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The Relevance of Mediality and Intermediality to Academic Studies of English Literature

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"Mediality" and "intermediality" have become key concepts in the study of (English) literature. The present contribution addresses problems that have arisen in the wake of the "(inter)medial" turn, including the question of whether this "turn" ought to be welcomed in the first place. The problems discussed refer to the definition of "medium" and "intermediality," to increased demands on scholarly as well as student competence, and to the highly important question of whether the new agenda will overburden philological disciplines with "alien" matter. It will be argued that in spite of the fact that literary studies ought not simply turn into media studies, mediality and intermediality have become highly relevant issues for both teaching and researching literature: literature is itself a medium that has not only influenced other media but has, in turn, been influenced and also transmitted by a plurality of media, so that the study of (inter)mediality is actually the study of an essential aspect of literature as such. The final part of the contribution explores ways of integrating mediality and intermediality into literary studies. In this context, a typology of relevant intermedial forms is presented and some possibilities of integrating medial concerns into existing literary theories, notably narratology, are offered.

1. Introduction: The rise of mediality and intermediality as subjects in the study of English literature

When I began studying English and French literature at the University of Munich in 1974 the concepts of mediality – let alone of intermediality – were not part of academic teaching at all, and this remained so until well into the 1980s, when I passed my PhD exam. Indeed, in one of the set texts which I used in my student days, Bernhard Fabian's introduction to English literature *Ein anglistischer Grundkurs* (1973), the mediality of literature was not even mentioned. Six years later, Wolfgang Weiss'

introduction *Das Studium der englischen Literatur* (1979) did have a short chapter on the relevance of the conventions of book printing for the transmission of literary texts (ch. 3.2.2.). Yet it was not until the late 1990s that mediality appeared on a major scale including in introductory books. Thus, the index to Rob Pope's *The English Studies Book* (1998) contained several references to "MEDIUM, MEDIA," "MEDIA STUDIES" and "multimedia" (413), and Vera and Ansgar Nünning's much used *An Introduction to the Study of English and American Literature* (which appeared in 2004 as a translation of their 2001 *Grundkurs anglistisch-amerikanistische Literaturwissenschaft*) sports a long chapter, "An Introduction to the Analysis of Media Genres" (ch. 6), containing sub-chapters on "Inter-Art Studies/Intermediality" as well as on "New Media." The section on the new media is preceded by the following epigraph:

> What is at stake is not merely a disciplinary facelift, but rather the implementation of the insight that all areas of enquiry within literary studies, without exception, should give adequate consideration to the mediality and intermediality of their subject-matter.
> Siegfried J. Schmidt (Schmidt 357 in: Nünning/Nünning, *An Introduction* 131)

This epigraph and my short survey should suffice to testify to the fact that we are witnessing yet another change in our discipline: mediality and intermediality, thirty years ago virtually absent from university curricula as well as from most research in English Literature, have become integral parts not only of introductory publications[1] but are nowadays also basic concepts in research and in many courses given in departments of English. In view of this development I myself have ventured to speak of an "intermedial turn" (*Musicalization* 2), and am now tempted to add to this a "medial turn" as well.

The undeniable fact that a change has occurred does not, however, mean *per se* that the new concepts are welcome additions to English literary studies, nor that, in the face of so many fashionable "turns" which we have witnessed over the past few decades, the medial or intermedial turn merit being taken seriously in the first place. It therefore makes

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[1] This even applies, to a certain extent, to Fabian's time-honored text-book, in whose ninth edition (2004) some references to media occur in the context of a discussion of the relation between literature and cultural studies as well as of literary genres and intertextuality (cf. 124, 247, 252).

sense to ask whether mediality and intermediality are really relevant to our discipline, in particular to the study of English literature as a special case in the study of literature in general. This is what I intend to do in the following. On the whole, I will argue in favor of the relevance of mediality and intermediality, but will first also give some thought to the problems these notions may raise.

2. Problems of the "(inter)medial turn" in the study of English literature, and possible solutions

The introduction of mediality and intermediality into the study of (English) literature as new agenda raises at least three problems:

1. Problems of defining these terms;
2. The problem of scholarly and student competence with reference to the non-literary media thereby involved;
3. The question as to whether the new agenda overburdens our discipline with alien matter to the detriment of what many (including myself) still view as the core matter: the study of written literary texts – in our case predominantly English or British literature.

In what follows, I would like to briefly explain these problems and try to suggest solutions to them.

2.1 Problems of definition

Both terms "medium" and "intermediality" are abstractions and designate phenomena which cannot be observed in themselves but only with reference to certain manifestations (cf. for "medium," Lüdeke 23). Since the range of these manifestations can be conceived differently, both notions can be seen to have considerably divergent meanings in research.[2] For "medium" we find that it can have a very broad sense, supported by Marshall McLuhan for whom medium is "any extension [. . .] of man" (3), as well as a much narrower and technical definition as used by Hans Hiebel in his *Kleine Medienchronik*, where he defines media as *"materielle oder energetische [. . .] Träger und Übermittler von Daten bzw. Informationsein-*

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[2] Cf. also, with a focus on the use of mediality for narratology, Ryan "Introduction" 15-20, "Media and Narrative," and "Theoretical Foundations" 14-17.

heiten" (8). Both definitions create difficulties for the use of the term in literary studies: the most obvious of these difficulties stems from the fact that the first definition is too broad, so that even a pair of glasses or a bicycle that might be used on stage as "extensions of the actors" would become individual media. While this definition would produce too many media even within one literary genre such as drama, Hiebel's very narrow definition would not give literature a media status at all, since literature is not a physical or energetic transmitter of information. In addition, Hiebel's concept, which coincides with what Marie-Laure Ryan aptly called "the hollow pipe interpretation" ("Media and Narrative" 289), does not leave much room for accounting for the possible effects media may have on the transmitted contents.

Rather than these problematic definitions, which are geared to media-theoretical or technical-historical concerns, we need, in literary studies, a viable definition of medium that takes into account its current use in the humanities and above all includes literature, as documented by Nünning/Nünning: here "medium" is on the one hand applied to literature as a whole (and in this is opposed to semiotically different ways of organizing information such as music, photography, film etc.);[3] on the other hand "medium" also applies to institutional and technical "sub-media" such as the theatre and the book ("[t]he written or printed word" [Nünning/Nünning, *Introduction* 133]). In other words, a conception of "medium" is required that possesses a certain flexibility and combines technical aspects of the channels used with semiotic aspects of public communication as well as with the aspect of cultural conventions that regulate what is perceived as a (new) medium;[4] or in Ryan's terms, the required definition should include elements from what she calls "the transmissive definition," as well as from "the semiotic definition" ("Media and Narrative" 289) and combine these facets with the element of "*cultural use*" (Ryan, "Theoretical Foundations" 16). Drawing

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[3] Cf. the revealing expression "interaction between literature and other media" (Nünning/Nünning, *Introduction* 132); Nünning/Nünning, in attributing media status to literature (in opposition to older studies such as Eidsvik and Saxer), follow "interart scholars" such as Brown (102) and Scher (217), who both speak of literature and other arts / media in terms of "media of expression," and Weisstein, who already uses the term "inter-medial enterprises" (26) for such interaction.

