The Concept 'Transmediality', and an Example: Repetition across Arts/Media[1]

O conceito de "Transmidialidade" e um exemplo: Repetição através das Artes/Mídias

Werner Wolf

Universität Graz, Graz (University of Graz), Styria/Áustria

werner.wolf@uni-graz.at

https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2071-4847

Abstract: Transmediality refers to the potential of concepts to 'travel' across arts or media and is thus related to intermediality, although not all scholars consider it a variant of intermediality. This essay argues that it makes sense to do so. Some of the benefits of this classification will be illustrated with respect to repetition in literature and music. Transmedial comparisons often show that some media or media-specific genres can realize a transmedial phenomenon better than others. This is also the case with repetition. It will be pointed out that, owing to the incompatibility between narrativity and large-scale, merely form-motivated repetition, such repetition is more frequent in tendentially non-narrative media or genres. It will moreover be argued that the tendency towards, or avoidance of, large-scale, form-motivated repetition can contribute to indicating the extent to which a given medium or genre has narrative potential. Besides being a contribution to inter- or transmediality studies, the essay is thus also relevant to narratology.

Keywords: Transmediality; intermediality; narratology; repetition; literature; music.

Resumo: Embora nem todos os estudiosos considerem a transmidialidade uma variante da intermidialidade, este texto defende que este conceito refere-se ao potencial dos que "viajam" através das artes e mídias, sendo, portanto, relacionado à intermidialidade. Alguns benefícios dessa classificação serão ilustrados com respeito à repetição em literatura e música. As comparações transmidiáticas sempre mostraram que algumas mídias ou gêneros específicos de mídia podem realizar o fenômeno transmidial melhor do que outros, o que também é o caso da repetição. Aponta-se que, devido à incompatibilidade entre a

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narratividade e a repetição *large-scale* motivada meramente pela forma, a última é mais frequente em mídias ou gêneros tendenciosamente não narrativos e que a tendência para tal repetição ou sua evasão podem indicar o potencial narrativo de uma certa mídia ou gênero. Além de ser uma contribuição para os estudos inter ou transmidiáticos, o ensaio é também relevante para a narratologia.

Palavras-chave: transmidialidade; intermidialidade; narratologia; repetição; literatura; música.

Introduction: 'Transmediality' and 'Intermediality', and the Problem of Mapping a Scholarly Field

When a new or allegedly new scholarly field comes into focus, one of the first activities is to define it, that is, to describe its extension and borders; another initial concern is to try and to assess its internal structure. Both concerns amount to a mapping of the field. As with geographical 'new-found lands', such mapping is, however, frequently far from being an uncontroversial activity. This also applies to intermediality studies in the wake of what I have termed the 'intermedial turn' (WOLF, 2008-2018b, p. 127). Various typologies and specific forms alongside a plurality of terminologies have been proposed (cf. RAJEWSKY, 2002; ENGLUND, 2010; WOLF, 1998-2013; JENKINS, 2006/2008; WOLF, 2008-2018b). In this babel, I will refrain from adding yet more terms and types but would like to highlight one detail of a well-known and well-established typology and terminology. More precisely, I propose to focus on one concept that essentially involves more than one medium and is, to that extent, intermediality-related, namely transmediality. This is a concept that, as I will show, has also particular relevance for the institution which first occasioned the present essay, namely the Centre for Comparative Studies of Lisbon University[2].

Transmediality has been well described by Irina Rajewsky (cf. 2002, p. 206), and I myself have taken over her term and description in my research. Yet while she considers it a form "closely related" to intermediality (RAJEWESKY, 2013, p. 22) but outside the genuinely intermedial sphere, I consider it being integrable into the field of intermediality.

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[2] See above, note 1.

In the first part of the ensuing paper, after defining the concept transmediality, I will show why it makes sense to consider it a variant of intermediality and what place it occupies in a typology of synchronic intermedial forms which I have repeatedly published elsewhere (WOLF, 2008-2018b). However, the main part of the present essay will concentrate, by way of illustration, on a particularly frequent transmedial phenomenon, namely repetition. After a short overview of its general relevance I will point out one particular benefit of a transmedial perspective on repetition. It reveals itself when one aligns repetition with another transmedial phenomenon: narrativity. In particular, my hypothesis is here that a tendency towards large-scale, form-motivated repetition in a given work of a specific medium or genre is indicative of its poor narrative potential, and the same holds true for genres and media in general. Besides being mainly a contribution to inter- or transmediality studies, this paper is thus also relevant to narratology. It derives in part from a recent publication of mine on the relationship between lyric poetry and narrativity (WOLF, 2020) and is also part of larger work in progress.

