more to him than his
life's pleasure, property, and fame.
Although in foreign squares the hollow
of a well-stone worn down day by day
was at times to him like something owned.*

(Rilke¹)

Introduction

Shakespeare's works, are presently strangers to themselves, as Ádám Nádasdy put it, they do not age, and are being consumed in all kind of forms: theatre performance, film, musical, etc.² However, like Rilke's stranger, while adjusting themselves to different expectations, they carry their specific character, the brand of the bard, in all adaptations, regardless how different the media are. The everlasting originals tend to forget themselves within these humble adaptations, only to reveal their individuality, originality and property in "foreign squares"³ once more.

In this paper I explore one of the very far-reaching adaptations of Shakespearean plays to the currently fashionable genre of manga, in the medium of comics, by Richard Appignanesi (there are other manga-adaptations of Shakespearean plays e.g. the ones by Adam Sexton). The *Manga Shakespeare*, as the series is called, are published by SelfMadeHero, a British comic-publisher, which has lately specialized in the comic-adaptation of classics, (e.g. Edgar Allan Poe's short stories).⁴ The adaptations, of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet* were the two initial pieces of the series, both appearing in March 2007, followed by another twelve,

¹ Reiner Rilke. *The Stranger*. Trans. Edward Snow.

<http://republicoftheimagination.tumblr.com/post/70041954835/the-stranger> (15.11. 2014) .

² Richard Appignanesi. *Rómeó és Júlia*. Trans.: Nádasdy Ádám. (Budapest, Agave Könyvek, 2010). Back-cover.

³ Reiner Rilke. *The stranger*. Trans. Edward Snow.

<http://republicoftheimagination.tumblr.com/post/70041954835/the-stranger> (15.11. 2014) .

⁴ Manga Shakespeare website - <http://www.mangashakespeare.com/> (15.11. 2014).

among them *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear* and *The Merchant of Venice*, which were published gradually until September 2009.⁵

Converted to mangas, the Shakespearean plays apparently forsake all their “pleasure, property and fame” as they dissolve in the unknown genre just to surface once more in another form: the same, but different. Only, the resulting product is not exactly a manga as the authors claim, but a mixture of elements taken from manga and the textual play of Shakespeare. Therefore, in my view, there are several contrasting forces at work drawn from both genres in these adaptations, which create inner tension by mixing structural and semantic elements of drama, literature and comics (manga). I termed these contrasts generic dualities, since they make the *Manga Shakespeare* collide between the genres of the source and of the resulting product. I further argue that the generic duality also implies two other kinds of dualities: duality in method and duality in function. Mixing the elements of the genre of source with those of the resulting genre inevitably implies the combination of two opposing principles of adaptation: faithfulness to the source (the imperative of preserving as much of the original as possible) and creativity in proximation (actualizing, modernizing the imaginary universe of the source, individualizing the product). This is a duality in the method of adapting. The duality in function is provided by the historical traditions Manga Shakespeare (accidentally) draws upon. By engaging with manga adaptations of literary classics, the adaptors, unintentionally access two opposing traditions: classic comics, which uses comics to promote pieces of literature, and amerimanga, which incorporates superficial elements of manga (e.g. techniques of illustration) into western comics to make them more original and enjoyable. The boundary to both traditions creates another tension: between promoting the source (classic comics) and promoting the comics/manga (amerimanga). This results in a duality within the function of the adaptation. I aim to demonstrate that generic duality was consciously and masterfully applied by Appignanesi, but by doing this, he inevitably activated the duality in method and function, which are seemingly beyond the adaptors’ intentions and redefine the notion of *Manga Shakespeare* to an abundance of tensions and dualities.

In order to make this understandable, in Chapter 1 I will briefly overview the history of manga in western context and that of the comic book-adaptations of classics. These both began more than half a century earlier than *Manga Shakespeare*. This provides the context for

⁵ Manga Shakespeare website - <http://www.mangashakespeare.com/> (15.11. 2014).

the analysis of the adaptation process that follows, and therefore, it might give a basis of comparison between the originals and the mangas.

Afterwards, in Chapter 2, I will identify the elements, both structural and semantic, that are changed through the adaptation, by contrasting *Manga Hamlet* and, occasionally *Manga Romeo and Juliet* to the original text-plays and noting the more important differences. These modifications will serve as proofs of the fact that in *Manga Hamlet* a new imaginary world is gradually being created. The plot is placed in the distant future in 2107, when Earth is devastated by global warming and the people are forced to live in cyber-space, equipped with ultra-modern technological devices in a milieu reminding of Science fiction. The universe presented in the adaptation is different from the one in the play, thus pushing the adaptation in the direction of becoming a work in its own right.

Furthermore, in Chapter 3 and 4, I will analyze the genres the adaptation process involves: the play as the starting point and the manga as the intended result. The complex adaptation process relies entirely on the features of the two genres, which form the opposite ends of the equation. I argue that the manga part creates an individual work, while the elements borrowed from the play will refer back to the originals undermining the individuality of the adaptations. The essence of the *Manga Shakespeare* resides within this dialectic (in the Hegelian sense) of the two divergent forces: individuality and referentiality. Therefore, the original plays separate themselves from their past form and resurface as new works, but at the same time they refer back to their Shakespearean identity nevertheless. To better grasp this point, it is best to start with defining the context.

Chapter 1

The two short-(hi)stories

The adaptation of classical literature to the medium of comics began in 1941, when Albert Kanter launched in the United States the *Classic Comics* series, which appeared as teaching material, or, at best, a more diverting set of easy readers, aiming at the adaptation of mainly 19th century classic novels, like *The Three Musketeers*.⁶ The success of the series was

⁶George Kovacs, C. W. Marshall. *Classics and Comics*. (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011). 21.

arguable; however, it was worth continuing, and, in order to obtain better publicity (thinking that comics were demeaning), Kanter changed the name to *Classics Illustrated* in 1947, after which the enterprise culminated in a continuous success serving a double purpose: on the one hand familiarizing children with classical literary works, on the other hand trying to alienate them from the stigmatized genre of comics.⁷ Even in these early times the oppositional duality in the function of classic comics was evident.

