MAARJA OJAMAA

The transmedial aspect
of cultural autocommunication

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of cultural autocommunication

Department of Semiotics, University of Tartu, Estonia

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Supervisors: Professor Peeter Torop, University of Tartu

Opponents: Dots Nicola M. Dusi, PhD, *Senior Lecturer*,
University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy

Eva Näripea, PhD, *Senior Research Fellow*,
Estonian Academy of Arts

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I.   Saldre, Maarja 2010. Tühirand eesti kultuurimälus: kirjandus-, filmi- ja teatripärase esituse transmeedialine analüüs. *Acta Semiotica Estica* VII, 160–182.

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

0. Introduction

The focus of the present thesis is the notion of transmedia. This introductory piece opens transmedia both as a specific cultural phenomenon and a universal operating principle of culture, but also comments on the problems with the notion itself. The prefix trans- implies a change of state, a movement as from one medium to another, positing transmediality very close to the concept of translation, especially Roman Jakobson's intersemiotic translation (1971 [1959]). Thus, the overarching approach to transmediality within this thesis relates it to a very general idea of how texts and text parts in culture undergo transfers from one medium to another, forming a new mental whole on a higher level. This is in line with Peeter Torop's cultural semiotic understanding of transmediality as the mental aspect of text's being in culture (Sütiste, Torop 2007:203, Torop 2008: 725). And this is also a central aspect of cultural autocommunication.

At the same time, the notion of transmedia is used not only in semiotics but also – and more often so – in other fields, especially media studies and narratology. Within each of these, it is conceptualized in a different way and juxtaposed with other concepts and terms. The media studies perspective first asks about the difference between transmediality and crossmediality and answers it by defining crossmediality as a more general phenomenon of which transmediality (in the framework of transmedia storytelling) is a subform (Ibrus and Scolari 2012: 7). The cultural semiotic perspective, however, sees it rather the other way round – transmediality being an umbrella term that includes all sorts of transfers, while crossmediality refers to a communicational strategy of intentional transfers. Crossmediality thus implies a target-oriented process whereby diverse media sources are collaboratively converged into a whole, and transmedia on the other hand implies a source-oriented process whereby a prototext is diverged into different individual metatexts in cultural space. Examples of crossmediality would include marketing one product through Internet, print media and TV or telling a coordinated story through comics, a movie, and a video game. Examples of transmediality would also include cinematic adaptations of a preexisting novel or the spontaneous ways certain motifs move from literature to music to painting etc. in culture over time. Based on these examples, however, it is clear that an univocal differentiation between trans- and crossmedia applicable for all possible contexts is not pertinent and certain ambivalence is inevitable or even desirable. A cinematic adaptation in contemporary cultural space bears both a transmedial relation to its source text (and is analysable on this level only), but it is also part of a crossmedial system as it is most likely to be marketed through a website, trailers and other texts that could possibly have important part in the meaning making process of the whole, both from the viewpoint of production and reception. All this is in turn related to the general question of the ontology of text in contemporary cultural space.

In the context of narratology, the notion of transmedia is put into practice for asking questions about the relations between a narrative and its media (Herman 2004: 49)[1]. An example of this would be defining the medium-specific variations and invariant elements of a story that exists in an oral and a written form. Another approach would be defining the medium-specific variations of a narratological category like frame or character. Thus, transmediality is here not an individual phenomenon, but an approach for studying stories in culture.

Two other terms that have more often caused confusion in the discussions on transmediality are intermedia and remediation. The first of them refers to text types where two or more media are conceptually integrated in a manner that makes it impossible to draw a boundary between them within a given text. Examples by the author of the term Dick Higgins include action music, object poems, happenings, sound poetry etc. (Higgins 2001 [1965]: 50). This distinguishes intermedia from multimedia, where the multiple media used within a given text stay distinct. What differentiates transmedia from both intermedia and multimedia – even though they all seem to be based on an old pursuit of a *Gesammtkunstwerk* – is the lack of sequentiality[2] in the latter. A constitutive characteristic of a transmedia text is its composition of physically distinct subtexts that form a mental whole on a higher level, implying an explicitly dynamic processual nature based on the operation of transfer. Therefore, an intermedia text is like an amalgam of the subtexts, a multimedia text is rather the sum of its subtexts (e.g. a verbal text and an image), while in the case of a transmedia text, the whole is formed on another (mental) level through intersemiotic translations (e.g. from a verbal text to an image).

The authors of the concept of remediation define it as: "the representation of one medium in another" (Bolter and Grusin 1996: 339; 2000: 45), whereas the core of the discourse on remediation is the distinction between old media and new/digital media. Thus, the concept is useful rather for describing media evolution than the communication and metacommunication of texts, even though these processes are obviously related in culture.

Besides more defined and established contexts, the root "transmedia" has brought along several instances of *ad hoc* coinage. This has been the case, for example, with one of the earliest scholarly uses by Charles Suhor (1984) within curriculum studies, and more recently in the context of contemporary art by composer and artist Shiomi Mieko (Mieko 2013). In addition, there was the performance group and art commune Transmedia Explorations in London in the late 1960s (see Reynolds 2006: 125–126). Altogether, it might seem that the term describes too many too different things each surrounded by mutually

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[1]   Another attempt to find appropriate basis for establishing the field of transmedial narratology is made by Ryan (2005).
[2]   Sequentiality does not imply a strictly defined trajectory and sequence of reading. Quite often, the readers of transmedia stories enter the storyworld from different points, be it due to their media consuming habits or by chance.

untranslatable terminological fields or general language of self-description. Nevertheless, a cultural semiotic approach can demonstrate operating mechanisms that are present in each. Therefore, the introductory paper is designed to first give an overview of two of the main paradigms on transmedia: transmedia storytelling and transmedial narratology, which are followed by a concentrated overview of semiotic issues they share. In each of the paragraphs as in each of the papers of the thesis, my usage of terminology corresponds to the given framework. The fourth, concluding part stems from another common keyword – literacy. No matter whether one discusses transmedia in the context of commercial entertainment, rereading ancient texts, contemporary art practices or else, sooner or later the question of comprehending the language comes up. I finish the paper with some perspectives for possible future studies on the ways that the ideas developed in different fields of transmedia research could be put in practice in educational contexts of the contemporary convergence culture. Within the latter, the boundaries are blurring not only between entertainment and its marketing and between entertainment and education, but also between object- and metalanguages (Ojamaa and Torop 2015). This cultural background gives ample and complex material for demonstrating the indivisibility of communication and autocommunication and the possibility to describe the autocommunicative function of any communicational process on a higher level. Whereas acts of communication could be seen as unique on their own, on the level of collective or of tradition, they unfold as transmedial repetition. Therefore, transmediality is an ontological characteristic of cultural processes.

Overview of the articles included in the thesis

The main body of this thesis is composed of five articles published in 2010–2014. Papers I and IV bear an empirical, paper II a historical, and papers III and V a theoretical focus.

I "Emptybeach in Estonian cultural memory: a transmedial analysis of a literary, a filmic, and a theatrical representation" ("Tühirand eesti kultuurimälus: kirjandus-, filmi- ja teatripärase esituse transmeedialine analüüs"). The paper presents an analysis of a textual complex, the prototext of which is Mati Unt's short novel "Emptybeach. Love Story" ("Tühirand. *Love Story*) (1972), considered a classic of Estonian (modernist) literature most of all for its uniquely intense language-usage echoing a flow of consciousness. In 2006, a film under the same title by Veiko Õunpuu premiered, and later the same year, Ingomar Vihmar produced a stage version at "Vanemuine" theatre. The focus of the paper is the motif of emptybeach, which in each of the texts appears both as a narrative space where the events take place, and a mental timespace of the main character. The motif is first opened from the medium-specific perspectives, describing the literary, filmic and theatrical devices used for its representation in

relation with the dominant elements of meaning creation in each separate textual case. After that, a mental emptybeach on the level of cultural memory is modeled, explicating its invariant (repeated) and variative (medium-specific) aspects.