Transmediality: the Concept, its Advantages, and its Contested Relationship to Intermediality

To begin with, a definition of the concept 'transmediality' as used in this essay is in order (there are others, with which I will not be concerned here [cf. RAJEWSKY, 2013, pp.18-19; MEYER et al., 2006; Freeman; GAMBARATO, 2018)]). The term 'transmediality', in the sense employed here, was originally used in intermediality theory by Rajewsky (cf. 2002, p. 206). Transmediality is a quality of phenomena that appear in more than one medium without being, or being viewed as, specific to, or having an origin in, any of them. It is thus a notion designed for media comparison and refers to the quality of 'travelling concepts' which allows them to be realized in several arts, media or media-specific genres. By way of examples one may point out the following: there is, for instance, a whole research field dedicated to the transmediality of narrativity. In this context, the question has also been debated to what extent single pictures or works of instrumental music can be narrative (cf. WOLF, 2018: Part Three, with further bibliographical references).
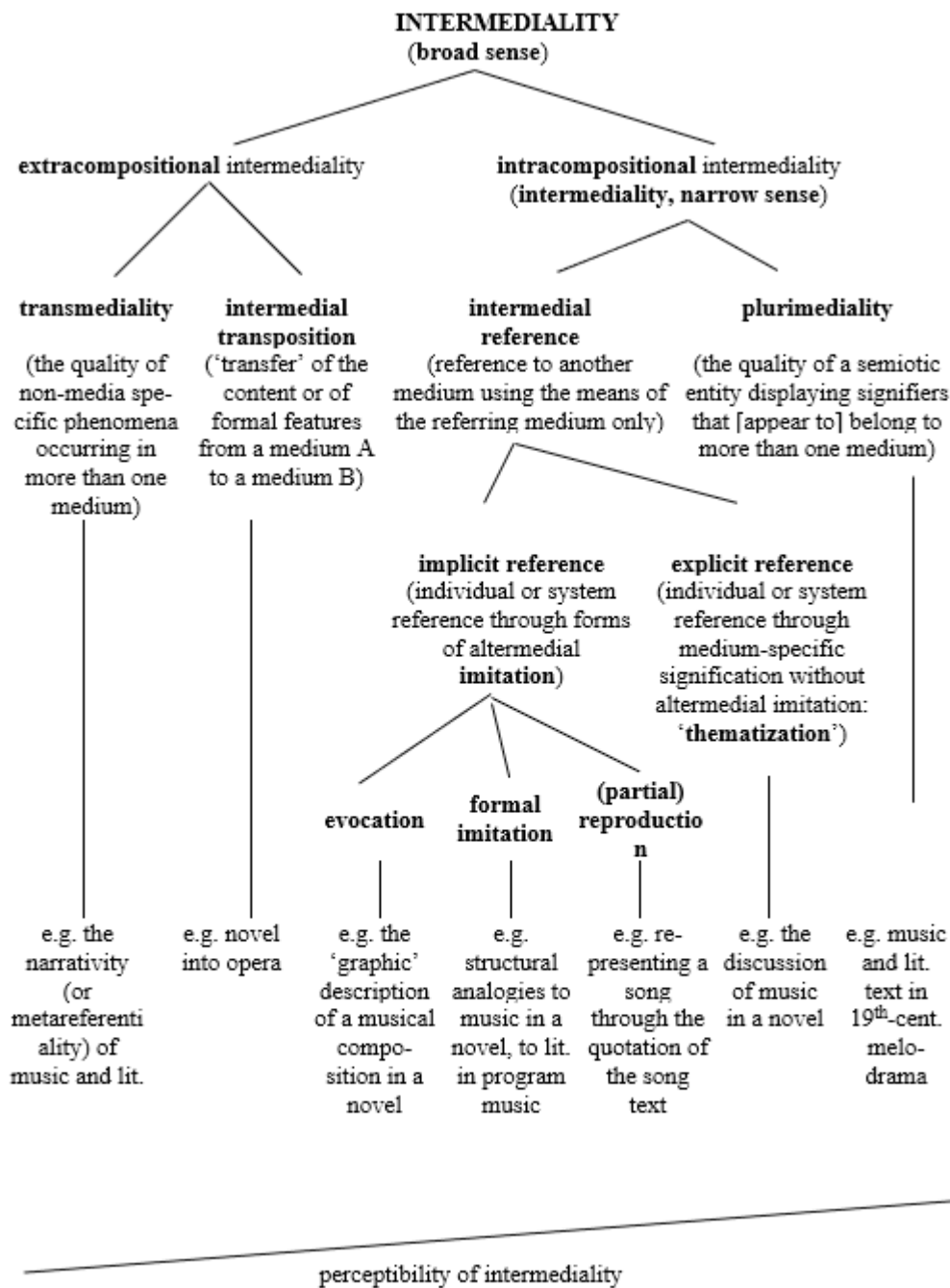
As for 'intermediality', I use it, in a broad sense, as a flexible term that applies to any phenomenon involving more than one medium (or rather what conventionally is considered a medium)[3] (WOLF, 2002-2018, p. 39). As for the relationship of 'transmediality' to 'intermediality' in this sense, in my view, transmediality is, as already mentioned, a form of intermediality within a systematic typology of its synchronic variants. More precisely, in this typology, it is a subform of what I call 'extracompositional' intermediality. The term 'extracompositional' refers to a quasi-peripheral region of intermedial forms and indicates that intermediality is here not necessarily apparent within a given work or artefact, a condition which would define the '*intra*compositional' core of intermediality. Rather, extracompositional intermediality is predominantly an effect of a scholarly perspective when it comes to relating a given work or artefact to other media or altermedial artefacts.