[4] One can, of course, continue to call the computer or DVD (new) media, but one should bear in mind – and perhaps implicitly or explicitly indicate it – that in doing so one refers to the "technical" sense of "medium." The inclusion of technical and material aspects into a concept of medium that is geared to literary studies has been convincingly advocated by Lüdeke.

in part on Ryan ("Media and Narrative" and "Theoretical Foundations" 14-17) I would therefore like to propose the following definition:

> Medium, as used in literary and intermediality studies, is a conventionally and culturally distinct means of communication, specified not only by particular technical or institutional channels (or one channel) but primarily by the use of one or more semiotic systems in the public transmission of contents that include, but are 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, "Media and Narrative" 290)

To conceive of the medially transmitted "messages" not only in terms of referential contents but also in terms of other kinds of contents such as expressive contents is necessary in order to include, for instance, music into the definition of medium.

As in the case of medium, intermediality can also be conceived of in both a narrow and a broad way: the narrow sense, which I myself have favored in my study on the musicalization of fiction, focuses on the participation of more than one medium within a human artefact (cf. Wolf, *Musicalization* 37). As opposed to this "intracompositional" definition, I have also proposed a broader one that roughly follows Rajewsky (*Intermedialität* 2002):[5] intermediality, in this broad sense, applies to any transgression of boundaries between conventionally distinct media as defined above and thus comprises both "intra-" and "extra-compositional" relations between different media (cf. Wolf, "Intermediality" 252 f.). "Relation" can mean gestation, similarity, combination, or reference including imitation.

2.2 Problems of scholarly and student competence

As a result of our educational system, many scholars and students tend to have an advanced competence in one medium only. This mono-disciplinary and, often enough, mono-medial background creates obvious problems in our context. To a certain extent this already applies to the meaningful use of the concept of mediality in literary studies, for

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[5] According to her, intermediality denotes "die Gesamtheit aller Mediengrenzen überschreitenden Phänomene [. . .], die mindestens zwei als konventionell distinkt wahrgenommene Medien involvieren" (Rajewsky, *Intermedialität* 12, 199).

this presupposes a perspective on literature as one medium among several others and thus a view, so to speak, from the outside. The problems become more acute for intermediality studies, as they, by definition, involve more than one medium. Teaching as well as researching in the field of intermediality therefore runs the risk of dilettantism wherever one transgresses the boundaries of one's own field of expertise.

This problem is indeed difficult to solve. One obvious suggestion presents itself here: namely that all intermediality studies undertaken in departments of literature be literature-centered (cf. Wolf, "Intermedialität als neues Paradigma"), that is, they should always involve literature as one of the media under scrutiny and highlight the role of intermediality in and for literature. Yet anchoring the discussion of mediality and intermediality in our field of expertise does not entirely do away with the problem of competence with reference to the other fields involved in intermediality studies. As for literary scholars working in intermediality studies, one may perhaps trust that only those who have at least some competence in one other medium will engage in these studies. Alternatively, or in addition, cooperation with scholars from other fields would be welcome. As for student competence, establishing media and intermediality studies as a permanent component of university curricula would entail reflection on where and how to integrate courses that foster media-competence beyond literature. One possible solution would perhaps be to reserve a part of the elective courses prescribed in our curricula to the coherent study of at least *one* further medium, so that all students of literature acquire some competence, for instance, in the interpretation of film, music or one of the visual arts.

2.3 The danger of losing sight of the core issue of literary studies

Introducing mediality and intermediality into the study of English literature inevitably poses yet another problem: the problem of overburdening a field that, both from a scholarly as well as a didactic perspective, is already in danger of over-expansion and of disintegrating into incoherent areas. Can one really, over and above the inclusion, for example, of the various postcolonial literatures in English, of gender studies, as well as of the vast area of cultural studies, ask for the integration of yet another field into curricula that are more and more forced into the European straight-jacket of ECTS credits (which, for a six-semester

Bachelor's course following the "Bologna model" amount to no more than 180)?[6] And even if we discount these organizational restrictions, are not the capacities of both students and scholars naturally limited? Above all, in the face of yet another new matter, do we not run the risk of utterly losing sight of our central subject, namely written literary texts, in particular the great (English) texts of past and present (and is the addition of medial, that is, mostly non-literary, concerns perhaps ultimately a symptom of the growing uneasiness with literature as an academic subject)?

Again, these are questions that cannot easily be answered, and I can only offer provisional solutions: one of them has already been mentioned, namely, to structure Bachelor programs so that the focus, in the field of literature, remains on the teaching of English literature as such, while at the same time enforcing the study of one other medium. Thus one would prepare the ground for possible specializations in Master programs, where intermedial studies should actually be located.

As for the as yet unsolved problem of squeezing too much matter into finite vessels, which applies not only to questions of how to organize study courses but also to the capacities of researchers, I would say that media and intermediality studies, as long as they are literature-centered – which they ought to be in departments of literature – neither add "alien" matter to the study of literature nor deflect attention away from literature, but shed a most illuminating light on it. This is in fact part of the relevance of mediality and intermediality: the study of (inter)mediality, if carried out wisely, contributes to the "core" of literary studies, because mediality *is* an indispensable condition of the cultural dissemination of literature itself.

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[6] One of the paradoxes produced by European technocrats is the fact that under the surface of seemingly homogeneous "workloads" defined in terms of ECTS credits the actual workloads can vary up to 20 percent; thus in Germany 1 ECTS credit equals 30 hours of work, in Austria only 25 (it is open to discussion whether this indicates a higher competence of Austrian students or lower study standards in Austria).