Contrastively to the initial numbers, which were no more than simplified illustrated versions of the classics, several adaptations appeared towards the dawn of the periodic, which only used their original as a source, and strived to reach individuality by modifying either the plot, or the narrative techniques used originally, like in case of the adaptation of Bulwer-Lytton's *Last Days of Pompeii*.⁸ After the disappearance of *Classics Illustrated*, the *Pendulum Press* took up Kanter's initiative and launched the *Illustrated Classics* series in 1973, but it turned out to be a failure and the company canceled its publishing after the 14th number, left with several finished numbers ready for publishing, in storage.⁹

Marvel publisher procured these, and with some modifications launched its own comic-adaptation periodic in the second part of the 1970s under the name of *Marvel Classic Comics*.¹⁰ Unlike its predecessors, the *Marvel* applied its already well-formed superhero recipe to the originals, e.g. in the case of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* when "the epic narratives are carelessly grafted onto the tropes (and physiques) of superhero comics".¹¹ The undertaking evolved even further thanks to *First Comics*, which focused on the adaptation of mainly fresh, contemporary novels applying the newly perfected graphic representation (gradually developed in the industry) of comics, but it never reached *Marvel's* success.¹² However, it became the last key link in a long chain-reaction from the simplified illustrations to the all-out adaptations, from teaching-aid material to individual article of consumption, the piece of literature.

⁷ George Kovacs, C. W. Marshall. *Classics and Comics*. (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011). 21.

⁸ Ibid. 21.

⁹ Bayer Antal. *Az adaptáció kísértése*. (Budapest, Nero Blanco Comix, 2013). 8.

¹⁰ Ibid. 8.

¹¹ George Kovacs, C. W. Marshall. *Classics and Comics*. (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011). 21.

¹² Bayer Antal. *Az adaptáció kísértése*. (Budapest, Nero Blanco Comix, 2013). 9.

Conversely, the status of comic strips has not improved thanks to the classic adaptations, on the contrary: the low status of the medium deprived the classic-comics of their validity as teaching material, which had been their primary function. This paradox might account for the movement from the principle of correspondence to that of coherence in the adaptation-paradigm, which led to the increasing of differences between classics and their comics versions. Since the classic-comics could not fill their purpose for coming into being, they moved to fill the gap (of good narrative) in the genre of individual comics.

Parallel to the American line of classic-comics, roughly in the same interval of time, another breed of the same medium came into being half way across the globe, in Japan: the manga. Although the genre was invented by Myoe bonc, a Buddhist monk, at the beginning of the 20th century, the real father of manga is nevertheless Tezuka Osamu.¹³ Tezuka reformed and popularized the medium, by creating fundamental works like, *The Mighty Atom*, *Princess Knight* or *Dororo*,¹⁴ and all later subgenres derived from one of these works. *The Mighty Atom* was the predecessor of *Cyborg 009* and of other robot-mangas, while *Dororo* gave inspiration to *Ninja Bucheicho* and all other *Shonen* (type of manga for boys) of this sort, involving samurai and ninja.¹⁵ However, the most important by far is *Tetsuan Atomu* (*The Mighty Atom*) published between 1952-68, because it gave rise to the first Japanese animation, an anime-adaptation of the manga-series, which became known world-wide as *Astroboy*.¹⁶ Of course, several great mangakas (manga artists) followed Tezuka Osamu in the later decades, perfecting the style of either one or another of his fundamental works until attaining perfection in the form of well-delimited subgenres, bringing the medium to its current state.¹⁷

Still, *Astroboy* and the anime are more important to this paper, since they popularized the genre in the west, familiarizing American comic artists with its special techniques of representation and well delimited subtypes, which proved to be exotic, and therefore catchy. Mangas a different way to implicate the reader in the plot, and each subtype (since there were many) focused on a very specific social group as its target audience, which led to the

¹³ Jérôme Schmidt, Hervé Martin Delpierre. *Manga*. Trans.: Hajós Katalin. (Budapest, Józsoveg Műhely, 2006). 7.

¹⁴ Scott McCloud. *Making comics*. (New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2005). 226.

¹⁵ Ibid. 226.

¹⁶ Jérôme Schmidt, Hervé Martin Delpierre. *Manga*. Trans.: Hajós Katalin. (Budapest, Józsoveg Műhely, 2006). 11.

¹⁷ Scott McCloud. *Making comics*. (New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2005). 227.

emergence of thematic conventions, beside the constraints of representation, that, in turn, resulted in further consolidation of the subgenres.¹⁸ By the 1990s many comic artists copied these specific representations of either one or more manga subtypes,¹⁹ and applied them in their own comics, without the original thematic constraints. This process from the 80-90s gave birth to a new phenomenon within the medium of comic strips, a genre of American content and Japanese form, made by American or West-European comic-artists. This is called *amerimanga*.

These two contemporary short histories merged in the last decade of the 20th century, when the comic-adaptation of classics and the production of individual comics in manga style were simultaneously practiced within the same medium on the same forums, that of the major comic-publishing companies. What is more interesting, is that I could not detect any clearly identifiable combination of the two trendy practices from any earlier than *Manga Shakespeare*, which appeared almost two decades later with the publishing of *Hamlet* (September, 2007). However, we must bear in mind that these processes take time to spread, and they gain ground slowly, step by step. Even in our days, with the expansion of manga-shelves in comic stores, the *amerimanga* still represent a small minority of the comics in current circulation, and the classic-comics were never popular enough to become a majority. Therefore it is not of much surprise, that *Manga Shakespeare* has no predecessors in the combination of these two traditions.

It might be said that *Manga Shakespeare* is both a conservative phenomenon and an innovative one, because, on the one hand, it draws from two separate traditions which stem from two opposite sides of the globe and manifest in the same medium, that of comics, on the other hand, the combination of the two cultures represented is a completely novel experiment. Apart from this, it is important to mention that the publishers intended the adaptation to be a teaching material. In this respect, they go back to the origins of classic-comics, to Albert Kanter himself, approximately 70 years ago. However, whether these Shakespeare adaptations would succeed in their function is a question of the future, which cannot be answered at the moment.

¹⁸ Scott McCloud. *Making comics*. (New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2005). 216 - 7.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 222 - 3.

In conclusion, the literary phenomenon of *Manga Shakespeare* can be traced back to a double history: that of amerimanga and that of the classic comics. This, however, raises the question of a double adaptation as the process standing behind this very abrupt conversion from the 16th – 17th century English renaissance drama to the 21st century Japanese-style comic book. If it were so, this presupposes that there were at least two steps in making the adaptation: from play to comics and from comics to manga. This implies three genres, one of them, the comics, being intermediary. It also implies that both processes were separate adaptations.