For the sake of viewing the place of transmediality more clearly in my typological system, here is my complete typology of synchronic intermedial forms (Figure 1):

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[3] Following Marie-Laure Ryan's lucid discussion, in which she includes technical, semiotic and cultural aspects of the term 'medium' as used in intermediality studies (see Ryan, 2005, pp. 288-290), I conceive of a medium as follows: it is a means of communication that is conventionally perceived as distinct and used as such in cultural practice; it is thus specified by cultural conventions but also by particular technical or institutional channels (or one channel) and the use of one or more semiotic systems in the public transmission of content that includes, but is not restricted to, referential 'messages'. Generally, media "make[...] a difference as to what kind of [...] content can be evoked [...], how these contents are presented [...], and how they are experienced [...]" (Ryan, 2005, p. 290). Medium in this sense encompasses the traditional arts (including literature as verbal art) as well as more recent means of representation or communication such as photography, film and the digital media.

Figure 1 - Typology of intermedial forms illustrated with musico-literary examples. (cf. WOLF, 2008-2018b, p. 143)

**INTERMEDIALITY
(broad sense)**

extracompositional intermediality

intracompositional intermediality
(intermediality, narrow sense)

transmediality

(the quality of non-media specific phenomena occurring in more than one medium)

intermedial transposition

('transfer' of the content or of formal features from a medium A to a medium B)

intermedial reference

(reference to another medium using the means of the referring medium only)

plurimediality

(the quality of a semiotic entity displaying signifiers that [appear to] belong to more than one medium)

implicit reference
(individual or system reference through forms of altermedial **imitation**)

explicit reference
(individual or system reference through medium-specific signification without altermedial imitation: **'thematization'**)

evocation

formal imitation

(partial) reproduction

e.g. the narrativity (or metareferentiality) of music and lit.

e.g. novel into opera

e.g. the 'graphic' description of a musical composition in a novel

e.g. structural analogies to music in a novel, to lit. in program music

e.g. re-presenting a song through the quotation of the song text

e.g. the discussion of music in a novel

e.g. music and lit. text in 19th-cent. melo-drama

perceptibility of intermediality

To a large extent, Rajewsky has a similar typology – in fact, I took over some forms from her typology, which she first published in 2002, but, as already adumbrated, she does not consider transmediality a part of intermediality. She has two main arguments for this:

> (a) The existence of a transmedial phenomenon within a given artefact does not relate it in any way to other media, nor does it show altermedial traces; in other words: transmediality does not involve "intermedial relations" (RAJEWSKY, 2013, p. 23) but is the effect of another perspective: one that focusses on media-comparison rather than on media-relations.