3. Reasons for the relevance of "mediality" and "intermediality" to studies of English

Literature is a medium (in the semiotic sense) that has been transmitted by many technical and institutional media: lyric poetry as well as the epics of old were orally performed, in part with musical accompaniment, before becoming predominantly hand-written and, later on, print- and book-transmitted texts. As for drama, a play is not just a "bookish" medium but a multimedial performance, involving words, sounds, music, as well as visual media. In addition, since classical antiquity the visual arts in particular have contributed to transmitting literary contents, and the media development since the nineteenth century has added to the spectrum of media that do so: photography, film, radio drama, comics and graphic novels are all worth mentioning as media that continue to be more or less related to literature while having developed their own profile, and one should add to this list recent technical media such as video tapes, compact discs, audio books, DVDs, and, in particular, the computer as a digital medium that has not only been used for hyperfiction but may create a new kind of virtual reality *Gesamtkunstwerk* – even if some may still hesitate to call it "art." Thus one may say that the notions of mediality and intermediality are not just theoretical chimeras, but have a substantial foundation in historical as well as contemporary reality, as is shown by the manifold cross-relationships which have occurred over the past few millennia between what we today call literature and other media.

If literature has influenced and has in turn been influenced and transmitted by a plurality of media, the study of media should become an integral part of literary studies. McLuhan's famous slogan, "The medium is the message" (7-21), is no doubt exaggerated, but an apt reminder of an undeniable fact: the multiplicity of literary media including their technical aspects, is not, as Ryan justly emphasizes (cf. "Media and Narrative"), a negligible accidental. Rather, medial conditions shape the literary content to a considerable degree and therefore merit attention. Thus, drama, if it is destined for the stage right from its creation, tends to differ from closet drama, and the filmic version of a novel will necessarily depart from its print version. In fact, media inevitably channel and shape information, and in the process of communication this is as relevant for the sender as for the recipient. From the point of view of the sender, this shaping quality of media manifests itself in the fact that,

with reference to similar contents, different media can function as limiting filters but can also provide powerful extension and intensification. From the point of view of the recipient, media possess tendencies that prestructure certain expectations. Thus one will not always expect illustrations within the covers of a new novel but would be surprised if a film consisted entirely of moving pictures, sounds and music without verbal text. This shows that media function not only as a material basis for transmission purposes but also as cognitive frames for authors as well as recipients and are therefore not merely a neutral means of communication but, indeed, part of the message itself.

In order to illustrate this I would like to give just one example from the medium with which most of us are constantly concerned as literary scholars, namely book-transmitted fiction. This medium can carry messages by the shaping of its materiality as well as by the intermedial potential it has to combine words and images. Among other things, these possibilities can be employed as markers of a literary genre. If we, for instance, compare the covers of two novels published by Penguin, the 1986 Penguin Classics edition of Thomas Hardy's *The Trumpet Major* (1880) and P. D. James's *The Lighthouse* (2005), significant differences catch one's eye. In the cover of the Hardy edition with its typical "Penguin Classics" look, salient features are the black background color of the printed section using small-sized letters, the frame surrounding the cover as well as the cover illustration, a detail from a realistic nineteenth-century landscape painting by J. W. Inchbold ("The Moorland"). Together these features visibly point to the frame "literary classic." In contrast, the cover of the novel by P. D. James, the grand old lady of contemporary detective fiction, clearly points to "bestseller": the overdimensional initials of her well-known name, the title in gold, the identification of the series ("An Adam Dalgliesh Mystery"), the advertisement ('PD James at her Finest' Daily Mail), the use of a suggestive photograph without frame, the haptic dimension of the title printed in relief – and one may add to this list a sticker by which booksellers sometimes promote new publications (e.g. "3 for 2 books, etc.") –, all of this is destined to catch the potential reader's attention in quite a different way from the Hardy edition. Most readers who go to a bookshop and buy Hardy's novel will, in all probability, have come to the shop with this precise intention, which permits the publisher to use a less salient and more sober cover (which will usually not be seen at first glance anyway, since the book will be found on a book shelf with only its spine visible).

The cover of P. D. James's novel, however, is meant to attract the eye of a browser who probably has not yet made up his or her mind which novel to buy among those on display – with their cover face-up – on the stand for bestsellers.

The contrasting cover illustrations are a relatively simple illustration of the many ways in which mediality merits attention in literary studies. It can, for instance, contribute to the elucidation of reader responses and to synchronic cultural studies, but also to historical approaches to literature (which may relate to sub-fields as diverse as social history, the history of perception and mentalities or the history of media-configurations [cf. Lüdeke 24]). Let me call to mind a few well-known facts: within English studies, the transition from oral performance to a predominantly written form of literary transmission is highly relevant to medieval literature, the explosion of printed texts following the "Gutenberg revolution" an indispensable detail of post-medieval studies; the employment of the noble folio format for the 1623 edition of Shakespeare's plays by Hemminge and Condell is an oft-mentioned marker of the importance the "bard" had by then acquired and thus an interesting detail of the early reception of Shakespeare; the invention of ever cheaper means of producing as well as of illustrating books is a correlative of increasing literacy and thus an important subject of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century studies of literature, and so forth.

At least as important as such individual details of the significance of medial history for literary studies is the fact that the development of literature has always been influenced by the system of media available at a given epoch. Thus the rise in status of landscape painting in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries left its mark on the landscape descriptions of English novelists, as every student of Ann Radcliffe and Thomas Hardy knows. Something similar can be said of photography and film in subsequent media history. The esteem which non-literary media enjoyed in different epochs led to intermedial features such as the pictorialization, the musicalization or the filmicization of novels, a relationship between literature and other media that has increased considerably over the last century.

Besides such intermedial phenomena, media competition has also left its traces in the literary medium. To continue the exemplification by means of the history of the novel, one need only point out one detail: the steep rise in importance of film after World War II arguably contributed, to a considerable extent, to the decline of realism together with

the demise of aesthetic illusion as a dominant effect in "highbrow literature." Novelists as well as critics were keenly aware of the fact that as early as the 1960s fiction had lost ground in areas where film excelled. Thus Robert Scholes remarked on the competition from film in 1967: "The cinema [. . .] threatens to take over from the [realistic novel] [. . .] the business of story-telling. [. . .] In the face of competition from cinema, fiction must abandon its attempt to 'represent reality' [. . .]" (11). In 1964, John Fowles had already pointed out a fact that continues to be relevant today, and not only for the realistic novel: "The development of better means of exact representation [. . .] has made purely descriptive realistic art seem largely mischannelled. The camera, the tape recorder [. . .] these things all make much overtly representational art look feeble and foolish" (191).