II "Estonian screen versions of literary works" ("Eesti ekraniseering"). The basis of cultural identity is always related to the contemporary languages of communication. This is why, for example, canonical texts once created in the form of a literary text often find reinterpretation in new cultural languages, i.e., in the languages of cinema, of comic books, and of computer games. In general terms, these are examples of the transmedial existence of a text in culture, whereas cinematic adaptations are perhaps the most common ones. This paper presents an historical overview of Estonian full-length films[3] (236 in total) based on previous literary texts within the time frame of 1923–2012. As could be expected, drawing a clear-cut boundary between films that "qualify" as cinematic adaptations and those that do not, is a rather complicated task. Literature and film are both cultural subsystems, which by definition never function in isolation and are always dynamically interrelated with each other as well as with other subsystems of the given culture. Thus, after discussing several border cases and reflecting on the problems of establishing a precise definition, a certain ambivalence of the notion is maintained.

The first Estonian filmmakers considered creating screen versions of the national literature as one of their main tasks. This was a rather unique situation as in most other cinema cultures, adaptations were often considered impure cinema and thus of inferior value. The objective behind the high-flying plans was strengthening the cultural identity of the young nation. However, mainly due to the lack of material means and to some extent also to insufficient professional skills, only one full-length adaptation was actually made. It was "Jüri Rumm" by Konstantin Märska in 1929, based on a novel of the same name published under the little-known pseudonym Hans Varesoo. The novel itself is based on the stories about the life of the legendary vagabond Rummu Jüri. After the first decade of Soviet occupation, when the main rationale behind choosing the sources for cinematic adaptations was their coherence with the prevalent socio-political ideology, a golden period of cinematic adaptations followed in 1960s as a number of screen versions of literary classics mainly representing the peasant roots of the nation were released. Since 1991, the number of adaptations relative to all the films made has constantly decreased, whereas the main tendencies have been adapting foreign Western, especially Nordic literature as well as the arguably Hollywoodian practice of adapting recent best-selling books.

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[3] In total 236 films were considered, of which cinematic adaptations make up almost a half. The criteria for a full-length film was the duration of at least 60 minutes.

III "Transmedia Space" (co-written with Peeter Torop). The paper approaches the emergent phenomenon of transmedia storytelling via the notion of space. First, an overview is given of the ways how different authors have attempted to define and describe transmedia storytelling using spatial metaphors. Proceeding from there, the phenomenon is discussed from three complementary aspects: the space of text, the space of media and the space of culture. The first subchapter considers the notion of storyworld and the textual means of worldmaking. The second one presents transmedia storytelling in an extratextual framework which implies the relations between a text and its intersemiotic translations. As the questions of the boundaries of text and media are perhaps most fruitfully approached in the context of existing works, the empirical example of the online environment of Pottermore is discussed. The aspects of the space of text and the space of media are in turn comprised in the aspect of culture or the timespace of textual communication and metacommunication. In conclusion, narrative texts that exist simultaneously in several media appear in cultural experience as both, a topological invariant or a storyworld and as typological, medium-specific variations. Transmedial space is thus simultaneously invariant and variative, reflecting the general mechanism of storing knowledge in cultural memory. Prof. Peeter Torop contributed to this paper by writing the subsection "Space of culture".

IV "The transmedial nature of cultural memory: The seashore in the artistic texts representing the overseas flight of Estonians during World War II" ("Kultuurimälu transmeedialisus: Rand Teise maailmasõja paadipõgenemisi vahendavates kunstitekstides"). The more there are media and discourses in which a historical event has been represented, the deeper is the culture's understanding of it. The paper analyses three artistic texts representing the story of Estonian refugee boats trying to escape World War II. Among these, there are a novel by August Gailit "Üle rahutu vee" ("Across the Restless Sea", 1951), a film by Sulev Keedus "Somnambuul" ("Somnambulance", 2003) and an oil painting by Eerik Haamer "Perekond vees" ("Family in the Water, 1941). The empirical focus of the study is the motif of seashore that is not a central motif in any of these texts, but nevertheless embodies the dominant meanings of each. In each of the analysed cases, the seashore appears to be meaningfully related to the loss of national identity. It constitutes a borderline between the sea that always belongs to the realm of Other and the land that was taken away from the people. Analysing the artistic means used for representing the motif, the paper explicates both the invariant core of the given texts as well as the variations in the means of meaning making that constitute the uniqueness of artistic languages. As a result, this empirical study re-emphasises the universal aspect of transmediality in culture's communication with itself about itself.

V "Transmediality of cultural autocommunication" (co-written with Peeter Torop). The aim of the paper is to indicate the immanent presence of the topic

of transmediality in Juri Lotman's works on cultural semiotics and thereby also the relevance and fruitfulness of his ideas for the study of innovative phenomena of the contemporary mediasphere. For this, transmediality is located in the wider context of cultural autocommunication, a key concept for Lotmanian semiotics, related to both mnemonic and creative functions. Understanding a culture means the ability of describing the hierarchical correlation of its sign systems (see Lotman et al 2013: 53), i.e., distinguishing between different communicative processes in a diversity of cultural languages. Cultural mediation or culture's simultaneous communication with others and with oneself is founded on cultural literacy and cultural experience is consequently influenced by the way cultural languages are cultivated in a given timespace, i.e. by culture's functioning as a system of education. For explaining the aspects of transmediality and autocommunicativity within a given textual example, an analysis of an educational transmedia project "Inanimate Alice" is provided. The paper thus explicates the movement between old cultural experience and new technological environment corresponding to the dynamics between the implicit and explicit forms of transmediality in culture. Prof. Peeter Torop contributed to this paper with explicating the historical roots of the Lotmanian notion of autocommunication.

I. TRANSMEDIA STORYTELLING

Transmedia storytelling is hereby regarded as a relatively new conscious strategy of narrative communication that usually harnesses some new media technologies[4]. The most fruitful reflections on the phenomenon have come from the media studies perspective, which is also informed of the marketing aspect. In this discourse, the processes of creating and mediating meaning are most often described and conceptualised in terms of transferring "content" across "platforms". Thus, the term "crossmedia" (or "cross-platform") is used as an umbrella concept comprising that of "transmedia" (see Ibrus and Scolari 2012: 7, Evans 2011: 14).

The key author in the transmedia storytelling paradigm has so far been media scholar Henry Jenkins. His main work in the field is the monograph "Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide" (2006) in which chapter III "Searching for the Origami Unicorn: The Matrix and Transmedia Storytelling" is dedicated to outlining the innovative phenomenon. Three years prior to the book, in a column published in MIT Technology Review, Jenkins proposed the term to describe what he then saw as the "future of entertainment", enabling "a more complex, more sophisticated, more rewarding mode of narrative to emerge within the constraints of commercial entertainment." (2003, online) His widely recited definition is the following:

> A transmedia story unfolds across multiple media platforms, with each new text making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole. In the ideal form of transmedia storytelling, each medium does what it does best – so that a story might be introduced in a film, expanded through television, novels, and comics; its world might be explored through game play or experienced as an amusement park attraction. (2006: 97–98)

This somewhat descriptive and pragmatic specification was first introduced in the column, later repeated in the book, whereas over the course of subsequent discussions, it has been slightly loosened. Especially in his blog posts (Jenkins 2007, 2009a, 2009b, 2011), Jenkins has been repositioning the defined limits of the phenomenon. The initial requirement, echoing franchise economics, was that every segment of the narrative whole should function as an autonomous whole, the understanding and consumption of which would not be conditioned by other segments. In his blog posts Jenkins has questioned this requirement, valuing integrity of the whole experience over the marketability of individual pieces. Also, he has stressed the processual aspect of transmedia storytelling by

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[4]   Among the more well-known examples of transmedia storytelling projects have so far been: "Star Wars, "The Blair Witch Project", "The Matrix", "Lost", "24", "Heroes", "The Truth About Marika", "The Hunger Games", "Glee", "District 9", "Conspiracy for Good", "Game of Thrones", "Pandemic 1.0".

describing it in terms of a new dynamics of telling a story rather than a new type of product in the market of storytelling. In line with this, Jenkins's student Geoffrey Long has proposed in his thesis that: "[t]he term "transmedia" should be considered an adjective, not a noun" (Long 2007: 32).