> (b) Her second argument is that intermedial forms such as plurimediality, intermedial transposition and reference are in themselves "transmedially observable phenomena" (RAJEWSKY, 2013, p. 23), which creates a problem within the typology.

All of this is true, and I think one could live in a scholarly field which opposes *two* perspectives, namely both inter- and transmediality, to a monomedial view of the arts and media. There are, however counter arguments:

Ad b) Concerning Rajewsky's second argument, one may point out that the cross-applicability of one sub-category to another may also hold true of intermedial transposition (which Rajewsky does consider a form of intermediality): intermedial transposition may involve some kind of intermedial reference to the source-medium (another form which Rajewsky also considers a variant of intermediality) and is in itself applicable across media and thus also transmedial. Moreover, the logical validity of the individual categories can best be seen when one disregards cross-relationships in favour of the possibility of their occurrence in 'pure', unalloyed form: for plurimediality, this may be seen, e.g., in the possibility of its occurrence in a song in which music and text do not refer to each other and which also does not derive from an altermedial artefact. For transmediality such 'pure' form would apply to all phenomena and concepts *outside* the three other intermedial forms in Figure 1.

Ad a) As for Rajewsky's first argument, if one adopts a strict text- or artefact-centred perspective without considering contexts, her 'orthodox' view

harping on discernible intermedial relationships runs into some difficulties: for the other 'extracompositional' form, namely intermedial transposition (which, as mentioned, is for Rajewsky a genuine intermedial variant), does not necessarily show altermedial traces in the artefact under consideration either. A film based on a novel, for anyone not familiar with said novel, may appear to present one filmic medium only and be to this extent a totally mono-medial artefact. Indeed, the altermedial source may in such cases often exist only in the comparative eye of the beholder and is thus the effect of a perspective rather than a discernible feature of the artefact under discussion. This also applies to transmediality: the transmediality of, let us say, narrativity, only comes into focus from a media-comparative perspective.

However, if one considers the transmedial phenomenon itself, e.g. narrativity, its potential to be realized in other media is, so to speak, a quality of the phenomenon itself, which does create relationships to other media. It thus fulfils the prime condition of intermediality, namely to designate phenomena which involve more than one medium.

The close relationship of transmediality to intermediality reveals itself also from the fact that it was first formulated within Rajewsky's seminal book on *inter*mediality. In addition, the history of intermediality studies points in the same direction, for these studies derive to a large extent from departments of comparative literature (as in Indiana University, Bloomington, where, for instance, Ulrich Weisstein and Steven Paul Scher, pioneers in the field of literature/art and music studies, taught); and the comparative perspective favoured by transmediality is also present in the predecessor of intermediality studies, namely comparative arts. Indeed, the early pioneering studies from G. E. Lessing's *Laokoon* to Oscar Walzel's 1917 book *Wechselseitige Erhellung der Künste* ('mutual illumination of the arts') all sport media-comparisons. One may even say that intermediality studies are born from a media-comparative perspective and that thus, from a historical perspective, it would be strange to exclude the eminently media-comparative category of transmediality from them.

Be that as it may, whether inside intermediality or outside, transmediality is closely related to intermediality, and from the point of view of enhancing the relevance of intermediality studies, it would be an asset to have it 'in the boat', all the more so as both concepts are opposed to a mono-medial perspective, and opposing one concept to another one

would heuristically, pragmatically and perhaps also 'politically' be more efficient than a ternary structure. The perhaps main heuristic gain derived from considering transmediality a part of intermediality and thus viewing both concepts as forming a unit is the fact that both fulfil one particularly important function and highlight something which has all too often been neglected in a scholarly world where disciplines create barriers and blind spots, namely media-specificities: in fact being aware of them is a precondition of discussing intermedial transposition as much as intermedial reference, plurimediality or transmedial phenomena, whose occurrence is always dependent on individual media (cf. RAJEWSKY, 2013, p. 29).

