

Editorial

As some of our readers may recall, we had originally intended to dedicate the current issue 9.1 of *ATEM* to the thematic focus “Between Setting Music to Text and Setting Text to Music”. To our great delight, the response was so overwhelming that we decided, together with the two initiators of the topic, translation studies scholar Marco Agnetta and linguist Monika Messner, to publish a special volume *ATEM* 9.2, featuring approximately twenty contributions, scheduled for release in early summer 2025. With ten thematically free scholarly articles that successfully passed the peer-review process, this current issue is likewise well-stocked with engaging content.

In the “Analyses and Theory” section, the focus is initially on the chanson and intercultural translation, with the author, **Stefanie Barschdorf**, skillfully blending translation studies and performance studies. In “Translation and Performance – Nina Simone Sings Aznavour and Brel”, she demonstrates, on the one hand, the changes that the chansons “Il faut savoir” by Charles Aznavour and “Les désespérés” by Jacques Brel, both from the early 1960s, undergo through their translation into English and, more importantly, through Nina Simone’s performance style. On the other hand, she shows that, contrary to expectations, it is not gender aspects but rather the image and positioning of the singer within a specific political context that are decisive.

Sarah Del Grosso’s article “‘Marguerite’ – Vom französischen Sonett zum deutschen Kinderlied” is also dedicated to intercultural and, in particular, genre- and time-related transformation processes; she compares Eugène Pottier’s sonnet “Marguerite”, its (French) adaptation and setting to music by Pauline Floury and Séverin Valière, and finally the translation into German by Suli Puschban, which is based on the French version, including two music videos. Using the pentathlon principle, she shows what constitutes a ‘singable’ translation and how Pottier’s allegorical spring scene takes on a completely new meaning at the end of the first Covid winter.

Intercultural relations also play a central role in Verdi’s opera *Aida*, though in a different way, as **Maria Kirchmair** has undertaken to analyze. In her study, titled “Crossing the Mediterranean (Sea) in the Opera: The Case of *Aida*”, she bases her analysis on Edward Said’s concept of “contrapuntal interpretation” (Said 1994), first examining the historical and cultural context of the opera’s creation between 1870 and 1871 against the backdrop of the hegemonic power dynamics of the time. She then explores the extent to which suppressed, ‘subaltern’ voices and narratives become audible in the music of the famous opera.

The postcolonial approach employed by Maria Kirchmair is also relevant for **Gianpaolo Chiriaco**’s ethnomusicological contribution, “La multivocalità di Gabriella Ghermandi:

memorie postcoloniali, world music ed ethiojazz”, both methodologically and content-wise. Based on various interviews with the Italo-Ethiopian writer and musician Gabriella Ghermandi, as well as other band members of the Atse Tewodros Project she founded, Chiriaco explores the processing of the collective memory of the Italian colonial era, which is particularly evident in the practices of *storytelling* and multivocal *singing ‘for’* – representing silenced voices.

Julia Kuzmina deals with a different kind of *storytelling* in her contribution “Serge Gainsbourg: trois manières de raconter une histoire érotique”. In her analysis of the three concept albums *Histoire de Melody Nelson* (1971), *L’homme à tête de chou* (1976) and *You’re Under Arrest* (1987), she shows how Gainsbourg succeeds, through the use of different strategies at the levels of literary, musical, vocal and phonographic ‘narration’, to model the basic situation of ‘sexual relationship with a young girl that ends unhappily’ in three completely different moods: innocence and fragility in the first album, violence in the second and emotional distance in the third.

In his contribution, **Nicola Pasqualicchio** also presents an individual study of an artist who had a similarly strong influence on the singer-songwriter scene in his country of origin as Serge Gainsbourg did in France, whose greatest successes fell roughly within the same period, from the 1960s to the 1980s. In “‘Dall’altra parte del cancello’. La rappresentazione della nevrosi e della follia nel teatro-canzone di Giorgio Gaber”, Pasqualicchio illustrates how the Milanese *cantautore* increasingly intensifies the theme of social alienation toward psychological issues, ranging from neurosis to delusional states. He also highlights how, in addition to the song lyrics, both the music and especially the stage performance of this artist, gifted in acting, convey the transgression of the boundary between normality and madness.