1.1. Aspects of production

The media of transmedia storytelling are not limited, nor specified, but television, videogames, comics and online social media platforms are perhaps the ones most often employed. First of these, television or more precisely television drama (see Evans 2008, 2011, Perryman 2008, Scolari 2009, 2013b, Clarke 2013) seems to be a natural arena for transmedia storytelling due to seriality and the practice of segmentation of content into episodes. Integrating other media to be a part of the overall experience has in some rare cases served the function of deepening audience participation even on the level of fabula of the TV episodes or of a given storyline. However, usually these efforts end up with a coloring-book mode and their value is most commonly mapping the timespace of the storyworld and expanding the storyworld by means of mini-episodes (e.g. "tardisodes" of "Doctor Who", mobisodes of "Lost", webisodes of "Monk" etc.). These episodes could provide the background story of certain events, another character's perspective on the events as well as mediate events that happen between broadcasted episodes.

Secondly, videogames (e.g. Klastrup and Tosca 2004, Aarseth 2006; several case-studies in Harrigan and Wardrip-Fruin 2009; Jane McGonigal's "ubi-quitous gaming" in McGonigal 2006) have been employed in transmedia story-telling projects mostly for their multi-level structure and reader's more active or more direct engagement with the story.

Thirdly, another medium that implies seriality and is thus congenial with the practice of transmedia storytelling is comics (e.g. Herman 2011; Weaver 2013) – a multimodal form of storytelling, which constantly balances discrete frames and continuity of the over-arching story. Comics is also the textual practice from which have emerged some of the earlier and most widely known crossmedia elements which mostly rely on the stories' protagonists, the (super)heroes. Another aspect of comics relevant to transmedia practices is the relationship of word and image and the collaboration between writer and illustrator, which is more essential and more strongly integrated than in the case of simply illustrated storybooks.

In an obvious addition, the medium or metamedium of Internet is in one way or another included in most transmedia stories through social networking sites or other platforms of facilitating interaction and collective experience. A computer with Internet access not only provides technological means for participation at unprecedented scale, but it is a naturally hypertextual, hyperlinked environment – again keywords congenial with the core of transmedia storytelling.

It should perhaps be added that in the transmedia context, unlike intermedia *a la* Higgins, the question of medium specificity remains in the core. The material outcome is not some sort of hybrid or creole medium, but each medium retains its own specificity even though in some instances elements of inter-mediality may be detected and many theoretical underpinnings of intermedia studies are relevant for studying and creating transmedia as well.

The sequence in which the chosen media should be switched into the transmedia whole is not constituted either. In some cases all content of diverse platforms can be simultaneously available at once, in others, various schedules are chosen to ensure the integrity of the overall experience. More important than the number or nature of the storytelling media is their mutual coherence in a given instance, logical and smooth transfers of elements between different subtexts as well as recurrence of key elements in all modes. Thus, it has been quite generally agreed that transmedia storytelling is a practice that is more concerned with world building than with and actual story or a single narrative element (e.g. a character or else) (see Saldre, Torop 2012). The aim of a transmedia storyteller is to create a fictional world from which a nonlimited number of stories might potentially occur. This brings along another oppor-tunity that has become relatively characteristic to the practice – playing with the boundary between fiction and nonfiction or art and life. This often happens by means of engaging audiences of a fictional story into physical activities in their everyday surroundings (including virtual environments such as Facebook, YouTube, mobile communications etc.). Making, for instance, a seemingly incidental street café a part of the meaning-making process gives interesting material for analysing the internal and external relations of artistic texts (see Lotman 1977: 135).

Keywords such as "franchise", "media markets and industries", "content provision strategies", "licensing" etc. are a natural and inherent part of the dis-course on transmedia storytelling and the context of commercialism is also where the roots of academic use of the notion of transmedia lie. Marsha Kinder (1991) dissected some hugely successful projects ("Muppet Babies", "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles") originating from TV series and comic books in 1980s by applying her concept of "transmedia intertextuality". This was based on the works of Bahtin, Kristeva and Piaget and the author regarded it as a "powerful strategy for survival" (1991: 39). Kinder called those TV cartoon series that evolved into video games, films, comic books, toys and other commodities "transmedia supersystem[s] of mass entertainment" (Ibid., 122–123). Such supersystems are generally built around a (hero) figure or group of figures from pop culture and:

> must cut across several modes of image production; must appeal to diverse generations, classes, and ethnic subcultures, who in turn are targeted with diverse strategies; must foster "collectability" through a proliferation of related products; and must undergo a sudden increase in commodification, the success of which

reflexively becomes a "media event" that dramatically accelerates the growth curve of the system's commercial success. (Ibid., 123)

Thus, Kinder's aim was to explain the creation of what in the '80s was regarded as a new type of audience[5] – children who are simultaneously consumers of licensed (collectable) merchandise related to the initial mass-media-spread story. Kinder exhaustively explained how the "turtilized" products "from lunch boxes and bubble bath to a talking Turtle toothbrush" (Botwinick 1989 cited in Kinder 1991: 122) have served the long-term and deep-engaging popularity of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles franchise. However, she did not really elaborate on the notion itself and used the more common terms of spin-off and tie-in for the subparts of the supersystems.

Such type of secondary or in some cases tertiary (i.e. created by audience) texts function in the favor of promoting the primary text or opening up new revenue streams through merchandisable products. Thus, not poetic widening but commercial promoting a central story in a single medium was the key function of these transmedial franchises. This was arguably also the first pro-proposition of the generation of sequels and prequels and other extensions of some stories in 1980s, most notable of which is definitely the "expanded universe" of George Lucas's "Star Wars". Even though many texts in the field keep commercially driven arguments in the core, by now, the attention of people exploring the opportunities of transmedia has turned from establishing financially profitable links between stories and marketing commodities to poetic coherence of the narrative wholes. The idea of separate phases is echoed in Evans's definition:

> Unlike earlier multi-platform expansions of television texts via merchandise, adaptations and spin-offs, transmedia storytelling is defined by a combination of narrative, author and temporal coherence. They are developed, constructed and released intentionally as a whole narrative unit. (Evans 2011: 38)

Jenkins as well has stressed the definitive difference of contemporary transmedia storytelling from the redundancy of earlier franchise economics, regarding transmedia as an enriching practice: "a more integrated approach to franchise development than models based on urtexts and ancillary products." (Jenkins

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[5]   Meanwhile, in the field of marketing, cross-media branding has been a long-known strategy for better results. The example of advertising for Eskimo pie tied to the very popular silent documentary „Nanook of the North" in 1920s is an often referred-to early instance of such practices and of mutual influences between the storytelling and marketing industries. This brings along rather specific topics of legal issues and financial power struggles between different parties owning a share of a given project (see e.g. Rodríguez-Amat and Sarikakis 2012, Bechmann 2012: 902–904, Ibrus 2012: 234–236.)

2009a) Nowadays, those "ancillary" products are growingly turning into creative elements of the story.