If we recall Scott McCloud's description of mangas made by American comic artists, we will find that he specifically refers to individual works that are created using the illustrative techniques of Japanese mangakas (artists).²⁰ He does not mention the existence of comics that are converted from an original American superhero-comic style to manga. I found no such statement in Petersen's excellent work on the subject either²¹. So this process, in its essence, is a blending of western content with manga representation, not an adaptation of comics to manga, in other words, a change in the comic-paradigm, but not in already existing works.²² In the following chapter, I will identify the changes from elements of the original in the adaptation from two perspectives: first, a structural approach focusing on the addition, deletion or alteration of elements from the narration and character list, while second, an approach aiming to describe the semantic changes that were introduced.

Chapter 2

The formal changes in the deep structure of the adaptations

In relation to *Manga Shakespeare* it is important to mention that they have a separate author, Richard Appignanesi, who does the adaptation of Shakespearean plays in all the numbers, and a separate illustrator, who is different in every number, usually prize-winning comic artists accustomed to the representations of the Japanese style.²³ *Romeo and Juliet* was

²⁰ Scott McCloud. *Making comics*. (New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2005). 222-3.

²¹ Robert S. Petersen. *Comics, Manga, and Graphic Novels*. (Santa Barbara, California, Praeger, 2011).

²² Scott McCloud. *Making comics*. (New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2005). 222-3.

²³ Manga Shakespeare website - <http://www.mangashakespeare.com/> (15.11. 2014).

illustrated by Emma Vieceli, and *Hamlet*, by Sonia Leong, although both mangas show a very similar style of illustration. The reason why I point this out is the tension between the verbal elements and the panels. These adaptations tend to keep as much of the Shakespearean texts and language as their speech-bubble-based verbal system allows them. However, the illustrations show a different character-design in new surroundings, which contrast with the conservative verballity. This results in yet another duality within the adaptations, between conservative/referential text and innovative illustrations. *Manga Shakespeares* also try to preserve some of the dramatic elements essential to the (written) plays, like the stage directions (represented sometimes as inscriptions), the verbal marker of the scenic change (the change of locus), the initial list of characters in the play and their relation to one another, the prologue and the epilogue, etc.²⁴

They do not change the evolution scheme of the plot or the set of characters of the plays, except for some minor modifications, that do not influence the outcome of the conflict, and the reader can barely notice them. I will briefly enumerate the structural alterations, and exemplify each by contrasting *Romeo and Juliet*, and later, *Hamlet* with its adaptation.

The first thing I observed was the lack of several elements (of little importance) of the play in the adaptations. On a verbal level some of the monologs and dialogs are left out from the mangas as the new medium cannot afford to keep them, since the speech bubbles are suitable only for a shorter narrative. This shortening and cropping leads to the redundancy of several static scenes, as these become irrelevant without the mentioned monologues/dialogues. As a consequence these empty scenes are also being deleted. On the narrative level the deletion of the scenes leads to the redundancy of some peripheral characters, which only appear within these scenes, either as the emitters of the monologues/dialogues or mentioned in them. As a result of this chain reaction, such characters are omitted from the adaptations. For example the chorus, the three musicians, the citizens of Verona, and Rosaline (who does not physically appear in the actual play either) are all absent from the manga, because they do not have any pragmatic value as agents in shaping the evolution of the plotline. The clearest example of a scene deleted, because of its participants becoming redundant in the adaptation, is the closing scene of *Hamlet*, when

²⁴ Richard Appignanesi. *Romeo and Juliet*. (London, Selfmadehero, 2007).

Richard Appignanesi. *Hamlet*. (London, Selfmadehero, 2008).

Fortinbras arrives to claim the throne of Denmark in the play, but in the manga, the plotline ends with Hamlet's death.²⁵

However, the adaptations not only show *epenthesis* (lack) in comparison with the originals, but also a significant amount of *prostheses*, that are slightly more complicated than the previous differences. The most important of these are the stage directions and other textual elements in plays (like the description of a locus), which normally are replaced by a visual equivalent when the play is acted out, but in the adaptations, the visual equivalent (the panel) is added to them. These elements that are only textual in plays (or only visual in performances), surface both textually and visually in mangas. Through this redundant repetition they are overpowered. So, in order to signify the appearance of a new space, like a room, the play-text uses a description, the performance relies on the set to provide a visual sign, an icon, while in the manga one would find a panel and a short description above it, as in the ball scene. There, we see a huge, one-page panel showing a fancy ball-room full of elegant people dancing and chatting, and above the panel there is the inscription: "Welcome to Capulet Mansions".²⁶ Another type of prosthesis is the visual representation of several moments when action is absent from the drama, but cannot be absent from the manga, because in the narration by images, as Scott McCloud points out, every once in a while a moment has to be represented in order for the reader not to lose the thread²⁷. Such moments, for example, meditations, contemplations of characters, inner conflicts, are represented as monologues in the performance, and usually, as pictures of the thinking character in manga, drawn without a background, to indicate that it's all in their head. Occasionally, when a long lasting idleness occurs in the plot, instead of the inner monologues, the same illustrations (static panels) are being redundantly repeated several times in the adaptations to express duration and idleness. The scene, when Juliet is expecting the reply for her first letter to Romeo, is a clear example of this. A whole page, containing six small panels, is occupied by the repetition of two images: Juliet's face and her watch, alternating in such a way that it seems like Juliet is constantly looking at her watch.²⁸

²⁵ Richard Appignanesi. *Hamlet*. (London, Selfmadehero, 2008). 193.

²⁶ Richard Appignanesi. *Romeo and Juliet*. (London, Selfmadehero, 2007). 31.

²⁷ Scott McCloud. *Making comics*. (New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2005). 12-3.

²⁸ Richard Appignanesi. *Romeo and Juliet*. (London, Selfmadehero, 2007). 68.

Furthermore, there are certain changes in the adaptations that could be perceived as a process of replacement, or mixture of the elements borrowed from the source, which can be best described as a *metathesis*. These are the most complex of alterations, because they are only partially motivated by the restrictions of the new medium, otherwise they seem completely arbitrary. One typical example of motivated metathesis is, when the manga (partly) preserves an important utterance of the original, but does not keep the character, who uttered it in the play, because it became redundant. This is the case of the epilogue, which was originally uttered by the chorus, but is turned into an impersonal inscription with no emitter in the manga, since the chorus is omitted.²⁹ Another, more arbitrary metathesis is just the opposite of this one: the preservation of an original character, whose statements are eradicated from the adaptation. These characters become mute figures. Such characters are Peter and Balthazar, who are completely silent, and partly Gregory, Sampson and Abraham, whose entire speech resides in a couple of very short utterances at the beginning of the plot.³⁰ A third metathesis, which implies absolute arbitrariness, is the emergence of new characters in the adaptation, who do not say a word, do not have a single speech bubble, and do not do anything that can be related to the action. Therefore, these characters are practically useless, only for reinforcing the independent universe of the adaptation. Such invented figures in *Romeo and Juliet* are the Montague-fan girl and the maid of the Capulets (not corresponding to any of the servants in the play), whom I call ghost figures, because their existence is of no consequence. They only appear in the background in a couple of pages, the Montague fan at the beginning, to reinforce Romeo's success as rock-star and the maid can usually be seen by the side of Capulet when in public, to reinforce his authority.³¹