With a decidedly linguistic orientation, **Matteo Mirabella** contributes a detailed study: “‘Parlo solo di droga, ma mi danno del poeta’. Sulla lingua della canzone rap di Kid Yugi”. Using text samples from the entire discography of the Puglia-based rapper/trapper, who has been active and extremely successful since 2022, Mirabella’s analyses show which lexical-semantic, morphosyntactic and rhetorical strategies Kid Yugi draws on to convey the usual trap genre themes of drugs, violence, crime or self-glorification in a thoroughly original way.

In another linguistic article, “‘Basta que me enamores – o que me mandes flores’: género, experiencia y emociones en el corpus del pop-rock en español”, **Nigel Manchini** and **María Martínez Casas**, on the basis of a corpus of 1000 song lyrics from Spain and Latin America, analyze how experiences and emotions are linguistically constructed and articulated and what gender-specific differences arise between male and female performers. The methodological framework is formed, alongside corpus linguistics, by socio-semiotics and psychological concepts of text analysis.

The “Facts and Perspectives” section, with its focus on reappraising and reframing knowledge content, offers two scientific articles. In “Raffaella Carrà und Loretta Goggi – Zwei Ikonen des italienischen Fernsehens und ihre Lieder”, **Andreas Bonnermeier** addresses a question often neglected in popular music research, namely the contribution that TV stars, famous through shows and moderations, make to the history of popular music in a country.

It is demonstrated that Raffaella Carrà and Loretta Goggi were able to achieve significant popularity and impact not only through television – where they reached iconic status once again in the new millennium following major successes in the 1970s and 1980s – but also with their songs.

In their ‘four-handed’ contribution, “Si vene ‘o Mammone’. Storia, caratteristiche e funzioni di un rituale magico: la ninna nanna”, the classical philologist **Maria Camilla Mastriani** and the music sociologist **Giuliano Scala** present a no less neglected aspect of research. It is about the genre of the lullaby, which exists in almost all cultures and is of great anthropological interest. Mastriani traces its existence and thematization across Greek and Latin literature, whereas Scala, after a detailed definition of the song genre, illustrates its Neapolitan form; the selected examples range from the 15th century to Pino Daniele’s well-known “Ninnanànnanoè” from 1979.

The review section of the issue once again presents interesting and relevant publications from the period 2020 to 2024, which are well worth exploring, as are the two texts in the “Forum” section, each of which is a republication: the first is **Ruedi Ankli**’s article, which is based on an interview with one of the most original contemporary singer-songwriters in Italy, Vinicio Capossela; the second, the reprint of an interview with the Quebec chanson researcher and politician André Gaulin, which was broadcast on the radio in 1994. It is accompanied by an introduction and historical photographs, and continues the retrospective of the milestones in Quebec chanson research, which **Jean Nicolas De Surmont** began in the last issue.

Last but not least, we would like to draw your attention to the call for papers for our next annual **issue 10.1** (January 2026), which will be dedicated to the topic “**Polarizing Songs in Romance Languages**”. Working titles for contributions can be submitted until March 15 (the deadline for submission of the completed contributions is July 15). As with the previously mentioned special issue 9.2, the editorial team for the thematic focus on “Polarizing Songs” has been expanded by two researchers: the Turin-based anthropologist and historian **Valentina Fusari**, and our esteemed colleague from Innsbruck, the ethnomusicologist **Gianpaolo Chiriacò**. The latter will permanently join our editorial team starting in 2026, which we are very excited about!

Finally, we would like to express our sincere thanks to all the authors and reviewers who have contributed to the current issue, and we wish all our readers a stimulating read.

The editors

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