Literature and other media can become competitors not only because they vie for the recipients' attention and spare time but also, and more interestingly, because they share a number of features. Aesthetic illusion, which can be produced by virtually all representational media is just one of these features. Others include the common narrativity of, for instance, novels, films or comics, the visual arts and sometimes even of music; the descriptivity which we encounter in all of these media; as well as self- or meta-reflexivity. All of these individual phenomena can, of course, be studied from a monomedial perspective, but they gain considerable relief when studied from a media-comparative point of view.[7] This even produces benefits for the literary scholar, since looking at one's own medium not only from the inside but also from the outside can reveal new aspects.

Becoming aware of the possibility of extending the discussion of well-known literary phenomena such as those mentioned above to other media permits us to highlight yet another reason for the relevance of media and intermediality studies: it can truly open up interdisciplinary perspectives that link literary studies to other disciplines and vice versa. Notions such as narrativity have for a long time been current in art history. However, it is only recently that both art historians and literary scholars have entered into a fruitful dialogue on the common ground

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[7] Cf. e.g., Ryan, ed. *Narrative Across Media*, as well as Wolf, "Problem der Narrativität," "Narrative and Narrativity," and "Cross the Border" for narrativity in literature and other media; Wolf/Bernhart, eds. for descriptivity; and Nöth/Bishara, eds., as well as Hauthal et al., eds. for self- and meta-referentiality (both volumes also contain contributions on the subject from myself).

denoted by this concept.[8] Such shared concepts are a challenge to all of the disciplines concerned. To the non-literary scholar who intends to deal with the "foreign" concept thoroughly and not only metaphorically, it is the challenge to enter unfamiliar ground in order to import potentially useful notions into his or her own domain; for the literary scholar it is the challenge to formulate the concept in question so that it can be used by other disciplines as well.[9] In narratology, for instance, this means that it does not make "intermedial sense" to keep to the existence of an anthropomorphic narrator in the definition of narrativity, for this would exclude most media beyond fiction and fly in the face of the obvious, namely that there are many more media, other than just "epic" fiction, (e.g. novels) that can tell stories. This process of providing transmedially useful concepts is, of course, not reserved to literary studies but works both ways: we as literary scholars can thus be "exporters" as much as "importers" of concepts. In all of these cases, an awareness of mediality, of the characteristic features and conditions of the media concerned, is, however, necessary.

We thus need not even refer to the usual argument used in order to promote mediality and intermediality as subjects of literary departments, namely the fact that we live in a culture dominated by non-literary media and that it therefore ought to be one of the aims of philological studies to promote media-literacy adapted to today's culture. Even without this – perhaps questionable – argument it should have become clear that mediality as well as intermediality are in fact relevant subjects of literary studies.[10]

4. How to integrate mediality and intermediality into literary studies

In spite of an, in fact, increasing awareness of the importance of mediality and intermediality to literary studies, these concepts are not yet sufficiently present in our discipline. Above, I have already made some

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[8] Cf. e.g., Steiner, *Pictures of Romance* and "Pictorial Narrativity," Frank/Frank, and Giuliani.

[9] For the terminological and conceptual problems of "exporting" concepts across medial boundaries see Wolf, "Möglichkeiten und Grenzen."

[10] There is, in fact, dissension as to whether the teaching of non-literary media literacy is a *desideratum* in today's culture or is redundant (as our students already possess a comparatively high degree of competence notably with reference to film, as opposed to the declining competence in the field of literature, which should therefore be strengthened).

eral suggestions concerning the location of mediality and intermediality in current curricula. In the following, I propose to discuss three *more specific* possibilities of integrating these into our discipline. In particular, I would like to concentrate on three issues:

1. The plurality of possible uses of the concept 'medium' in literary studies;
2. A typology of intermedial forms and the way it can be used in literary studies;
3. Possibilities of integrating medial concerns into existing literary theories such as narratology.

4.1 The plurality of possible uses of the concept "medium" in literary studies

The concept of medium can, in fact, be successfully integrated into literary studies in several ways. An obvious way is to acknowledge the fact that literature is a medium in its own right and as such is in opposition to, but also in competition with, other media. A less obvious fact is the use of the concept of mediality *within* the field of literature, as the case of drama may illustrate. Traditionally, drama has been conceived of as a literary *genre*. So, should one – instead or in addition – call drama an individual *medium*, a literary *sub-medium*, or, as Pfister, in his magisterial study *Das Drama*, has done, a *plurimedial* form of representation (ch. 1.3)? I think one should, in fact, link drama to media concerns, perhaps as early as in introductory courses, but also in research – depending, of course, on one's heuristic purpose – since a "medial perspective" is apt to reveal aspects which a merely generic one would not highlight in the same way. If one considers drama, for instance, from the general perspective of the media profile of a given epoch, it makes sense to classify it as an individual medium in opposition to opera, film and other media. Viewing drama as a sub-medium of the macro-medium literature allows one to emphasize its particularly performative character, which opposes it to the sub-medium of book-transmitted fiction; and regarding drama as a plurimedial form of representation permits one to highlight the fact that drama combines several semiotic systems that analytically can be attributed to individual media: it uses verbal and body language, visual representation, sound and music. Verbal language affiliates it with literature; body language and visual representation with the visual, e.g., picto-

rial medium; and sound and music with music as an individual medium. Thus employing the notion of plurimediality can help to emphasize the multiple affiliations which drama as a hybrid medium has with other media.

4.2 A typology of intermedial forms and the way it can be used in literary studies

This leads to the question to what extent the field of (inter-)mediality is relevant to our discipline. I have already suggested that, for our purposes, it should preferably be literature-centered. In fact, we can best activate our expertise as textual scholars when focusing on literature in the following four ways:

a. Literature as a medium that shares *transmedial* features with other media, features that permit comparisons;
b. Literature as a medium that can yield material for *transposition* into other media or can, vice versa, take over material from other media;
c. Literature as a medium that can enter into *plurimedial* combinations with other media in one and the same work or artefact;
d. Literature as a medium that can *refer* to other media in various ways.