Leaving the typological quarrel aside I would now like to focus on the heuristic and pragmatic advantages of transmediality. They become especially clear when one considers the perspectives and noteworthy results which a transmedial project has elicited, for instance in parts of the book series Studies in Intermediality (SIM). So far, if some modicum of self-advertisement is permitted, the following transmedial phenomena have been investigated across media and arts by myself and others:

- Framing (WOLF/BERNHART, eds. 2006)
- Description (WOLF/BERNHART, eds. 2007)
- Metareference[4] (WOLF et al., eds. 2009)
- Aesthetic illusion or immersion (WOLF et al., eds. 2013)
- Absence, i.e. lacunae or silences on the formal level (WOLF et al., eds. 2019)

Some of these projects have also been pursued with an eye to a specific tandem, that is, musico-literary perspective in the book series Word and Music Series (WMS):

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[4] I consider 'metareference' (cf. the introduction to WOLF, ed. 2009) a hypernym of all possible forms of 'metaization' across the arts and media. A particularly intriguing question in this context is whether instrumental music can be metareferential, in other words, whether there is such a thing as instrumental meta-music (which I believe does exist; see WOLF, 2007-2018, 2010-2018).

• Self-reference (related to the above-mentioned study on metareference) (BERNHART/WOLF, eds. 2010)

• Silence and absence (WOLF/BERNHART, eds. 2016)

Generally speaking, and as can be seen from, among other things, the aforementioned research, a transmedial perspective may shed light on what has been pointed out above: namely the capabilities and restrictions of individual media in realizing given general phenomena. And to this extent such a perspective is privileged in illuminating typical media-specificities from a synchronic, systematic point of view. Transmediality may, however, also be used for cultural-historical studies, when it comes, for instance, to highlighting the similarities across media in promoting 18th-century sensibility or what I have termed the 20th-century metareferential turn (cf. WOLF, ed. 2011).

In the context of Word and Music studies and a systematic perspective on phenomena of general importance across media and arts, I am currently pursuing another transmedial avenue, which I will use as an example in the second part of the present paper, namely forms and functions of repetition across media.

Repetition as a transmedial phenomenon: general manifestations, relevance and forms across media, and its relationship to narrativity (exemplified with literature and music)

The high relevance of repetition needs hardly to be belaboured. It occurs in nature – e.g. in the orbit of planets, the recurrence of the seasons, in our heartbeats – as frequently as in the media and arts. One may think, for a start, of architecture. Here, for example, the use of repeated structural modules can be traced from classical Roman architecture (e.g. aqueducts) and the repeated sections of Gothic cross vaults and interior facades to the often monotonous modularity of today's international style. As for music, repetition looms large in recurring themes, motives, rhythms, or even in the 'verbatim' recurrence of whole sections within a musical composition ("da capo al fine"). In literature, repetition or at least similarities are, for instance, present in recurring themes, in the metre and rhymes of poems or in *mise en abyme*-structures across genres.

Generally, repetition comes in a variety of forms which one can classify in the following ways (note that all of the following oppositions mark extremes in a continuum):

- according to place of occurrence*: intracompositional* vs. *extracompositional* (e.g. the repetition of the same Gothic modules within a cathedral and across cathedrals of the same age); moreover, still in the field of place of occurrence: *deep structure* vs. *surface structure* with intermediate levels (i.e. this, for instance, concerns the question as to whether some basic configurations of buildings reoccur across monasteries or whether surface similarities or identities occur in one and the same building);

- according to degrees in intensity: *exact repetition* to vague *similarities*, alongside special forms such as contrast, ordered series, symmetry;

- according to degrees in extension: *small* to *large scale*;

- according to motivation: *form-related* vs. *content-related* motivation;

- according to expectability and hence functional relevance and meaningfulness: *automatized* vs. *de-automatized* (cf. WOLF, 2014-2018).

As it is impossible to pursue all of these variants from a transmedial perspective in the present context, restrictions are in order. This is why, in the following, I will concentrate on an occurrence of repetition in the arts of literature and music only; moreover, as far as intensity is concerned, on repetitions ranging from exact identity to minor variations (that is, for the sake of easy discernibility, on relatively high degrees of intensity); in addition, on intracompositional manifestations on a relatively high to intermediate level (to be able to include variations), and, as for extension, I will concentrate on large-scale repetition for reasons that will become apparent; finally, as for expectability, de-automatized repetition with consequently a relatively high degree of functionality and meaningfulness will be in focus. With respect to the opposition form- vs. content-related motivation of repetitions both will be of relevance in the context of media-specificities, as will become apparent below.