Up till this point the focus was on the structural differences between original and adaptation, described in a rather structuralist manner. Regarding the analysis on the semantic level, it is important to mention that there is no deliberate change in the deep claim of the work. What is changed is the superficial appearance of the characters and of the spatial-temporal framework, in which the action takes place. Although they might influence the general impression of the reader, modifying the reception paradigm of the meaning as a whole, the alterations alone are insignificant, no more than what Julie Sanders (2006) calls

²⁹ Richard Appignanesi. *Romeo and Juliet*. (London, Selfmadehero, 2007). 1.

³⁰ Ibid. 1-3.

³¹ Ibid. 1-2, 17.

proximation, meaning by this term an “attempt to make texts ‘relevant’ or easily comprehensible to new audiences and readerships”³². The semantic modifications in *Manga Shakespeare* seem to be intended only to serve this purpose of actualization, however, as a side-effect, they influence the way the text is interpreted, and therefore the adaptation cannot be described as a clearly-cut transfer called transposition. By transposition, Sanders refers to the transfer of content from one medium to another, involving only medial differences without any change in the deeper layers of meaning³³. Contrary to Sanders, I argue that transposition is impossible if proximation is applied, by analyzing the side-effect of proximation in *Manga Hamlet* in the next chapter by exploring the superficial changes.

Chapter 3

The (superficial) semantic changes

After analyzing structural changes in the plot and the character-stock, it is important to turn to details often considered insignificant, which are, as this chapter will prove, of key importance in the perception of the meaning. Since not one key moment is altered in the plot of *Hamlet*, and no important characters are changed in essence, I may start by stating that no substantial difference occurs between the outcome of the play and the adaptation. Interestingly, in the review on the back cover of the Hungarian translation, Ádám Nádasdy reflects on this faithfulness to the original by describing these adaptations as Shakespeare’s plays in manga form („Most itt van manga formában a Hamlet meg a Rómeó és Júlia”)³⁴. Still, many superficial elements of this representation are in part actualized, in part, just changed. In the case of *Manga Hamlet*, these minute modifications gradually detach the transposition from its source, nominating it for the status of broad adaptation, or, according to Sanders, commentary³⁵. Commentary refers to the “instances [when] the process of adaptation starts to move away from simple proximation towards something more culturally loaded.”³⁶

³² Julie Sanders. *Adaptation and Appropriation*. (London, Routledge, 2006). 19-21.

³³ Ibid. 20.

³⁴ Richard Appignanesi. *Hamlet*. Trans.: Nádasdy Ádám. (Budapest, Agave Könyvek, 2010).

³⁵ Julie Sanders. *Adaptation and Appropriation*. (London, Routledge, 2006). 21.

³⁶ Ibid. 21.

What first captures the reader's attention is the language used in these mangas, since it is not representative of the genre. It is formed of extracts from the Shakespearean text in 17th century English, sometimes even in verse, and of colloquial prose from the English of our times, especially used in inscriptions. Added to these are the onomatopoeic words that are necessary elements of the medium, indispensable in comics.³⁷ Sometimes, this technique of montage can appear confusing or even ridiculous to the reader, because of the tension between the two completely different stylistic registers and the two diachronic stages of English they belong to. The quotations from the original occasionally conflict with the facts of the narrative as well. A clear example of this are the borrowed lines that contain spatial references of the play, like Elsinore (a town known as Helsingør) or England,³⁸ while the plot of the manga takes place in cyber space. Also the original names of the characters Hamlet, Polonius, Claudius etc. might contrast with the anime-like figures, equipped with all sorts of accessories from either traditional arsenal (e.g. swords) or modern technology (microchips) and science fiction (holograms).

The scene and time structure of the plot is changed from the Denmark of the medieval period to the extra-terrestrial setting of the year 2107 A.D., as presented in the prologue, when the global warming had devastated Earth, so the people forcibly left their home planet and could barely survive in cyber space.³⁹ All the locations are indefinite, we only know that the plot takes place somewhere in Elsinore, and we may have some intuitions on the basis of the visual representation, that the locus of action is the royal palace or some other regal residence.⁴⁰ The only date is in the prologue, apart from that, there are no other absolute time markers, only some relative ones (*now, later, yesterday*, etc.) that are only coherent within the plotline. The temporal structure is just as loose as the spatial one.

As for the characters, their social status is preserved, Hamlet is still a prince, Gertrude still a queen, Polonius still the royal counselor. This keeping of traditional roles creates tension within the futuristic atmosphere of the manga. Another trait of the characters is their lack of ageing; very few clues in the panels indicate age differences between generations, for instance between Hamlet and his mother. Only Polonius is pictured clearly as an old man, but

³⁷ Scott McCloud. *Making comics*. (New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2005). 146-7.

³⁸ Richard Appignanesi. *Hamlet*. (London, Selfmadehero, 2008). 1, 123.

³⁹ Ibid. Prologue.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 1.

that seems appropriate given his statute as a wise counselor, since old age, wisdom and cunningness are intertwined in the public belief.⁴¹ This erasure of age differences may be accounted for by the traits of the new medium, since the iconic figures of manga, as McCloud (2005) states, do not always show age differences.⁴² The fact, that the lack of ageing of the characters is only represented in the illustrations, seems to legitimize this explanation, as there is no reference to the age of characters in the text of the manga.

The accessories and weapons used are interesting. While people in the adaptation insert microchips in their bodies to download information, and communicate with little antennas placed on their heads, they use traditional swords in duels. Likewise, they attend the theater, but no films are represented.⁴³ In countless ways the imaginary world is built of the harmonious coexistence of traditional and ultra-modern elements, often excluding the ones dominant in our present, by those of the past and future. It is in no way a proximation alone, since it does not bring the universe of the play any closer to our world; it rather circumvents our present context completely. This practice can function as a reminder of the individuality of the adaptation, that it does not simply transfer Shakespeare's characters and plotline in a manga context, but also creates a new manga-universe based on them. In this sense *Manga Hamlet* is a commentary.⁴⁴ By expressing the excessive incorporation of elements considered trendy and entertaining in our times just to make the manga diverting it may very well comment on Shakespeare's theatre of entertainment. It is no secret that the English renaissance theatre was a business, which had to lure in its audience day by day in order to maintain itself, therefore, playwrights incorporated whatever seemed attractive to the widest-possible audience and Shakespeare was the best in this.⁴⁵

All these semantic overlaps between elements originating from different periods of time cause the reader to subconsciously place the framework of the action in a parallel universe that has nothing to do with the world of the Shakespearean play, this meaning, that the text is turned into an individual work of fantasy, or rather science fiction in this case. The reader perceives the plot as something distant, unrelated to his world, an analogy of *Hamlet*.