Still, transmedial practices often mean blurring the line between story proper and its marketing as the goal of transmedia strategies might often be drawing audiences of one medium to another, attracting a readership as wide as possible. Due to this, it's not just experimenting by content-creators, but adjusting to new logics of reading in the contemporary weblike, hyperlinked and non-linear media environment. Convergence culture, the technological convergence and convergence of communication networks and platforms, has brought along new types of communicative strategies and new ways of telling stories as well as receiving the stories. The new reception practices have been studied in the context of convergence culture implying again a lift of boundaries between author/producer and audience.

1.2. Aspects of reception

It may be considered quite likely that kids who haven grown up used to their favorite books being adapted to cinema and computer screen, to toys and other commodities, are going to expect comparable practices to be executed on the stories they read for entertainment as adults. This is not only about being consumers, but the key is being used to reading across platforms, about being transliterate. And the latter is something that cannot be avoided in the contemporary mediasphere, where platforms are constantly multiplying and proliferating. Jenkins has tried to comment on this innovative phase relating it to what he calls vernacular culture (2006: 334) and to the oldest practices of human storytelling, conjuring up images of patchwork and hunters-and-gatherer's societies. He even sees in transmedia storytelling a potential for triggering a more democratic society through citizens' active participation in meaning-making practices that transmedia stories usually involve: "Like the older folk culture of quilting bees and barn dances, this new vernacular culture encourages broad participation, grassroots creativity, and a bartering or gift economy" (Jenkins 2006: 136). Even though those parallels can be questioned, it is clear that today's media environment, especially through channels of social media, has made various forms of self-expression more easily available to anyone. What have made the so called convergence and participation cultures possible are precisely the technological means (especially affordable computer-based connectivity, multiple-user software etc.) for convergence and participation. In this context, self-expression happens mostly in reflexive forms as remix practices that also take a growing part in the expansion of popular fictional worlds.

To describe the changing relation of author and audience, terms such as "productive consumption" (Bolin 2005, 2012) "produsage" (Bruns 2007, 2008), and also "prosumption" (Ritzer and Jurgenson 2010, Ritzer 2014) have been

used, referring to readers as active participants in the dialogic process of textual creation. In other words, the classic linear top-down communication model of experts and centralised industry versus individuals who participate only on a mental, interpretative level is being reconceptualised. Within this space of creative consumption, reading is inevitably accompanied by writing, redaction (Hartley 2008: 26) and remixing. The users could thus be regarded as the triggers of innovation.

Another new aspect of reception is the growing trend of collective reading. Not only franchise-like projects depend on sociability and shareability between consumers, but often the buzzlesolving type of transmedia projects rely on user's collaboration and social interaction. Jenkins has explained it using Pierre Lévy's term "collective intelligence". These two aspects – creative and collective reading – together characterise "participatory culture" (see also Burgess and Green 2009). With the help of educational system, participatory culture potentially really could imply a new form of citizen identity, i.e. active and participatory citizenship: from DIY citizenship (Hartley 1999: 179) to DIWO [do it with others] citizenship (2012: 144–145) in Hartley's terms.

The cultural context of participating in contemporary transmedia projects is also characterised by the notion of convergence (Jenkins 2004, 2006) which is commonly accompanied by that of divergence. Convergence happens on several levels – from that of technology, the form of stories to the content of stories and to the practices of creation and consumption on a more general level[6]. This new cultural context of convergence in unprecedented scale and its relation to innovation are the reason why there is a desire to draw a concrete line between contemporary "pure" transmedia creations and earlier transmedial phenomena such as the pop culture franchises of 1980s, but also the Bible, "Wizard Oz", the fan art practices and fan communities filling in gaps in the prototext since at least 1930ies etc. (see further explanations for the distinction in Dena 2009: 317). A cultural semiotic background for the convergence processes on the level of reception is manifested in Lotman's distinction between five socio-communicative functions of a text. These include communication between sender and receiver, communication between readers and cultural tradition, reader's communication with oneself, reader's communication with the text, and communication between the text and cultural context (Lotman 1991: 276–278). The article was Lotman's reaction to Umberto Eco's notions of decoding and extra-coding (i.e. overcoding and undercoding) (Eco 1979: 129–139) and describes the different (albeit complementary) communicative ways a single text circulates in semiosphere. This way the paper implicitly already includes the idea of transmediality.

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[6] See several papers, e.g., by Bolin, by Bechmann Petersen, and especially by Fagerjord and Storsul distinguishing between parameters of convergence in Storsul and Stuedahl (2007).

1.3. Aspects of self-description

An important characteristic of transmedia storytelling is the fact that the concept is still so emergent that books are almost outdated at their publication. That is why a lot of conceptualisation in the field is done online, especially in the blogosphere and even scientific articles use blog posts as reference material (see e.g. Scolari 2013b). Lack of temporal distance also means that the spheres of theory and practice are intertwined: the practitioners of transmedia storytelling are looking for the language of self-description themselves (see e.g. Simon Staffans 2011, 2013a, 2013b, 2015) and theorists take in the word of practitioners (e.g. chapter one of Scolari's overview book "*Narrativas Transmedia: Cuando Todos Los Medios Cuentan*" (2013a) relies not only on Jenkins's definition but involves also the viewpoint of pioneering transmedia producer Jeff Gomez). A tendency of such an early phase of self-description is using conceptual metaphors, for example spatial metaphors as explained in Article III of the present thesis.

Henry Jenkins for one is a frequent blogger and some of his perspectives on transmedia have been developed precisely on his *Confessions of an Aca-Fan*[7] blog, where he posts videos of his talks, interviews with both the creators (designers, producers, scriptwriters etc.) of projects of the entertainment world and the media scholars who analyse them. This is also the main channel through which Jenkins has attained undeniable influence, and his ideas have been and continue to be an inspiration for a wide network of theorists and practitioners. Even though his posts usually revolve around empirical examples and seldom strive for comprehensive conceptualising, there still are instances where he aims at theoretical generalisations (Jenkins 2007, 2009a, 2011). A characteristic discussion on the boundaries of the phenomenon took place between Jenkins and film scholar David Bordwell in 2009 (Bordwell 2009, Jenkins 2009b). Platforms such as blogs[8], Twitter posts, Facebook communities and comment threads[9], non-academic conferences[10] and the videos of the talks distributed online, are an intrinsic space of dialogue on a constantly innovating subject. However, the process of more traditional institutionalisation of the field saw a landmark in 2010 when transmedia producer was accepted as a job title into the Producers Guild of America. Also, first metalevel reports and reflections on the current state of affairs (e.g. a typology of transmedia projects in Pratten 2011: 14; a distinction between East Coast and West Coast schools of transmedia

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[7]   Aca-Fan refers to the blurry line between an academic researcher and a fan of media texts.

[8]   E.g. henryjenkins.org, deusexmachinatio.com, www.simonstaffans.com, thepixelreport.org, tsstoryteller.com/blog, http://www.scoop.it/t/transmedia-storytelling-for-the-digital-age/, http://www.scoop.it/t/transmediascoop.

[9]   E.g. in 2011 Clark started an active conversation on the problems of creative control, business rights etc. (http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=10150246236508993).

[10]   E.g. TEDxTransmedia, Power to the Pixel Conferences, FMX = Film and Media Exchange.

storytelling in US in Clark 2011; a report on the impact of multiplatforming in UK public service broadcasting by Bennett et al 2012, etc.), an ample choice of handbooks from different angles for practitioners (Miller 2004, Davidson 2010, Alexander 2011, Bernardo 2011, 2014, Pratten 2011, Phillips 2012) as well as for analysts (Gambarato 2013) and even an interactive tool for transmedia storytelling named conducttr (http://www.tstoryteller.com/how-it-works) have been compiled and published.