A typical result of transmedial comparisons is that some media or genres can realize the transmedial phenomenon under discussion better than others. This is also the case with repetition, as we will see. Moreover, transmedial phenomena rarely occur in isolation in one and the same artefact but – depending on what is in focus – almost always in combination with each other. In many cases, such combination is unproblematic as in the co-occurrence of framing with narrative, of narrative and description, and of metareference and description. However, in some cases there are also tensions, for example when the transmedial feature of aesthetic illusion or immersion meets certain kinds of metareference within the same work.

In this context, the question as to what extent repetition and narrative can enter into a symbiosis is of special interest, since repetition is a ubiquitous phenomenon, and the same has been claimed about narrativity (in the slogan "narratives are everywhere"[5]). This indeed begs the question: can both occur in the same artefact?

I may be permitted to draw attention again to the hypothesis formulated in the introduction to the present quasi-peripheral: namely that there exists a tension between narrativity and large-scale repetition and that consequently both transmedial phenomena cannot occur with the same intensity in one and the same artefact. But why select narrativity and repetition of all possible transmedial phenomena in the first place? Besides the afore-mentioned claim of their tandem ubiquitousness, there is a reason with respect to current narratological debates in two fields about which I have reservations: so-called musical narratology (cf. WOLF 2018: Section Three), and narratology applied to lyric poetry (cf. HÜHN, 2005 and, as a critical position, WOLF, 2020). As narrativity is, like repetition, gradable, I propose to concentrate for clarity's sake on high degrees of both transmedial phenomena in one and the same artefact (if one includes small-scale repetitions, e.g. of musical phrases and individual words, this would not yield significant results).

Let me start with music, more precisely classical instrumental music. It is full of large-scale repetitions. One may only think of Baroque *da-capo* arias, of theme and variations, of the ternary lied form ABA often used

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[5]   This phrase was coined by Michael TOOLAN (1988, p. xii) and was repeated in the blurb of a recent volume on *Transmedial Narratology and Contemporary Media Culture* (ed. JAN-NOËL THON, 2016).

in the second movement of classical symphonies and last, but not least, of sonata form with its compulsory components that can also be aligned to an underlying ABA form: an optional introduction; (A) a compulsory exposition, which in the classical form is repeated (AA) and then followed by a development (B), which in turn, before an again optional coda, leads to the recapitulation (A*), which in itself is partly a verbatim repetition of the exposition and partly a variation[6]. Now, none of these forms or genres is highly narrative, and in all cases repetition is form-motivated and does not derive from some narrative content (indeed in much of instrumental music content *is* form). Even sonata form, in which the development in particular could be likened to some degree of narrative conflict among themes regarded as characters, loses such narrativity owing to the verbatim repetition of the exposition and its occurrence with the slight variation in the recapitulation mentioned above.

Why does large-scale repetition exclude strong narrativity? After all, stories, in whatever medium they occur (be it film, comics, novels or opera), are typically based on the repeated appearance of the same characters (they indeed require this content-"motivated repetition", as I once termed it [WOLF, 2008-2018b, p. 486], for their intelligibility), they moreover can show similar to identical settings[7] and may contain similar episodes (or, in opera and film music, recurring leitmotivs). Yet they do not typically repeat the same episode (including settings, characters and action/happenings) down to minute details (experimental films[8] and *da-capo*-arias as parts of the narratives of pre-Wagnerian opera being to some extent exceptions[9]).

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[6] Notably in the convention that in compositions in major tonalities the second theme, which occurred in the dominant in the exposition, now loses this tonal tension by being 'reduced' to the tonic (in a similar way, in minor tonalities, the second theme changes from the parallel major tonality to the main minor one).

[7] In TV serial films, this has become a staple functioning as a reminder of certain spatial settings (for instance, in the German TV series *Der Bergdoktor* ('The Mountain Doc'), this refers to the identical descriptive shots of Austrian mountain scenery taken from above, or, in the U.S Series *Castle*, the shot identifying the eponymous hero's New York house, cf. also Dragan, 2020, p. 26).