⁴¹ Richard Appignanesi. *Hamlet*. (London, Selfmadehero, 2008). 114 – 22.

⁴² Scott McCloud. *Making comics*. (New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2005). 215-28.

⁴³ Richard Appignanesi. *Hamlet*. (London, Selfmadehero, 2008). 100, 146, 184.

⁴⁴ Julie Sanders. *Adaptation and Appropriation*. (London, Routledge, 2006). 21.

⁴⁵ Peter Womack. *English Renaissance Drama*. (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2006). 34-8.

Analogy functions on a metaphorical level of understanding, relying on the similarity between the metaphor (the vehicle) and its referent from reality (the tenor), but it does not presuppose any obligatory relation between them. Shakespeare's *Hamlet* also pictures a created world, in which the ghost of a dead returns among the living to seek help for revenge, however, these fantasy-layers were suited for the time these plays were written. By adding these futuristic elements of technology and changing the time and scene of the plot, the adaptation distances itself from the (imaginary) world represented in the original. In other words, it borrows the characters and the chain of events from the original, but they are placed in a very different light. The manga, thus, becomes individualized on the one hand; on the other hand, these modifications create tension with the preserved elements, the Shakespearean language, the title, the plot and the characters. The later, especially the plot and characters constitute what may be called foreground and the former, modified elements are only the context, which constitutes the background. Thus, only the background is changed, which highlights even more the elements of the foreground. What happens in *Manga Hamlet* is called foregrounding by Karin Kukkonen meaning the "cognitive process in which one element is perceived against the context of its background [...] achieved through both verbal and visual means".⁴⁶ Kukkonen considers foregrounding a metalepsis applied in comics, used to reflect to the reality, like the making of the comic, from the imaginary universe of the narrative.⁴⁷ Such a metalepsis may reflect on the reality of *Manga Hamlet*, on its status as an adaptation. By changing the background without proximation, the authors deliberately draw the attention on the foreground which is an evocation of Shakespeare's Hamlet.

Therefore, the semantic alterations serve a double purpose in the manga: they undermine the adaptation-status of the work by placing the plot in new surroundings, thus creating a new, independent world, but at the same time, these modifications seem to reinforce the status of adaptation, by foregrounding the elements of boundary to the original, especially the Shakespearean language, the characters and the logic of the plot. Julie Sanders mentions that the condition for a work to function as an adaptation is that the reader be made aware of the similarities and differences between the adaptation and the original.⁴⁸ I believe this is accomplished most creatively in *Manga Hamlet* by metalepsis: underlining the difference

⁴⁶ Karin Kukkonen, Sonja Klimek. *Metalepsis in Popular Culture*. (Berlin, De Gruyter, 2011). 217.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 215-22.

⁴⁸ Julie Sanders. *Adaptation and Appropriation*. (London, Routledge, 2006). 22-3.

between the backgrounds to highlight the similarities in the foreground. The distancing of the adaptation from the source in order to reinforce the inter-textual boundary between them is by far the most spectacular and important generic duality that defines *Manga Shakespeare*. To better illustrate what is meant by generic duality it is best to look at the genre of the source and of the product.

Chapter 4

The source: renaissance plays

As elaborated in the chapter 1, the adaptation process behind *Manga Shakespeare* can be described through the blending of two methods, practices of adaptation: that of classic-comics and that of amerimanga. If we consider the comics an intermediary phase of the process, since it is neither the original nor the resulting work, we are left with two genres to analyze: the play and the manga, and the way these are projected in the resulting product.

It is more logical to start with the analysis of the renaissance play. Since the preserved elements are mainly the plot itself and the characters (apart from the language, which is not relevant here), my primary interest is in the processes, which shaped the content. There is one interesting theory, that of Glynne Wickham, which might prove useful for the current analysis, and it goes the following way: the medieval English drama was in itself emblematic, meaning that its characters were symbolic and the plays reconstructed important sacral moments, events, just like religious rites and shamanic incantations, but this was changed in the renaissance, when the theatre started to focus more on the representation than the meaning, promoting the spectacular realism of the performance, which implied the plausibility and unpredictability of the plot.⁴⁹

The historical account for this is simple, the medieval theatrical performance was under ecclesiastic power, and it served as a tool for instructing religious values and raising money for the church, however, because of the reformation in England, both the sponsorship and the performance of the plays were transferred from the sacred sphere to the profane, from

⁴⁹ Wickham, Glynne. *Angol színpadok a korai időkben*. In Demcsák Katalin, Kis Attila Atilla. *Színház-szemiotika: Az angol és olasz reneszánsz dráma és színház ikonográfiája és szemiotikája*. (Szeged, JATEPress, 1999). 295 – 8.

ritual function to entertainment by 1580s.⁵⁰ Peter Womack seems to support this theory, since he states that the former religious plays were not suitable to provide the novel, shocking-realistic entertainment that was newly expected of the theater, therefore playwrights had to write works that were entertaining above all, as their financial situation depended on it.⁵¹ The theater, separated from the church, became an institution, as well as a business under the pressure of the market, and employed actors and playwrights, who came up with current stories that captured the attention of the contemporary audience.⁵² These new, profit-oriented plays, could not afford to be as general and philosophical as their predecessors, for they had to attract a wider audience, not only aristocrats familiar with the classics.⁵³ So the works came to be anchored in real time and space by representing existing figures, preferably famous historical personalities of their particular era, especially because the theater needed quick inspiration and a great repertoire of plays, as they had to diversify the program of performances as often as possible⁵⁴. Since their success was short-lived, and they were written for spectacular performance, rather than expressing deeply conveyed, everlasting content, the plays simply became outdated as their superficial referentiality faded away.