Amongst academic transmedia storytelling research based on semiotic approaches, two authors have stood out: Carlos Scolari and Christy Dena. In 2009, Scolari (2009: 587) described the transmedial textual processes as "one of the most important sources of complexity in contemporary popular culture." Scolari defines transmedia storytelling as: "a particular narrative structure that expands through both different languages (verbal, iconic, etc.) and media (cinema, comics, video games, etc.)" (Ibid., 587). Later, however, he also has broadened his understanding of the phenomenon, most notably perhaps from excluding to including adaptations (Scolari 2012: 54–55). Scolari has analysed transmedia storytelling projects such as "24" (2009) and "Lost" (2013). In the first case he aimed at applying Umberto Eco's concept of "implicit reader" and Juri Lotman's term of "primary modeling system" (however, considering not language, but narrative as the primary one) for explaining the fictional world of the espionage series "24". In the second case he applies the four classical rhetorical operations and narratological categories of time, space and character in order to provide a taxonomy of expression and compression strategies used in the adventure drama "Lost". He concludes the first article stating that: "a combination of narratology and semiotics is very helpful for creating analytical models of these new narrative experiences." (2009: 601). Christy Dena authors the first PhD thesis (2009) in the subject field. She applied a transdisciplinary approach to delimit and present ways to study what she called "transmedia practice", referring to "the employment of distinct media (and environments) for creative expression." (Dena 2009: 4).

All in all, while in 2003, Jenkins described transmedia storytelling as the future of entertainment, by now it has become a norm and in some contexts, especially in UK, even a requirement (Thompson 2006, Evans 2011, Bennett et al 2012).

2. TRANSMEDIAL NARRATOLOGY

Several authors of the contemporary narrative studies (Herman 2004, Ryan 2005, Wolf 2003) have started off or concluded their papers by stressing that the initial impulse of narratology was transmedial. This idea is also repeated under a number of entries of the "Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory" (RENT) (see *sub* Intermediality, Media and narrative, Music and narrative, Pictorial narrativity, Structuralist narratology). A narrative is thereby not a literary or even a verbal phenomenon but a mental conception simultaneously characterised by discrete and continuous qualities, both verbal and visual elements etc. Consequently, there are countless "forms" and "vehicles" of narrative in a variety of "media" and "substances" (Barthes 1975 [1966]: 237), and narratology is entitled to study all of them.

2.1. The perspectives of cognitive narratology and David Herman

However, the term "transmedial narratology" was adopted in the context of postclassical narratology as opposed to classical structuralist approaches to stories. Such turn was proposed by David Herman (1997, 1999) referring to the broadening of narratological perspectives to "new questions about (the relations between) narrative structure, its verbal, visual or more broadly semiotic realization, and the contexts in which it is produced and interpreted" (1999: 9). Developing Herman's argument, Ansgar Nünning designated eight categories of new directions in narratological research: 1. Contextualist, Thematic and Ideological Approaches: Applications of Narratology in Literary Studies; 2. Transgeneric and Transmedial Applications and Elaborations of Narratology; 3. Pragmatic and Rhetorical Kinds of Narratology; 4. Cognitive and Reception-theory-oriented Kinds of ('Meta'-) Narratology; 5. Postmodern and Post-structuralist Deconstructions of (classical) Narratology; 6. Linguistic Approaches/ Contributions to Narratology; 7. Philosophical Narrative Theories; and 8. Other interdisciplinary Narrative Theories (2003: 249–251). Under the second label Nünning lists scholars venturing into studies of narrativity in different non-verbal media (drama, poetry, film, music, visual arts) and expresses hope that: "taking the media of manifestation of narrative and their different semiotic and expressive possibilities into account will exceed mere application and that it may well lead to a significant rethinking of the domain and concepts of narratology" (Ibid., 251–252).

A year later, in 2004, Herman's seminal paper "Toward a transmedial narratology" was published. Herman starts the discussion by marking off the irony of earliest narratologists (Barthes, Genette, Greimas, Todorov) using only literature as their corpus, even though one of the founding texts of the discipline was Propp's treatment of oral folktales. So, the research project of narratology

was programmatically transmedial, whereas the empirical material remained monomedial, leaving the generalisability of the results questionable. Thus, in reality, research into conversational and literary as well as other types of narratives remained (for a long time) distinct disciplinary traditions. Herman regards transmedial narratology as "an organic outgrowth of the continuing reflection on issues of methodology – in particular, the fit between corpus and theory – that constitutes a basic part of research in the field." (2013: 107)

As the general problem for the 2004 article, Herman proposes the following: "What are the relations between narrative and its media." (2004: 49) A later version of the broader research question is: "how the process of remediation plays out in a given instance, given the constraints and affordances of the media involved." (2011: 160). In addition, he also posits a research hypothesis: "although narratives in different media exploit a common stock of narrative design principles, they exploit them in different, media-specific ways, or, rather, in a certain *range* of ways determined by the properties of each medium." (2004: 51).

Herman approaches his research question via three theses rooted in previous narratological research. The first of these relies on the standpoint found in structuralist approaches by Bremond, earlier Rimmon-Kenan, Barthes and Prince, insisting that certain key aspects of narratives, especially the *fabula* or story level of a narrative, are medium independent. The antithesis of this holds radical and definitive dependence of narrative on its medium, which implies talking not about different medial versions of one story, but about separate stories. Examples of this can be brought from the later works of Rimmon-Kenan as well as conversation-analytic, linguistic, and ethnomethodological traditions. Thirdly, Herman insists that in most cases stories have "gists" (Ibid., 54) that are fairly persistent through most transformations (i.e. recognizable after intersemiotic translation). Thus, the synthesis is formulated in the following way: "differences between narrative media are gradient (more or less) rather than binary (either...or)" and therefore, "the operative assumption is that the semiotic properties of the source and target media determine how fully a story told in one format can be recast in another" (2013: 107–108). In other words, transmedial narratology: "stresses the story-shaping (i.e., both constraining and enabling) power of semiotic media vis-à-vis the use of heuristics for narrative comprehension" (Ibid., 124). Such standpoint is held for example in the works of Deborah Tannen and Monika Fludernik. In conclusion, the synthesis is clear, albeit insufficient on its own – a methodological program is needed for researching the particular aspects etc.

Within the given paper Herman's contribution to developing such program is a study of two tales on shape-shifting: Franz Kafka's "The Metamorphosis" and an oral conversational retelling of a story recorded in the context of a socio-linguistic interview. Herman comparatively discusses the story logic of each applying five sets of coding strategies or design principles of the two story-worlds: processes and participants; states, events, actions; temporal ordering;

spatial configuration, and deictic reference. Later, the author has contributed both empirical and theoretical takes in the field (2009, 2010a, 2010b, 2011, 2013). Notably, he compares artistic and nonartistic narratives, while his continuing field of interest is the nexus of narratology and cognitive sciences.

Within the current thesis, papers 1 and 4 are following the approach of transmedial narratology. One of them (Saldre 2010) studies purely fictional narratives, a novel and its adaptations to theatre and film, and the other one (Ojamaa 2013) treats texts that mediate a historical event in the sign systems of literature, film and painting. In both of the articles the motif of seashore is chosen as the main empirical gist and the papers explicate its variative or medium-specific aspects and invariant aspects that can be traced in each of the three texts. At the same time it has to be remembered that one thing is the specificity of medium's affordances and constraints, and slightly another one is the semiotic environment of the medium as a whole (e.g. the system of theatre in a given culture). The latter affects both the creation and reception of texts as meaning-making does not happen only within the frames of individual texts but is always shaped by a larger cultural context embracing also different kinds of textual communication including meta-, in-, inter- and extratextual translations (Torop 2000: 72). For example, it is often difficult to draw a line in one's memory between the aspects of a story that originate in a literary text and the ones that were introduced in its cinematic adaptation. Furthermore, several meanings that can be attributed to a story can originate in diverse kinds of marketing materials (posters, ads, trailers, but also cover images, title itself etc.) preceding the reading of the story itself. This is in turn related to the emergent research on nanotextology (see Hampson 2007: 140–142).