[8] Cf. Dragan's illuminating discussion of "single-shot repetition as cinematic metareference" (2020, title)

[9] *Da-capo* arias were, however, already criticized in the 18th century owing to the improbability that emotions return to the same initial state; one may indeed see in this form-motivated repetition a non-narrative element, which, however, is embedded in an overall, largely narrative structure, for instance, an opera.

Of course, a story may, for example, tell a hero's peregrinations in which he re-visits old haunts or makes the same journey again, fairy tales often repeat similar actions or constellations a magical three times, and a multi-perspectival narrative may offer different perspectives on the same phenomenon. Yet even in these cases differences will inevitably occur on the story-level (i.e. the content level), nor would it be probable that the recurring event is represented on the discourse-level (the level of form and transmission) in exactly the same terms (unless there is a story-centred motivation in line with verisimilitude, as would be imaginable in the recurrence of a traumatic dream). This absence of real large-scale repetition in typical, mimetic narratives (that is, in non-'experimental' ones) is also true, when one considers Todorov's (1968, p. 60) basic ternary structure underlying typical 'intrigues' or plots, namely the movement from original balance to its disruption and re-establishment (or the establishment of a new balance), which would align story structures with an ABA or ABA* structure and hence with repetition. Yet, Todorov's formula is so general and refers to a 'deep' structure, which could come with a plethora of different realizations on the 'surface' so that it does not point to what is at stake here, namely large-scale more or less verbatim repetitions which appear on an immediately perceptible level. All in all, content-motivated large-scale and quasi verbatim repetition is almost unimaginable in non-experimental narratives, since it lacks minimal probability to which typical story-telling usually tends. As a result, neither Todorov's analysis nor the rare cases in which stories may show some degree of repetition invalidate the claim that narrativity is incompatible with large-scale repetition.

This is why both in fiction (in novels and short stories) as well as in drama such large-scale repetitions are extremely rare. And when they occur nevertheless, they confirm, so to speak, the rule by the general 'deviant' quality and 'experimental' nature of the texts in question. This is, e.g., the case with Raymond Queneau's notorious *Exercices de Style* (1958). Its tour de force of 99 versions of one and the same scene, is based on the variation principle and hence on a variant of repetition. In Queneau's text, content repetition is so pervading that the overall narrativity of the volume is near zero, for the focus in it clearly shifts from a story-based narrative to the metareferential foregrounding of the discourse level displaying the author's virtuosity in inventing ever new stylistic variations for similar if

not identical contents. Repetition, in *Exercices de Style*, is not only present on the deep level of content structure only, but also on the surface of both story and content at least in some of the variations: identical elements such as the mention of a bus or bus line as the setting of the first encounter, the Cour de Rome or the vicinity of the St Lazare station as a location of a second encounter and a coat button tend to reoccur in a remarkable way which emphasizes that the text as a whole is not a novel or any other kind of continuous, causally connected and teleologically oriented narrative but precisely what the title indicates: a stylistic 'exercise'. As such, it well illustrates the inverse relationship under discussion here: clear form-motivated repetition in conjunction with poor (overall) narrativity.

Something similar can be said, albeit only for one repetition only, in the field of drama, when one considers Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (1953-56). Basically, the two acts of which the play consists represent twice the same scene over with minor variations (a rare case in drama history): this concerns basic character constellation, the situation of the two main characters eternally waiting for Godot, with a disappointing arrival of the wrong persons, Lucky and Pozzo, and the final frustration of the waiting process. This repetitiveness of the story is in alignment with an implied worldview in which the sameness of human suffering in a meaningless, absurd world and life without real events, without a goal and without the fulfilment of hope, in short, in a world in which entropy reigns and where, consequently, narrative development, eventfulness, teleology and resolution do not exist. Here, too, repetition goes along with a considerably reduced narrativity.

After examples from fiction and drama, to complete the review of main literary genres, one may now take a look at poetry. A typical example may illustrate my point, namely that in lyric poetry, among all the three literary macro-genres the least narrative one, there is the most outspoken tendency towards large-scale and often form-motivated repetition. This can, for instance, be seen in Blake's "The Tyger":

William Blake, "The Tyger"

Tyger! Tyger burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? And what dread feet?

What the hammer? What the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? What the dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger! Tyger burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?
(BLAKE, 1794-1982).