However, this cannot be the whole truth, if that were the case, Shakespearean plays, and many other master pieces, would have long been forgotten. It is true that Shakespeare's plays must have been full of contemporary references, and also contemporary ideology, since a referential reading of the plays is possible even by critics and analysts of present times. One such alternative reading, which aims to demonstrate the contemporary referentiality of the Shakespearean plays, is well elaborated in *The drama of Social Reality* by Stanford M. Lyman and Marvin B. Scott. In their view, the plotline of *Hamlet* is perceived as a *bildungsroman*, where the young prince has to go a long way from being a ciceronian adept of justice to become a cunning schemer full of deceit and cold revenge to reclaim the power taken from him.⁵⁵ The authors see Hamlet's madness as the cover for the realization of his evil master plan, a madness during which the prince demonstrates all the ideal traits of a successful ruler

⁵⁰ Peter Womack. *English Renaissance Drama*. (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2006). 21-3.

⁵¹ Ibid. 3.

⁵² Ibid. 24-33.

⁵³ Ibid. 34-8.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 29-30.

⁵⁵ Stanford M. Lyman, Marvin B. Scott. *The Drama of Social Reality*. (New York, Oxford University Press, 1975). 25-30.

that Niccolo Machiavelli enumerates in *Il Principe*.⁵⁶ The work of Machiavelli appeared just about half a century earlier than the play itself, so the playwright had to be up to date with contemporary ideology. The authors also mention Michele de Montaigne, regarding his theory that humans are only gradually superior to animals, but not essentially, which undermines the belief of natural hierarchy, according to which God placed humans above all else, the basis for royal dynasty's divine right to rule.⁵⁷ The supremacy of royal dynasties is evidently challenged in *Hamlet*, by the deceitful murder of the king by Claudius, and by the murder of Claudius by Hamlet, demonstrating that members of the leading class are no better than ordinary animals that fight for the domination of the group, always empowering the last one standing, in Hamlet's case: Fortinbras. Lyman and Scott even believe to have found a clear reference in the Shakespearean text to the change in contemporary ideology from the traditional Ciceronian/Platonian beliefs to those of Machiavelli and Montaigne through Hamlet's return from Wittenberg, where he studied the Classics, to Elsinore, where all of his studies prove worthless in learning how to effectively rule.⁵⁸ The reason of this detour was to demonstrate how the renaissance plays found inspiration in history. History is only one of the ten sources of inspiration Peter Womack mentions, among which the most important two are Allegory and Ceremony.⁵⁹

These two traits basically define the medieval theatre. Allegory, according to Womack, was the main form of expression in medieval times, not just in the theatre, but all arts, for instance painting, where Elizabeth's portrait expresses her status as virgin queen, not her personality.⁶⁰ Ceremony was the content of most medieval plays, since plays were part of ceremonies, and as ceremonies, they were known by everyone and predictable⁶¹. So the role of the mystery play was to function as a ceremony using allegories (emblems) everyone was familiar with, regardless of generational or social differences. If this function had to be represented in the system of the semantic relations to experience I applied earlier, it would not be metaphorical, but symbolic.

⁵⁶ Stanford M. Lyman, Marvin B. Scott. *The Drama of Social Reality*. (New York, Oxford University Press, 1975). 25 - 6.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 23- 4.

⁵⁸ Ibid. 23-5.

⁵⁹ Peter Womack. *English Renaissance Drama*. (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2006). 46-7.

⁶⁰ Ibid. 49-50.

⁶¹ Ibid. 54-8.

Many traits of the medieval drama were kept and reused in the renaissance, in a different way of representation, among them the use of allegory and the incorporation of ceremony.⁶² Therefore, like the medieval ones, Renaissance plays must have had a symbolic, or, to stick with the used terminology, an allegoric layer of meaning. Womack identifies medieval allegoric references in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, claiming that these were actively used, only with different purpose.⁶³ Regarding ceremony, Womack argues that during the Renaissance the ceremony and the theater performance switched places: before, the performance had been part of the ceremony after the reformation, the ceremony was part of the performance.⁶⁴ According to Womack, the renaissance plays, and Shakespeare's works among them, focused on disentangling the expected outcome of the plot, as opposed to the ceremonies and the mystery plays which were all about predictability, certainty and inevitability.⁶⁵ I believe that this distortion of predetermined acts and allegories is a kind of foregrounding, since both the plot (the ceremony) and the characters (allegorical figures) remain in function under the new, renaissance surface layer, and they are even more overpowered by the contrasting context. Furthermore, they even function today, because, as in *Manga Shakespeare* only superficial strata are being altered, while the deep layers are quasi-identically engraved in the mangas as in the originals. Shakespeare applied these ceremonies and allegories extensively, undermining them at the same time, as Womack claims: "Shakespeare disrupts ceremonies with endless inventiveness, from Juliet's wedding morning to Ophelia's funeral, and from Richard II's coronation to Macbeth's haunted feast".⁶⁶ This mastery may well be the reason, why Shakespeare is being adapted continuously to this very day. The form of adaptation, the appearance may be different, but the essence remains the same, the sublime message just finds itself in "the hollow of a well-stone worn down day by day".⁶⁷

The adaptation not only borrows content from the source, but also freely incorporates several elements of the play-text. The prologue, the list of characters before the plot, and the

⁶² Peter Womack. *English Renaissance Drama*. (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2006.) 53-4.

⁶³ Ibid. 54.

⁶⁴ Ibid. 55-7.

⁶⁵ Ibid. 56-7.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 59.

⁶⁷ Reiner Rilke. *The Stranger*. Trans. Edward Snow.

<http://republicoftheimagination.tumblr.com/post/70041954835/the-stranger> (15.11. 2014)

final utterance, which resembles an epilogue are all taken from the original. In the play *Romeo and Juliet*, the epilogue is uttered by prince Escalus, while in the manga, it is an inscription.⁶⁸ The prologue in *Manga Romeo and Juliet* is a page-size panel, representing two families, who are trying to pull away two lovers from each other on the streets of a big city. Above this panel there is an inscription (without an attributed emitter) containing the location (Tokyo) and time (the present) of the plot (the love of two teens coming from two rivaling yakuza families that are enemies).⁶⁹ The list of characters is turned into a set of posters, each of the characters having their very own poster (except for the unimportant ones, which have to share). Characters appear (on posters) in order of importance, the first being Romeo, of course. On each poster (these are colored, while the rest of the manga is black and white) an inscription hangs above the figure of the character, containing one of its key utterances as a motto. Similarly, in the case of *Manga Hamlet*, both the general prologue-panel and the character-list are present (the epilogue is not, because the last scene, when Fortinbras arrives is omitted from the adaptation).⁷⁰ Instead of the stage directions, the narrative relies on inscriptions, especially when a new scene is shown. Looking at the inscriptions, a careful reader can formulate an idea on how the original play might have been divided, and where these divisions between scenes could have been, as the inscriptions divide the plot similarly to the structure in the play.⁷¹ Therefore, even the stage directions are transferred in *Manga Hamlet*, and also in *Manga Romeo and Juliet* (only to a lesser extent). The abundance of elements taken from the play, on both semantic and structural level is evident.