Via the logics of textuality, one of the earlier authors whose works are relevant for the research in transmedial narratology, is Gérard Genette with his concept of transtextuality (1992 [1979], 1997a [1982], and 1997b [1987]). This embraces: "*textual transcendence*–namely, everything that brings [a text] into relation (manifest or hidden) with other texts" (1992 [1979]: 81) and comprises five subcategories: intertextuality, paratextuality, metatextuality, hypertextuality and architextuality (1997b [1987]:1–7)[11]. A narratological concept that is developed from Genette's understanding of hypertextuality, is "transfictionality", whereby: "Two (or more) texts […] share elements such as characters, imaginary locations, or fictional worlds." (RENT *sub* Transfictionality) The other sources for the concept are Doležel's explications on "postmodern rewrites" in the context of which he defers that "fictional worlds gain a semiotic existence independent of the constructing texture; they thereby become objects of the active, evolving, and recycling cultural memory." (1998: 202)

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[11] It is perhaps important to notice here, that the Genettean terms belong to a specific terminological field and their usage might not always concur with the terms of the semiotics of culture. For example, the cultural semiotic concept of "metatext" stems from the notion of metacommunication.

In short, the basic mechanism that transmediality is found upon, is inter-textual relation in the broadest sense, and as this relationship is essentially established between texts of at least two different media or languages, we can add intersemiotic translation as the basic operation that all transmedia texts involve. Jakobson's concept of intersemiotic translation (1971 [1959]) is thus one of the most useful tools for analyzing transmedia texts. In methodological terms, this implies defining a unit of analysis and comparatively tracing its shifts (or transmutations) between different media. The result would be a better understanding of the core of the story (that remains invariant in all media) as well as of the specific modelling practices of the storytelling media.

2.2. The perspectives of interart and intermedia studies and Werner Wolf

There is another thread of transmedial narratology with a different focus and almost no cross-referencing with Herman's line of thought. Werner Wolf, perhaps the main author in the paradigm, equates transmediality with medium-independence (Wolf 2004, RENT *sub* Intermediality, Pictorial narrativity). His approach leans on Irina Rajewsky's PhD thesis on intermediality (see Rajewsky 2003). This thread focuses on more general narratological categories "available and realizable *across* media borders" (Rajewsky 2005: 46). Initially, Wolf locates such categories on three levels: e.g. ahistorical formal devices (motivic repetition, thematic variation), characteristic historical traits (e.g. pathetic expressivity of 18th century sensibility) and archetypal subject matters on content level (Wolf 2002: 18–19). Further examples of the broad scope of such transmediality can be brought from the titles of the book series "Studies in Intermediality" in which Wolf authors introductory articles of each volume, opening the transmedial nature of the categories of frames and framing (2006), description (2007), metareference (2009), and immersion and distance (2013). At the same time, "narrative" and "narrativity" should also be regarded as trans-medial, i.e. applicable regardless of the medium. For instance, Wolf 2002 is an explanation of their usage in the context of art history, while in Wolf 2011, there is a discussion on the narrative potential of a sculpture and the plastic arts etc.. One could also add to the above-mentioned transmedial categories Bahtin's concept of chronotope (timespace) (2004 [1937–1938]), which has been both conceptually and methodologically opened by Torop (1999: 135) within cultural semiotic paradigm. All these transmedial narratological categories can also be regarded as nodal points for the creation of originally transmedial texts.

Wolf's main area of interest, though, has been the domain of music (see *sub* Music and narrative), often considered as a nonnarrative art form[12]. The context where he first uses the term "transmedial" is what is sometimes called interart studies, within which Wolf concentrates on the relations between music and other arts (Wolf 1999). His own references for the term (see 1999: 42) include Eric Vos (1997) who aims at integrating the work of Leo H. Hoek (2002 [1995]) and once again of Clüver (2009 [1992]) in systematising the terminology of the relations of media texts, and musicologist Siglind Bruhn (1999) who by applying the term "transmedialization" has studied the representation of literature (and later also visual arts) in music. The central theoretical approach of Wolf's abundance of publications is characterised by the keyword of "metaization", i.e. "the movement from a first cognitive or communicative level to a higher one on which the first-level thoughts and utterances, and above all the means and media used for such utterances, self-reflexively become objects of reflection and communication" (Wolf 2009: 3). From the cultural semiotic viewpoint, Popovič's theory of metatext (see Popovič 1976) would be a systematic addition for such approach.

As indicated, Rajewsky and Wolf regard transmediality as a subcategory of intermediality, more precisely as a variant of extracompositional intermediality, referring to: "transgression of boundaries between conventionally distinct media of communication" that occurs "as a consequence of relations or comparisons between different works or semiotic complexes" and concerns "phenomena that are not specific to individual media" (Wolf 2002: 17–18). It should also be noted that transmediality is here discerned from intermedial transposition. In the latter case it is possible to distinguish between the source (text, medium, genre) and the target, whereas in the former case, tracking such transfers is either impossible or irrelevant. Wolf's overarching project is "cognitive and proto-typical reconceptualisation [that] opens narratology to a transmedial application of its findings without right from the start excluding what might seem to be non- or less narrative" (2011: 165).

The adjective transmedial as referring to events and other phenomena whose "representation is not tied to one specific medium" (Erll 2008: 392) is also used in the paradigm of cultural memory studies. Most notably perhaps by Ann Rigney within her concept of "transmedial recursivity" (2005: 21), explaining how: "[t]he 'working memory' of a particular culture [is] the result of *various* cultural activities that feed into, repeat and reinforce each other" (Ibid., 20). The processes of creative repetition in cultural memory take us to the cultural semiotic issues of transmediality.

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[12]   Interest in its potentially narrative qualities is growing however. It is exemplified by the field of word and music studies and a journal of the same title, within the covers of which the term transmedial is not uncommon.

3. TRANSMEDIALITY OF CULTURE

The phenomenon of transmedia storytelling as an innovative storytelling practice making use of new technologies and the approach of transmedial narratology to all kinds of stories since the earliest instances, may at first seem like two different concepts. Nevertheless, there is still a common thread running through all the papers of the current thesis. That is the cultural semiotic thought of Juri Lotman. Indeed, meaning creation in different albeit mutually related sign systems is as old as human culture and therefore its constitutive characteristic.

In addition, not only does Lotman's theory and language of description contribute to the understanding of transmediality, but new meaning making practices can also underline Lotman's own continuing innovativeness and shed new light on his ideas, several of which seem to have only by now met perfectly compatible empirical evidence (see also Ibrus and Torop 2015). Semiotics of culture helps to bring transmediality into a wider context. For example, the question of the relations and the possibility of intersemiotic translation between visual and verbal sign systems is not only the problem of textual creation but concerns culture as a whole. Thus, transmediality does not describe only texts or textual systems like initially transmedial "Matrix" or "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" extended into a transmedial story after initial success in a single medium, nor the Bible or Greek mythology and not even solely narrative enterprises, but is a general mechanism of culture as such.

3.1. Aspects of text and semiosphere

Transmedial stories vividly explicate the isomorphism of text and semiosphere. One of the main features that the two have in common is simultaneously unifying and separating boundary that the systems are surrounded by externally and criss-crossed with internally. When Lotman writes about semiosphere's internal space which is: "at the same time unequal yet unified, asymmetrical yet uniform. Composed as it is of conflicting structures, it none the less is also marked by individuation" (2001: 131), it also applies to transmedia texts composed of sign systems of diverse material and organized by conflicting principles, yet mediating a coherent story(world), i.e. evolving without loosing one's identity (Lotman: 2009). Also, "there is a constant exchange, a search for a common language, a *koine*, and of creolized semiotic systems come into being" (2001: 142) similarly over the boundaries of semiosphere and the systems of transmedia texts. Consequently, while every language needs to draw separating boundaries to define its individual identity, its medium-specificity, the opposite process, a centrifugal search for elements of transfer is equally active in cultural communication. Transmedia texts offer eloquent material for analysing these two simultaneous processes, especially tellingly in the per-spective of comparative case studies.