These four forms constitute the four basic variants of intermediality as in part formerly devised by Irina Rajewsky and myself (Wolf, "Intermedialität – ein weites Feld," "Intermediality Revisited").

a. The first is what, drawing on Rajewsky (cf. *Intermedialität* 206 and *Intermediales Erzählen* ch. iv.3.4), one may call *transmediality*.[11] It concerns phenomena that are non-specific to individual media and/or are under scrutiny in a media-comparative analysis in which a potential source medium is not in focus. Being non-media specific these phenomena appear in more than one medium. Transmediality as a quality of cultural signification can occur, for instance, on the level of content in myths that have become cultural scripts and have lost their relationship to an original text or medium (notably if they have become reified and appear as a "slice of [historical] reality"). Transmediality also comprises ahis-

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[11] Rajewsky, however, does not consider transmediality a form of intermediality as such but merely a related phenomenon.

torical formal devices that can be traced in more than one medium, such as the repeated use of motifs, thematic variation or, as already noted, narrativity, descriptivity or meta-referentiality. Yet further instances of transmediality concern characteristic historical traits that are common to either the formal or the content level of several media in given periods, such as the pathetic expressivity characteristic of eighteenth-century sensibility, which can be observed in drama, fiction, poetry, opera, instrumental music and in the visual arts. A transmedial perspective on such phenomena implies that they do not have an easily traceable origin which can be attributed to a certain medium or that such an origin does not play a role for the investigation at hand.[12]

b. There are, however, cases in which discernibly similar contents or formal aspects appear in works of different media and where at the same time a clear heteromedial origin can be attributed to them. In these cases a transfer between two media can be shown to have taken place, in other words an *intermedial transposition*. Its best-known realization involving literature is the filmicization of novels.[13]

Transmediality and intermedial transposition are the basic forms of *extracompositional intermediality*. As opposed to these, there are two basic forms of *intracompositional intermediality*. Here, the involvement of another medium is less the effect of the critic's perspective, as in the extracompositional variants, since it is discernible within the work in question, where the intermedial relation is in addition an integral part of its signification (in intermedial reference) or and semiotic structure (in plurimediality).

c. The most obvious and indeed "overt" form of such intracompositional intermediality is multi- or *pluri-mediality*, which has already been

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[12] It could be argued that narrativity, which I have classified as a "transmedial" phenomenon, is actually a form of intermedial transposition, since it originates in verbal narrative. However, while narrativity may be a typological borderline case inside the field of extracompositional intermediality and while certain phenomena tend to be transmitted by certain media rather than by others, it would be difficult to maintain that all narrative features, e.g., of film or some works of the visual arts, are a translation of devices stemming from verbal (oral or written) narrative rather than the application of a cognitive frame that can, in principle, inform more than one medium.

[13] Like the study of transmedial phenomena, dealing with intermedial transposition can yield illuminating insights into the medium of literature, its capabilities and limitations in comparison to other media, insights which cannot be obtained from a mere monomedial perspective.

mentioned with reference to drama. Plurimediality produces the effect of medial hybridity or can be traced back to originally heterogeneous media. In any case these media become an integral part of the semiotic structure of the work in question.

d. As opposed to plurimediality, *intermedial reference* does not give the impression of a medial hybridity of the signifiers, nor of a heterogeneity of the semiotic systems used, but rather of a medial and semiotic homogeneity and thus qualifies as "covert" intracompositional intermediality. The reason for this is that intermedial reference exclusively operates on the basis of the signifiers of the dominant "home" or "source" medium.[14] In contrast to intermedial transposition (which, as a rule, creates works that signify in their own right), the decoding of intermedial reference is part of the signification of the work in which such reference occurs and is therefore requisite for an understanding of this work. Intermedial references fall into the following two main subforms.

The first subform is *explicit reference* (or *intermedial thematization*, a term which is best used in the context of verbal media only). Here, the heteromedial reference resides in the signifieds of the referring semiotic complex, while its signifiers are employed in their usual way and do not contribute to heteromedial imitation. In verbal media, explicit reference is easiest to identify. In principle, it is present whenever another medium (or a work produced in another medium) is mentioned or discussed ("thematized") in a text.

As opposed to intermedial thematization, an alternative form of intermedial reference is *intermedial imitation*. There are various ways (with varying degrees of intensity) of realizing this form, ranging from imitating references through partial reproduction (as in the quotation of song texts which make the reader remember the music of the song),[15] to evocation (as in ekphrasis)[16] and formal imitation (as in the imitation of

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[14] This means that it can only incorporate signifiers of another medium where these are already a part of the source medium (see below, the referential variant "[partial] reproduction").

[15] Generally speaking, this liminal case of intermedial imitation implies, in literature, the quotation of part, or the entirety, of the verbal constituent of a plurimedial work, by which means the other, non-quoted constituent is also associated by the reader.

[16] Evocation imitates the effects of another medium or heteromedial artefact by purely monomedial means (without involving heteromedial quotation). Evocation appeals to the recipient's imagination and therefore goes beyond explicit reference, which points to another medium in a non-imaginative, denotative or "technical" way. An example of this

sonata form in a musicalized novel).[17] I cannot go into details here; it must suffice to point to Figure 1, which gives an outline of the general system of intermedial forms together with examples from the relations between literature and music (cf. Wolf, "Intermediality Revisited" 28).

A typology such as the one outlined above only maps the field of possible intermedial relationships that may be relevant to studies of (English) literature. This static map requires at least two dynamic additions in order to become useful. The first would be a historical dynamization and would highlight *processes in media history*, for instance, developments in media configuration that pave the way from individual media (such as theatre and music) through regular combination to (new) hybrid media such as the opera or nineteenth-century melodrama. Another, highly important way of rendering the typology fruitful for interpretive purposes is, of course, the investigation of the *functions* of intermedial relations. Such functional enquiries can focus on 'intracompositional' aspects, that is, on functions of intermediality within the respective artefact, but they could and should also embrace "extracompositional" aspects by linking intermedial phenomena to historical and other cultural contexts beyond the limits of the artefact or text under discussion.

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intermedial device would be a novel in which a painting is evoked in the reader's mind through "graphic" ekphrastic description.

[17] Cf. Aldous Huxley's polyphonic novel, *Point Counter Point*. Another way by which literature can formally imitate another medium is the filmicization of fiction (which includes the imitation of film scripts as in the last chapter of David Lodge's *Changing Places*). Formal intermedial imitation is an especially interesting phenomenon because the intermedial signification in this case is the effect of a particularly unusual iconic use of the signs of the source medium. In fact, as opposed to explicit reference but also to the other implicit variants of partial reproduction and of evocation, the characteristic feature of formal imitation consists of an attempt at shaping the material of the semiotic complex in question (its signifiers, in some cases also its signifieds) in such a manner that it acquires a formal resemblance to typical features or structures of another medium or heteromedial work.