Chapter 5

The product: the (ameri)manga

After the plays, the most important genre involved in the adaptation is manga, which ought to be shortly described before continuing the analysis. It functions through the same medium as the comics, encoding the meaning in the reciprocal relation between panels and speech bubbles or inscriptions. As Scott McCloud points out, in comics, the blank spot

⁶⁸ Richard Appignanesi. *Romeo and Juliet*. (London, Selfmadehero, 2007). 193.

⁶⁹ Ibid. Prologue (on title page).

⁷⁰ Richard Appignanesi. *Hamlet*. (London, Selfmadehero, 2008). Prologue, 193.

⁷¹ Ibid. 1, 12, 26, 42, 96, 130, 148, 178.

between two panels (the gutter) has to be filled with meaning by the reader, relying on the differences, changes between the two images and on the verbal elements to complete the chain of moments that constitutes the action.⁷² This is also true for mangas, but they show numerous differences compared to the comics in the way they apply this medium. Relying on Scott McCloud's work, eight such differences can be identified:⁷³

1. the use of iconic characters
2. effective representation of space
3. blank images and shifts of the viewpoint (in the narration)
4. subjective movement (the readers perspective is not static, but dynamic, moving along with the action)
5. diversity in character design (two characters can have very different looks, even in the same work)
6. the representation of insignificant details (irrelevant to the plot)
7. extensive use of elements that represent sentiments (faces, eyes, gloomy backgrounds)
8. genre maturity (referring to the many well delimited subtypes accumulated under the name of manga)

Since most of these differences regard techniques of illustration, it would be difficult and pointless to analyze them in this paper. The diversity of subgenres is important, as it has direct implications on the making of the adaptations. Before looking at this however, an observation is welcome: some of the above features described by McCloud as generally existent in manga are omitted from the two *Manga Shakespeares*. One is the diversity in the characters physical appearance, since in *Romeo and Juliet* as well as in *Hamlet*, the characters are very similar. Another lacking element is the occasional representation of irrelevant scenes or details, a technique that deliberately breaks the flow of action in the Japanese mangas. In these adaptations the action flows with the same haste and tension as in comics, without any brake from the beginning to the end.

Manga literally means “whimsical drawings” in Japanese, and is used as a group collective noun of many specialized subgenres, that have their separate names: the most

⁷² Scott McCloud. *Making comics*. (New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2005). 12- 20.

⁷³ Ibid. 216.

famous of these are the Shonen (mangas for teenage boys, focused on combat, action, violence etc.) and the Shojo (addressing teenage girls, involving a love story, abundance of feelings, etc.).⁷⁴ Since Tezuka Osamu (the father of the genre) the subgenres came to have their own famous artists, target audiences, themes and styles of representation, therefore, one must chose one or the other when creating strips in manga style.⁷⁵ So what did the makers, above all, the illustrators of *Manga Shakespeare* choose as a style of representation for *Romeo and Juliet* or *Hamlet*? The authors attribute no subgenre to their product, and the Hungarian publishers only mention manga, as the genre, on the cover of the translations.⁷⁶

When reading both *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet* one can surely observe that the narrative, although continuous, is not dynamic at all. There are lots of moments of idleness, and most panels represent static positions, situations, the focus being on the faces and eyes mostly viewed from a close-up, and the characters' spatial position in relation to one another is often hard to determine.⁷⁷ There are lots of sentimental outbursts, when characters are presented as caricatures of themselves with disproportioned, small bodies and giant heads with improbable mimics.⁷⁸ The moments of ecstasy or extreme rage are also numerous, in these cases the background diminishes from behind the character.⁷⁹ This corresponds to what Scott McCloud says about the illustrative techniques of Shojo, namely, that their plot is not much more than sentimental faces floating in a montage and the characters are often represented with expressionistic effects and distorted bodies in order to involve the reader in the characters' emotional conflicts.⁸⁰

More often than not in the two *Manga Shakespeares* this is what can be seen, but there are some scenes, especially those of combat or duel, that are represented differently, involving intense movement with immense speed, and a dynamic viewpoint, that moves along with the fighting characters, as if the reader was taking part in the fight. This impression can also be found among McCloud's descriptions, in the one about Shonen, which causes tension

⁷⁴ Jérôme Schmidt, Hervé Martin Delpierre. *Manga*. Trans.: Hajós Katalin. (Budapest, József Műhely, 2006). 6, 20, 74.

⁷⁵ Scott McCloud. *Making comics*. (New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2005). 218.

⁷⁶ Richard Appignanesi. *Hamlet*. Trans.: Nádasdy Ádám. (Budapest, Agave Könyvek, 2010).

⁷⁷ Richard Appignanesi. *Romeo and Juliet*. (London, Selfmadehero, 2007). 33,43-6, 108-12.

⁷⁸ Ibid. 65, 68, 71.

⁷⁹ Richard Appignanesi. *Hamlet*. (London, Selfmadehero, 2008). 31, 39, 63, 78-9, 86.

⁸⁰ Scott McCloud. *Making comics*. (New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2005). 220.

by involving the reader in the action through the subjective movement (of the view-frame) and intense time laps in the illustrations, as if the reader was physically present, a witness of the events.⁸¹ These shifts between styles of illustration particularly cause a rise of tension, after the many former calm scenes the reader got used to.⁸²

From the above descriptions it can be concluded that the adaptations of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet* predominantly use the illustration style of Shojo, but occasionally, when representing fighting scenes, the style shifts from Shojo to that of Shonen. This shift is logical since the Shonen can much better represent action or outer conflict, just as Shojo is a much better visualization of sentimental or inner conflict. The illustrators clearly adopt a critical stance toward the rules of the subgenres they work with, since they do not feel reluctant to use both Shonen and Shojo, two quite opposite subtypes, in the same work alternatively fluctuating from one to the other according to what they wish to illustrate. This would probably not be a possibility for a Japanese mangaka, as the blending of subgenres is non-conventional.⁸³ However, the two Shakespearean plays cannot be condensed into the thematic categories of any subtype, so the only way to illustrate them effectively is to blend the subgenres. Since the adaptations are dominantly Shojo-like, it seems that the makers believed the plays to be closest to the thematic interval of that subgenre. Apart from the visual representation described here, the contextual proximation needs to be mentioned. Although proximation is a general trait of adaptations, in this case, the newly acquired context alludes in many ways to manga, more precisely to the work of Tezuka Osamu. The apocalyptic setting of *Manga Hamlet* (Earth destroyed by global warming) recalls the devastated futuristic milieu of Tezuka's early science fiction mangas, for instance, *Metropolis* (1949) or *Next World* (1951).⁸⁴ The contemporary Japanese context of *Manga Romeo and Juliet*, incorporating elements of history, like samurai's weapons, can be traced back to Tezuka's realistic historical works, which focus precisely on the shift from the Tokugawa regime to the Meiji government, this mixture of past and present, involving samurai and modern people in one manga, for

⁸¹ Scott McCloud. *Making comics..* (New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2005). 221.