Being composed of subtexts of diverse material, transmedia stories open up new questions about the textual boundaries. Whereas a frame is a defining characteristic of a text (Lotman 1977 [1970]: 214) providing its compositional integrity and meaning by distinct opening and closing, in the cases of transmedia texts it is not always evident, where they begin and end. This is due to the particular relationship of part and whole and the functioning mechanism of dialogue between medium specific parts and a mental whole. This again renders explicit the description of textual ontology on the level of culture provided in the *Theses*: "on different levels the same message may appear as a text, part of a text, or an entire set of texts." (Lotman et al 2013 [1973]: 58). A similar thought is expressed in the article on the semiosphere whereby:

> [c]ertain parts of the semiosphere may at different levels of self-description form either a semiotic unity, a semiotic continuum, demarcated by a single boundary; or a group of enclosed spaces, marked off as discrete areas by the boundaries between them; or, finally, part of a more general space, one side of which is demarcated by a fragment of a boundary, while the other is open. (2005: 138)

Thus, depending on the viewpoint, a movie might function as an autonomous message with all the characteristics of a whole text, a sequence of audiovisual messages as well as a part of a transmedial message. Dialogue between these levels is facilitated by an isomorphic relationship between the parts and the whole as it is possible to discern an invariant or a core that is repeated in all of the subtexts with their medium-specific means. Evidently, a transmedial text (as any text in culture) is a structure as well as a process conditioned by the reservoir of meaningful growth immanent in any culture text, realising itself in contacts with other texts, texts from another semiosphere or another chronological layer of culture. Addition of a new text into the system reinterprets and transforms the previous whole which in turn appears as a part. Among others, this raises a question about the nature of a seemingly simple phenomenon – cinematic adaptation of previous literary texts (see paper II of this thesis).

Such particular communicational dynamics is why Peeter Torop has defined transmediality as the mental aspect of text's existence in culture (Sütiste, Torop 2007:203, Torop 2008: 725). All the different medial versions of a text, however distant from each other in time, form a mental whole in the cultural (as well as individual) memory. This mental text is not an occasional sum of its parts, but possesses an internal hierarchy which is in accordance with the hierarchy of sign systems in the culture. The concept of mental text as used in the papers of the current thesis bears similarity to Manfred Jahn's cognitive narratological "internal narratives" (see Jahn 2003) and has also been used in the sphere of folkloristics where the occurrence of variants is practically a definitive characteristics of the research object (e.g. Honko 2000). In fact, Herman in his approach to transmedial narratology as well has drawn inspiration from the latter field (see Herman 2004, 2011).

3.2. Aspects of translation and innovation

The second central characteristic of a text besides the frame is its internal structural heterogeneity which ensures the text's creative function (1994: 377). More broadly, the idea of an irreducible (dialogical) diversity of languages of communication can also be traced back to Bahtin's notion of heteroglossia. Even though introduced (Bahtin 2004 [1934–1935]) for describing the functioning of verbal (artistic) language, the concept of centripetal and centrifugal forces simultaneously at play within any seemingly unitary language (Ibid., 270–273) is fruitfully applicable also in the context of transmediality. An important moment from the perspective of semiotics is the assumption that every medium-specific part of the transmedial whole is on another level a multi-lingual whole itself. In other words, the potential dialogue between subtexts is facilitated by the inner polyglotism of any text. Thus, as an analyst of the language of transmedia in any paradigm, one needs to acknowledge the elements of discreteness in texts of continuous languages and vice versa. These are the elements of transfer that enable translation between principally different languages (e.g. from verbal to visual languages). As an argument for the growing visual and multimedial dominant of literacy of the contemporary society, Kress (2003, 2004) brings the example of the computer screen that is almost already more ubiquitous than a page of a book. When the content is the same, a page and a screen might seem equivalent at first glance. However, the process of reading and along with it the mechanisms of meaning creation bear a fundamentally different logic on each. While a book page is structured according to writing, which means succession of discrete elements in time, the screen is structured as an image, bearing a spatial logic of simultaneity (Kress 2003: 9, 2004: 446). So, Kress defers, "[t]he world narrated' is a different world to 'the world depicted and displayed' (2003: 2), thereby echoing Goodman's distinction between description and depiction (Goodman 1976 [1968]: 40–43). In general, of course, one can not overcome the other and these two modes are complimentary, but in each individual case, it is a question of dominant. While, as referred earlier, the dominant sign systems of today's communication processes are visual or multimodal (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001: 1).

Another perspective on the changes of the communicative environment is provided by the Dutch scholar Barend van Heusden (2007) who insists that not only is the amount of visual information augmenting, but we are just as well increasingly exposed to diverse kinds of sounds, noises, tastes, smells and bodily experiences and thus, all of our senses are undergoing meaningful changes and the direction of these is toward growing concreteness. This can be exemplified also by storytelling practices inherent to 3D and 4D cinemas etc. Talking about sensory elements, there is of course W.J.T. Mitchell's claim that all media are 'mixed media' (2005: 257) and that "the very notion of a medium and of mediation already entails some mixture of sensory, perceptual and semiotic elements" (Ibid., 260). Painting that is traditionally considered a visual medium

always involves the aspect of touch on the canvas by brush and by paint and both its creation and reception processes are directed by some sort of verbal component, be it a story, a theory or else, even in the most abstract cases[13]. At the same time, written text always entails a visual aspect of the size, font, color etc. of the letters and its composition on the page, whereas on the level of interpretation, reading words creates mental images. So, a reader (in the widest sense of the term) always integrates perceptual information from a plurality of semiotic channels into a mental whole. Thus, a reader in culture and culture as a reader are always necessarily polyglot.

Approaches that withdraw from drawing strict separating boundaries between media are certainly not tied to the studies of transmediality only, but rather stem from Dick Higgins' (2001) explication of intermedia and are commonplace in the fields of intermedia studies and interarts studies today (see for example Arvidson et al 2007, esp. Clüver 2007; Elleström 2010). Quite logically, thus, also the studies of ekphrasis may prove as a fruitful source also for under-standing transmedia. Traditionally, the notion of ekphrasis denotes a rhetorical device implying verbal representation/description of a (previously existing or imagined) visual representation (e.g. Mitchell 1989, 1992; Klarer 1999, Heffernan 2004, Steiner 1989), but there are instances of broadening the term into other (nonverbal) art fields, such as film (Eidt 2008) and music (Bruhn 2000, 2001). In fact, Bruhn considers musical ekphrasis as the product or end result of the process that she calls "transmedialization". Even though she does not reflect on the concept further in theoretical terms, one of her indirect source authors is Roman Jakobson, again with his concept of intersemiotic translation.