INTERMEDIALITY
(broad sense)

extracompositional intermediality   intracompositional intermediality
(intermediality, narrow sense)

trans mediality	intermedial transposition	intermedial reference	plurimediality
(quality of non-media specific phenomena occurring in more than one medium)	('transfer' of the content or of formal features from medium a) to medium b))	(heteromedial reference using one medium only)	(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 heteromedial **imitation**)

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

evocation   **formal imitation**   **(partial) reproduction**

| narrativity of lit. and of some music | opera based on a novel | 'graphic' description of a musical composition in a novel | structural analogies to music in a novel/ to lit. in pro-gramme music | re-presenting a song through the quotation of the song text | discussion of music in a novel | music and lit. text in 19th. cent. melodrama |

(music in literature /literature in music)   (music in lit.)   (music and lit.)
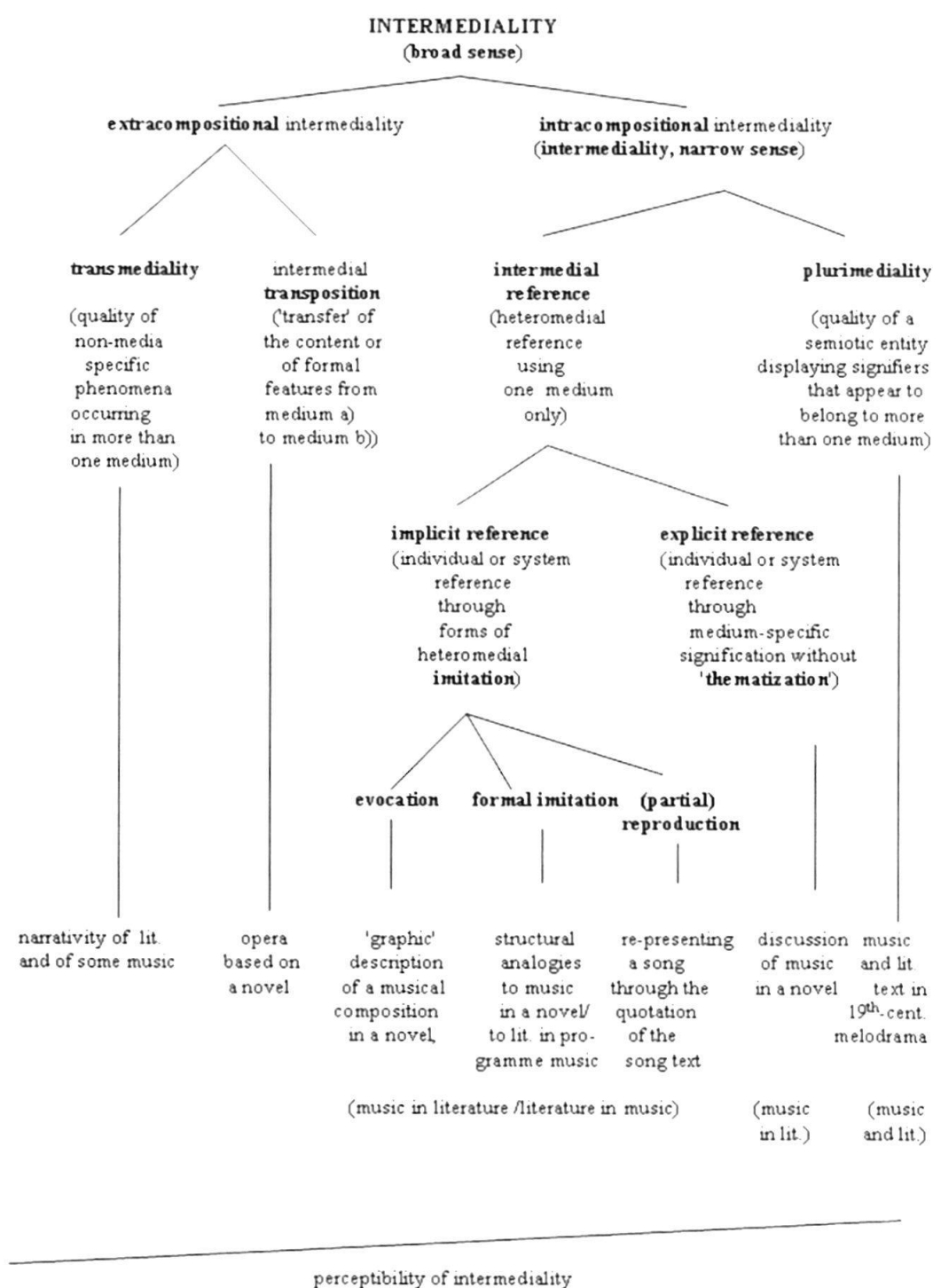
perceptibility of intermediality

Figure 1: System of intermedial relations illustrated with
musico-literary examples.

4.3 Possibilities of integrating medial concerns into existing literary theories such as narratology

A third important issue for integrating a mediality perspective into literary studies concerns the individual literary theories, e.g. dramatology, lyric theory and narratology. For brevity's sake I will concentrate here on narratology.

In many influential narratologies (e.g. by Stanzel, Genette or Fludernik, *"Natural" Narratology*)[18] the medium of narratives is not a major issue and is sometimes not even given a systematic location in the description of narratives. It is therefore appropriate to remember the fact that one of the pioneers of structuralist narratology, Seymour Chatman, already made a simple and convincing proposal of how and where to integrate medial concerns into a systematic description of narratives. In *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, drawing on Hjelmslev, he equates Todorov's constitutive levels of narratives, story and discourse, with narrative "content" and "expression." In addition, Chatman, like Hjelmslev, differentiates within each of these categories between "substance" and "form" (in practice, of course, "form" cannot exist without "substance," as already stated with reference to "medium" as an abstract concept). While the content of "story" refers to individual stories (such as Ulysses's adventures), its form corresponds to what Propp analyzed in his *Morphology of the Folktale*. As for the discourse, the bulk of Chatman's narratology (as well as of most other narratologies for that matter) is concerned with the form of discourse (see 25); this includes, for example, the use of hetero- or homo-diegetic narrators, the use of discourse-time as opposed to story-time, etc. In contrast, the substance of discourse receives only a brief mention, but this is where mediality is introduced: Chatman defines the substance of discourse as "its appearance in a specific materializing medium, verbal, cinematic, balletic, musical, pantomimic, or whatever" (22). This location of medium as an aspect of "discourse" is a viable possibility of installing the category of medium in all general narratologies and narratological interpretations on the level of "intracompositional" dimensions that require attention (see Figure 2).

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18 Fludernik's seminal reflections ("Genres, Text Types, or Discourse Modes?") on "narrative modalities," for instance, concentrate on "genres, text types [and] discourse modes," not on media.

STORY: substance	STORY: form
DISCOURSE: substance (*media*)	DISCOURSE: form

Figure 2: The position of media within a system of intracompositional
dimensions of individual narratives (based on Chatman).

What we, however, still need in this context are elaborations of the slot
"substance of discourse." This concerns both the wider context in
which media can be placed together with basic other categories requisite
for a systematic description of narratives as well as the relationship be-
tween the typical properties of individual media and their potential to
affect narrativity.