⁸² Richard Appignanesi. *Romeo and Juliet*. (London, Selfmadehero, 2007). 6, 79, 83, 171.

Richard Appignanesi. *Hamlet*. (London, Selfmadehero, 2008). 35, 115, 153, 184-5.

⁸³ Jérôme Schmidt, Hervé Martin Delpierre. *Manga*. Trans.: Hajós Katalin. (Budapest, József Műhely, 2006). 118-24.

⁸⁴ Mark W. MacWilliams. *Japanese Visual Culture*. (Armonk, New York, M.E.Shape, 2008). 70-1.

example, *Sunlit Tree* (1981-6).⁸⁵ The proximation the adaptations is not made according to our milieu, much rather in accordance with the context of Tezuka's works, which define the context of manga itself. Apart from this, the flow of action, the development of the plot is also specific to manga or comics, as it is not interrupted, delayed, suspended or divided into simultaneous alternating plotlines (as in novels or plays). I would attribute the techniques of illustration, the proximation and the narrative pace of both *Manga Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet* to the genre (and medium) of manga.

Apparently, the adaptation is made from the blending of elements of manga and elements of drama. What takes a very careful analysis to find out, is that the way in which these elements are used by the adaptor divulges another duality, one that combines the aim to keep as much from the play (the source) with the desire to innovate the adaptation (the product). To better demonstrate what is meant by this duality, I propose an analogy between the manga-adaptation of plays and theatre-performance. In case of theater-adaptation, the audience can access the performance itself, or, if interested, it can also access the play as a text (most of the time), but what it cannot reach, except on rare occasions, is the directing itself, as an adaptation process. However, when viewing a performance, if one remembers the text well enough, one can easily detect this third, latent element, in the way differences between text and performance are shaped and organized, and if one is very well informed in theatre theory and the styles of directors, this structure of differences may even betray the method applied. The situation of *Manga Shakespeare* is different, since, as argued in the previous chapters, it blends the text of the original, with the visual adaptation, as if, in case of the theater, the audience could read the play while watching the performance, and constantly contrasting the two. This makes the hidden principles far more evident to the receiver, therefore, the latent method that frames the adaptation-process of *Manga Hamlet* and *Manga Romeo and Juliet*, is better identifiable. It is the combination of the adaptive tradition of classic comics (keep to the source as much as possible) and the maxim of *amerimanga* (be as creative as possible). The two opposing principles are applied at the same time, in the same work. They affect different components creating inner contrasts: text (preserved) vs. images (changed), foreground (preserved) vs. background (changed), etc.

⁸⁵ Mark W. MacWilliams. *Japanese Visual Culture*. (Armonk, New York, M.E.Shape, 2008). 85.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to demonstrate, that *Manga Shakespeares* are not mangas. Therefore, I firstly explored the inherent traits, which are basically inherited from the two traditions of comic-adaptations the series draws upon: classic comics and amerimanga. These two have had opposing functions ever since their initial phase, going back to the intention of the founders themselves: Albert Kanter and Tezuka Osamu. While Kanter aimed to put comics in service of high literature considering it nothing more than a secondary, vulgar genre, Tezuka hoped to raise the prestige of manga to a higher level, that of the recognized arts. Accordingly, classic comics are all about faithful adaptation, promoting the source, amerimangas, in the spirit of Tezuka overpowered by American artist thinking outside comic-conventions, are all about originality, promoting the manga. This tension inherited by *Manga Shakespeare* is what I termed duality of function.

Secondly, I analyzed the method of adaptation, focusing more on the transferred elements and the genres involved as source (renaissance play) and product (amerimanga/comic). By enumerating the abundance within the product of elements borrowed from both genres, I underline the fact that *Manga Shakepeare* is not an amerimanga (and certainly not manga), but lingers somewhere between the legacy of the play and the influence of the amerimanga, being pulled both ways. Therefore, the adaptations are characterized by tension stemming from generic dualities surfacing throughout. The text itself is mostly made up of quotations from Shakespeare, and in small part of inscriptions borrowed from the play, while the illustrations and the medium belong to manga. While the foreground (plot and characters) are preserved from the source, referring back to the renaissance plays, the background (time, space and accessories) is bound to the product, hinting at the influence of manga. While the plot develops continuously in the way and rhythm of comics, the character list, prologue and epilogue, create the impression of reading drama. These inner tensions of the adaptations, both structural and semantic, are what I termed generic dualities.

Afterwards, providing a careful analysis of all the methods (*epenthesis*, *prosthesis*, *metathesis*, *metalepsis*, proximation, blending of illustrative styles, etc.) applied in the adaptation process, I hopefully demonstrated that these are so systematically arranged on both structural and semantic level, that they cannot be resulting from brilliant improvisation alone. There must be a set of principles the adaptors apply. I have compared this to the principles of directing a play. It takes elements from both genres and deliberately condenses them in the

same product, thus creating tension. This deliberate juxtaposing of conflicting elements from the two different genres (e.g. the space markers *Verona* or *Norway* in a plot placed in Japan or Cyber Space) is proof of the simultaneous application of the principle of faithfulness to the source on the one hand, and the principle of creativity and recontextualizing. The former principle belongs to classic comics, while the later to amerimanga. The simultaneous use of both principles is what I termed duality in method.

Finally, based on the fact, that some specific elements of manga are excluded, opposing manga subgenres (Shojo and Shonen) are unconventionally blended and visual representation is completely subordinated to the text in the evolution of the plotline (in manga the text and panels are equal in this sense), there is likely to be another set of adaptive functions operating in the background, that has nothing to do with neither manga nor play. I suppose that the influence of mainstream comic-writing was at work in the subconscious of the adapters beside the duality in method. However, this is only a presupposition and it requires contrastive research on manga and mainstream superhero-comics to be proven right or wrong. Hopefully, this work will provide a starting point for such, more specific studies.

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