Apart from small-scale repetition such as the anaphoric what?-questions, Blake's poem sports one conspicuous large-scale repetition: the last stanza takes up the first one in form of an almost complete verbatim repetition (except for the auxiliary verb in the last line "Dare", which replaces the original "Could"). All of this amounts to a version of the afore-mentioned ABA form with the B-part being split into four stanzas. The repetition is here obviously form- rather than content-motivated, since it aims at a quasi-architectural, framing "symmetry" as mentioned in the poem's last word.

As for narrativity, it is clearly absent here, since the poem consists of a combination of description with reflections on the origins of the tiger – all of which comes in question form. Incidentally, this form would also be most untypical of narratives, which usually come in assertive form.

Blake's "Tyger" is only one example among countless others in which poems – or the lyrics of pop music for that matter – contain repetition on various levels, including large-scale ones, e.g. in the form of refrains. Now, the repetition of relatively small units such as individual lines may also occur in narrative poems, ballads in particular[10]. Yet, large-scale repetition is usually absent in ballads and thus bespeaks what is at issue here: the inverse relation between narrativity and repetition.

Conclusion: results

It is time to come to a conclusion and formulate results. One result concerns our systematic reflections on the relationship of transmediality to intermediality. Here, for reasons mentioned, it should have become clear that it does make sense to consider transmediality a part of intermediality, although ultimately such classifications are of secondary importance. It should also be clear that the typology discussed covers intermediality from a systematic, synchronic perspective only, and that other classifications are possible (cf. WOLF, 1998-2013) including a typology that refers to dynamic processes, e.g. of 'remediation' and the historical and general development of media, where media convergence (cf. JENKINS, 2006-2008) could be opposed to media-divergence[11].

Ultimately, more important than classifications and typologies is the question: what can be done with a concept such as transmediality? After all, concepts are primarily heuristic tools, and their meaningfulness depends on their usefulness. Transmediality has been shown to be of great usefulness. As has been adumbrated with respect to various issues discussed more in

[10] In ballads, minor repetitions as well as the rhymes can be considered reminders of the fact that, after all, this is poetry and thus a form of verbal art that is more word- and form-oriented than, for example, narrative prose.

[11] Media convergence is present in what Jenkins (2006-2008) focusses on, namely 'transmedia storytelling' involving media such as novels, films, and comics, while media divergence can be observed in the emergence of new media (often from old media, as in the case of opera as a synthesis of drama and both vocal and instrumental music).

depth elsewhere such as descriptiveness or metareferentiality, it provides a highly fruitful perspective, since it opens the horizon beyond the areas of origin of the respective concepts (e.g. metafiction or description in literary studies) and shows their wider applicability. This applicability depends, of course, on the respective medial conditions and to this extent yields another important advantage of a transmedial perspective, namely to highlight media-specificities.

This is also true of the transmedial phenomenon in focus in this essay, repetition: We have seen that not all media or genres appear to be equally prone to permit large-scale repetitions (poetry and music were shown to be much more repetition-friendly than drama and fiction). In addition, the preceding discussion has shown that the transmedial perspective adopted enables a confirmation of the hypothesis that there is indeed a tension between large-scale, in particular form-motivated repetition and narrativity. Moreover, the frequent occurrence of large-scale repetitions in a given genre or medium can be used as an indicator of its typically having a reduced narrative potential. The converse version seems also to be true: a strong narrativity does not allow for large-scale, and especially form-motivated repetition. However, the respective zero version, for obvious reasons, does not apply: thus, the absence of narrativity does *not* necessarily indicate a strong presence of repetitiveness (narrativity can go along with any non-repetitive form), nor does a lack of repetition necessarily point to narrativity (since absent repetitiveness can occur in combination with any semiotic macro-mode other than narrative).

As a final result, the inverse relationship between the two transmedial phenomena of repetition and narrativity may also shed light on the vexed question of the (poor) potential of instrumental music and lyric poetry, both particularly 'repetitive' media, to realize narrativity. In fact, the hypothesis put forth here may be confirmed by the rare cases of narrative instrumental music and genuinely narrative lyric poetry. Yet, the in-depth elucidation of the link between narrativity and repetition in these media are issues which the ambit of the present essay does not permit to explore and which therefore must be left to further discussions within lyrology, musicology, narratology and inter- or transmediality studies.

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