As for the first task, its solution requires that we leave the narrow
focus of Chatman's "intracompositional" narratology, namely the indi-
vidual text. Instead, we should try to account for the position of media
within a wider system of cognitive (macro-)frames or semiotic macro-
modes, media and genres, as well as for the fact that macro-frames can
also occur on the micro-level of individual works (where narrative pas-
sages can be juxtaposed with descriptive, argumentative etc. ones).

Perhaps the best way to systematize what is under discussion here is
to start from the open category of *cognitive macro-frames* or, what one may
call from a semiotic perspective, basic semiotic *macro-modes*. On this ab-
stract level we find, for example, "narrative" with its defining, gradable
quality of narrativity as opposed to "the descriptive," "the argumenta-
tive," etc. Fludernik, in an illuminating essay ("Genres, Text Types, or
Discourse Modes?"), named this top level the level of "macrogenres"
(282).

These macro-frames or macro-modes are, however, highly abstract
and require for their realization not only historical *genres* (be they *general
genres* or *sub-genres*) but also, and above all, something that concerns us
here most immediately, namely *media* (such as the verbal and the picto-
rial media, film, instrumental music, etc.). The fact that narrative, like all
macro-frames, can be realized in more than one medium shows that
these macro-frames are, to a large extent, media-independent. As for the
genres, this level refers, firstly, to general genres (which sometimes over-

lap with media)[19] such as, within the verbal media, drama (as typically not narrator-transmitted) or narrations of the type novel, epic and short story (as typically narrator-transmitted) and, secondly, to historical genres (within the pictorial media, for instance, religious painting, historical painting, still life).

As a rule, the macro-frames, or more precisely, their occurrence as dominant, are a defining feature both of general genres and historical sub-genres (but can, in individual texts and artefacts, occur on the micro-level, alongside other, subdominant frames). The semiotic macro-modes or macro-frames can thus not only be realized by several media but may, within individual works, be seen to operate both on the macro-level and on the micro-level, in which case they may only be present as subdominant frames together with other frames. With reference to a typology of verbal texts, this potential recursivity of frames has already been proposed with particular clarity by Virtanen[20] and in similar terms by Fludernik ("Genres, Text Types, or Discourse Modes?"). For our purpose of locating the concept of medium within literary theory, including narratology, these findings can be adapted and the resulting typological possibilities be visualized as in Figure 3,[21] one should, however, emphasize that in Figure 3 all registers (1-5) show only *examples* and hence do not represent the full repertoire of options.

Having proposed possible ways of integrating "medium" as a category into narratology as a leading literary theory, I must now address the relationship between the typical properties of individual media and their potential to affect the realization of the macro-modes. Again, I will focus on narrative/narrativity, where the problem has not found much attention so far. Indeed, compared to the many *forms of discourse* which narratology has discussed (e.g. concerning the format of covert or overt narrators, the establishment and use of diegetic levels etc.), systematic

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[19] Cf. Fludernik, "Genres, Text Types or Discourse Modes?" 282; Fludernik subsumes under "genres/text types" "novel, drama, film."

[20] Virtanen, from a monomedial focus on verbal texts, gives a description of the status of a "discourse type" or "text type" (according to its location on the primary or on the secondary level) together with narrative, instructive, expository and argumentative text types (299). In spite of the fact that Virtanen is not concerned with a transmedial typology of semiotic macro-modes but only with a text typology, her conceptualization can be adapted to fields beyond verbal texts.

[21] For a rudimentary elaboration of the systematic location of media in narratology see Wolf, "Problem der Narrativität" 42, and "Narrative and Narrativity" 181.

reflection on the categories that may apply in a narratologically relevant way to media as the *substance of discourse* are remarkably scant.

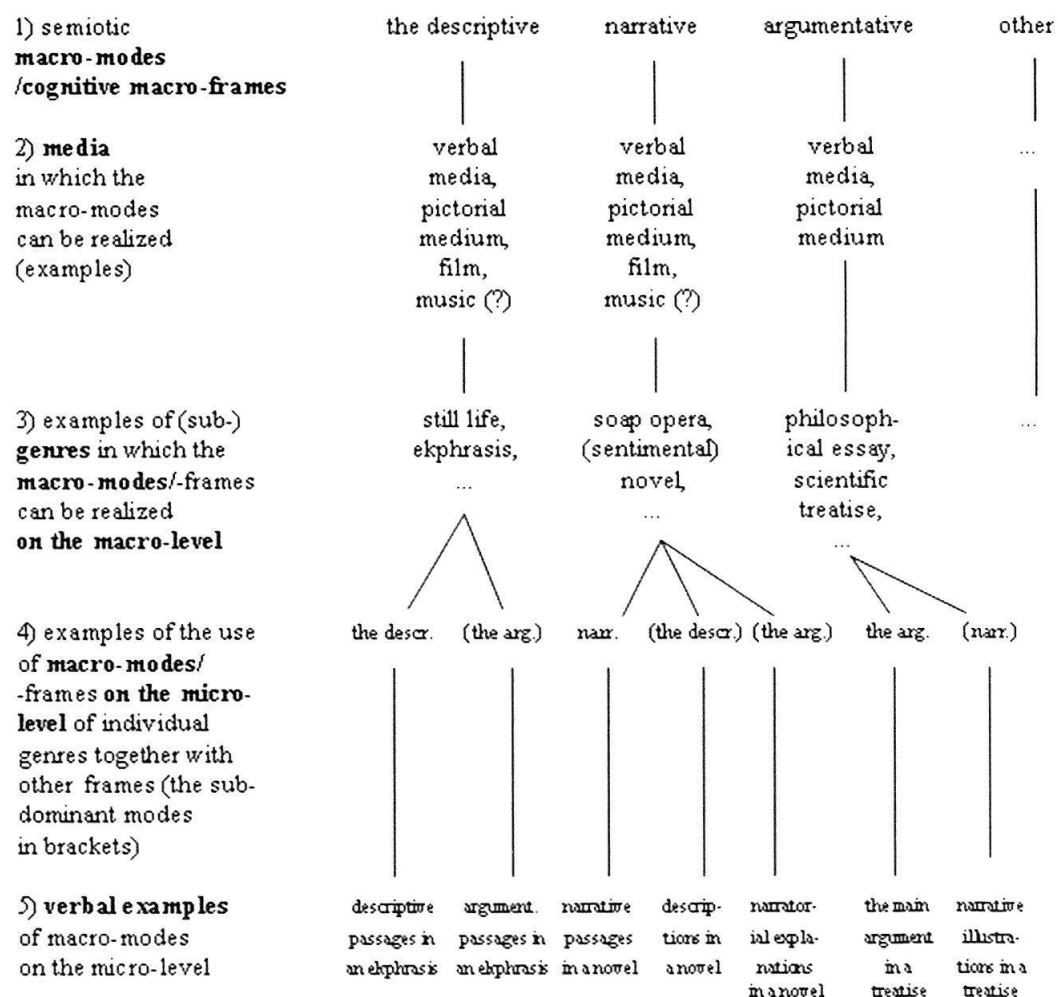| 1) semiotic macro-modes /cognitive macro-frames	the descriptive	narrative	argumentative	other
2) media in which the macro-modes can be realized (examples)	verbal media, pictorial medium, film, music (?)	verbal media, pictorial medium, film, music (?)	verbal media, pictorial medium	...
3) examples of (sub-) genres in which the macro-modes/-frames can be realized on the macro-level	still life, ekphrasis, ...	soap opera, (sentimental) novel, ...	philosoph- ical essay, scientific treatise, ...	...
4) examples of the use of macro-modes/ -frames on the micro-level of individual genres together with other frames (the sub-dominant modes in brackets)	the descr. (the arg.)	narr. (the descr.)	(the arg.) the arg.	(narr.)
5) verbal examples of macro-modes on the micro-level	descriptive passages in an ekphrasis / argument. passages in an ekphrasis	narrative passages in a novel / descrip- tions in a novel	narrator- ial expla- nations in a novel / the main argument in a treatise	narrative illustra- tions in a treatise

Figure 3: The position of narrative and media within a typology
of cognitive macro-frames/semiotic macro-modes, media and genres.

Once again we are grateful to Marie-Laure Ryan for having at least prompted reflections in this field. In her afore-mentioned article ("Media and Narrative") she proposes six categories with some subcategories that may well serve as a matrix of criteria according to which narratologists of the future could evaluate individual media. In Figure 4 I have systematized Ryan's categories, occasionally reformulating and completing them (Ryan's wordings are put in double inverted commas).

These categories receive their heuristic value by revealing aspects that are narratologically important. Thus the *spatio-temporal extension* as well as the *kinetic properties* have an obvious and direct relevance to narrativity. As for the *senses addressed* one can imagine that "pluricodal" or "plurimedial" media can easily attain a particularly high degree of experientiality (one of the defining features of narrativity), which is one reason why film is of such importance in today's culture. The *priority of sensory channels*, in particular in pluricodal media, is narratologically relevant because, for instance, the visual priority in film prestructures not only the production but also the reception of this medium in a different way than is the case in theatre, where the verbal code is more important. The *technological support* and the *nature of the signs used* are relevant since, for instance, traditional, analogical photography as an indexical as well as iconic medium (regardless of the possibility of manipulation) has a highly documentary value, which, for example, a digital photograph possesses only to a lesser degree owing to the increased possibilities of manipulation; and a painting (except for a portrait) does not have at all, for it is only iconic (see Ryan, "Media and Narrative" 291). Finally, the influence of the *cultural role* and *methods of production and distribution* on narratives is inextricably linked to generic and other conventions and is responsible for the fact that highly different versions of the same story are produced, and different cultural connotations are triggered, depending on whether the story is transmitted, e.g., as an opera or a comic strip.

Medial categories and properties affecting narrativity		corresponding media (unsystematic examples)
"Spatio-temporal extension"	"temporal"	fiction, music
	"spatial"	painting, sculpture
	"spatio-temporal"	film, dance
"Kinetic properties"	"static"	film stills, sculpture
	"dynamic"	film, drama, dance
	static and dynamic	film, drama
"Senses [...] addressed/ semiotic codes [...] used"	'mono-codal'/'mono-sensory'	
	visual	sculpture
	aural	music
	language	fiction
	etc.	
	'pluri-codal'/'pluri-sensory' ('pluri-medial')	theatre, film, opera, dance
"Priority of sensory channels"	without priority	(mono-codal media)
	with priority of:	(pluri-codal media)
	visual	film
	aural	opera
	language	theatre
	etc.	
"Technological support" /nature of the signs used	analogical transmission	conventional photography
	digital transmission	digital photography
	symbolic signs	fiction
	iconic signs	painting, photography
	indexical (+ iconic) signs	conventional photography
	other differentiations	
"methods of production/ distribution"	mass production	newspaper
	individual production and distribution	sculpture
"Cultural role"	high cultural medium	opera
	popular culture medium	comic strip
	primarily pragmatic use	TV news story
	primarily non-pragmatic use	Shakespeare play
	other differentiations	

""   = quotations from Ryan, "Media and Narrative" 291

Figure 4: Criteria for media in narratology
(based on Ryan, "Media and Narrative").

5. Conclusion: Literary into media studies?

As we have seen, there are many ways in which the concepts of mediality and intermediality can or should be integrated into our discipline. However, is "integration" the right notion? Should we, in view of the above-mentioned medial turn, not rather adapt Antony Easthope's plea for transforming *Literary into Cultural Studies* (1991) for a new purpose and promote a dissolution of literary into media studies?

I am well aware of the fact that this radical option may have some attraction, not least in today's universities, where vacant professorships are no longer automatically renewed in order to maintain the tradition of a discipline – let alone a seemingly outmoded one such as literary studies – but are increasingly financed only if displaying some "innovative" profile. So why not gradually abolish professorships of English Literature in favor of English Media Studies?

It will not surprise the reader that I, as a representative of literary studies, should decidedly oppose such a development. Like all interdisciplinary studies, interdisciplinarity requires first and foremost disciplinarity, otherwise it would lose its basis. This also applies to interdisciplinary media studies. While they are a genuine concern in their own right, they also require the disciplinarity of a well-informed focus on individual media. Literature is one of them, and not the least important. In fact, it is one of the most complex of human art forms and by far the richest storehouse of cultural memory which humankind has as yet developed. This is true on a world-wide as well as on a national basis. Literature can, moreover, function as an interface for all other media, and, owing to the flexibility of its verbal medium, it can do so in a more detailed manner than any other medium. In addition, literary studies have developed one of the most elaborate tool-boxes of cultural interpretation. To abolish literary studies in favor of media studies would therefore be madness. What we need is a stronger awareness of medial and intermedial concerns in our discipline, but we must remain literary, that is textual scholars, for it is in the central field of literature that we have our best expertise, and it is as literary scholars that we can best contribute to the elucidation of mediality and intermediality, past and present.

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