Intersemiotic translation is the building principle of transmedia. In the transmedia storytelling practice there is usually a verbalised or verbalisable story and often also a story bible (i.e. a text type that ensures the integrity of the storyworld used both for pitching the project and for reference in the design and production phases), which are transferred into diverse other sign systems. Each of these models the elements of the storyworld in accordance with its modal affordances (Kress 2010: 27), accenting some aspects and suppressing others. The absence of semantic equivalences between the signifiers of different types of sign systems has led Lotman to describe the relationship as a situation of untranslatability. In the case of transfers from discrete to continuous languages

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[13] Compare the thoughts of Bahtin/V.V. Vološinov in the treatise „Marxism and the Philosophy of Language": „It is owing to this exclusive role of the word as the medium of consciousness that *the word functions as an essential ingredient accompanying all ideological creativity whatsoever*. The word accompanies and comments on each and every ideological act. The process of understanding any ideological phenomenon at all (be it a picture, a piece of music, a ritual, or an act of human conduct) cannot operate without the participation of inner speech. All manifestation of ideological creativity – all other nonverbal signs – are bathed by, suspended in, and cannot be entirely segregated or divorced from the element of speech." (2000:15)

"[t]he equivalent to the discrete and precisely demarcated semantic unit of one text is, in the other, a kind of semantic blur with indistinct boundaries and gradual shadings into other meanings" (Lotman 2001: 37). Such untranslatability does not mean total impossibility of translation but implies significant alterations of meaning (Ibid., 36–38), which render the process simultaneously nonexact and nontrivial with a creative, innovative potential (Ibid., 137).

The searches for the "emergent language of transmedia" demonstrate well how older storytelling principles are recoded within new structures while still preserving a memory of the previous system of encoding (Ibid., 137; 1994: 378–379). Evidently, such crossings of medial boundaries happen most eloquently around semiosphere's outer boundary, where the core norms of the system are not as strict – it's the periphery where the area of semiotic dynamism lies and new languages come into being (2001: 134). Understanding innovation in terms of 'illegitimate' translation is somewhat similar to Manovich's approach in "The Language of New Media" (2001) and Bolter and Grusin's claim that any mediation is remediation (2000). Even though those central thinkers of contemporary media studies do not refer to Lotman in any explicit way, they seem to completely agree with Lotman's explication of semiosphere where every new language is always preceded by a system of semiotic formations. And this requirement is again relevant on different isomorphic layers from a single text to the semiosphere because: "[t]o function, a consciousness requires another consciousness – the text within the text, the culture within the culture." (Lotman 1994: 378). A Lotmanian semiospherical perspective on innovation has been elaborated by John Hartley (recently in Potts and Hartley 2014a, 2014b).

3.3. Aspects of cultural memory and identity

The tension between discrete and continuous, iconic and conventional languages is a central creative mechanism of culture and this is important also from the viewpoint of cultural memory as transmediality is related to the question of the languages of remembrance. At the same time, "mediality represents [...] the very condition for the emergence of cultural memory" (Erll 2011: 114). We remember the past only through medial representations, i.e. texts, through "transmedial recursivity" (2005: 21) as Ann Rigney posits and later clarifies in her concept of 'social life of texts', which "supposes that literary texts have multiple afterlives in different medial manifestations and social contexts" (Rigney 2012: 19). Hereby the specification "literary" can by substituted with any other medialisation. As different sign systems model an object in different ways, they function complementarily from the viewpoint of memory, because the diversity of signification takes us closer to understanding the peculiarity, the invariant core of the given object. Repeating a text in different sign systems is thus simultaneously a storing and a creative activity and transmedial memory of

culture is dynamic memory, enabling the semiotic, meaningful growth of a text in culture. Analogous mechanisms have been described also within the research into social memory, where Fentress and Wickham conclude their monograph stating that an attempt to explain the meaning of stories and images in social memory reveals: "a tendency to slide from one topos to another, or else merely to rationalize the images and stories by recontextualizing them into other forms" (Fentress and Wickham 1992: 202). More recently, in an attempt to explicate the dynamics of social memory, Hewer and Roberts proposed a three-part model consisting in the "interplay between academic history–evidence-based, revisionist and didactic, collective memory–traditional and resistant to change–and individual experience" (Hewer and Roberts 2012: 179).

The relation of transmediality is based on a dialogue with the reader and realised in the reader's memory, again both in the case of a single human mind and the whole culture. In both cases, when a mental text is formed on the basis of a text's familiar versions, subsequently, it is often impossible to distinguish, which aspects of this mental whole originate in which particular subtext, especially in the narrative domain. For example, when the first acquaintance with a story comes in an audiovisual form, mental images and sounds coherent with that version cannot help being processed in the mind when reading a verbal version of it, while all of the information is intermingled into a new whole in the memory. With the occurrence of any new version, the whole is (re)transformed anew, which means that new versions of a text influence the ways we understand and remember the prototext itself. Thus, for example, in the case of a cinematic adaptation not only does the literary text influence the creation of the movie, but the influence goes the other way as well.

The more there are translations across the boundaries of media, the more coherent is the mental text memorised. At the same time, such intersemiotic translations bear a self-organising function, bridge time and potentially enhance coherence also on the level of the whole culture and this is especially important from the viewpoint of canonical texts. Texts that have functioned as nodal points of the formation of national and cultural identities are nowadays very often first met not in the original version but via reading a metatextual version of them. For a simple example, practically every grown-up European has an idea of who was Hamlet even without ever having read the tragedy by Shakespeare (which of course itself has several pretexts in different verbal sign systems). Depending on the aspects and elements structurally activated, such versions might and might not start functioning as the supporters of the cultural identity. In the process of transmedial repetition of a canonical text, not only the text is transformed but the cultural system itself is restructured by providing oneself with new ways of self-description.

Transmediality is thus a mechanism of culture's autocommunication. The plurality of the existing languages for communicating with oneself about oneself somewhat paradoxically enhances the culture's coherence. One could claim that the source of wealth of a culture is not diversity of texts mediating

different objects, but the diversity of cultural languages for mediating one and the same object (i.e. oneself) and the activity of translations between them. This can be vividly demonstrated by the ways historic events are memorised in culture, whereby not only verbal and visual sign systems, but also artistic and nonartistic sign systems are complementary. The basic principles of this are as old as human culture, but the contemporary technology and new textual forms developing alongside, render these universal mechanisms more explicit and thus also better analysable.

4. SOME FURTHER PERSPECTIVES: TRANSMEDIA AND EDUCATION

The questions of cultural memory and autocommunication are in practical terms also questions of education, of ways and languages of mediating the understanding of the world and of oneself. The latter implies both, a comprehension of one's cultural heritage as well as competency of the contemporary languages of communication. Studying transmediality can lay groundwork for pedagogic inquiries and new practices. This is based on Peirce's general semiotic assumption that meaning is "the translation of a sign into another system of signs" (CP 4.127). Following the thought of Peirce, Eco stresses that every interpretant increases our understanding of the sign (1984: 43). The idea of the translational nature of semiosis is cohesive with Lotman's claim that "[t]he elementary act of thinking is translation" (2001: 143)[14] and also with an earlier one stating that "the problem of content always involves the problem of recoding" (1977[1970]: 35). Based on this, one could conceptualise understanding as the ability to translate into another system of signs, i.e. the ability to transmediate.

One of the earlier uses of a term sharing the same stem with transmediality comes precisely from a pedagogic context. Charles Suhor in his article favoring a semiotics-based curriculum conceptualised 'transmediation' as the "translation of content from one sign system into another" (1984: 250). Among some others (e.g. the collection edited by Semali 2002; Short et al 2000, Schmit 2013)[15], Marjorie Siegel has developed Suhor's concept in semiotic terms, explaining that: "[i]n transmediation, the learner does not simply correlate a content and an expression plane, but takes the interpretant arising from that correlation and maps it onto the expression plane of a new sign system" (1995: 461). As different students learn and memorise better in different sign systems – some are bound to do it in discrete/verbal, others in continuous/visual languages – transmediation has the potential to benefit more students than would be the case with sticking to a single sign system (see Siegel 2006: 70–71).

Looking at the contemporary mediasphere, one can notice that not only media themselves are proliferating, but also transfers between media are, and this should naturally be taken into consideration in pedagogy. As most notably and repeatedly demonstrated in the works of Gunther Kress and his followers (Kress 1997, Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, Kress et al 2005, van Leeuwen 2005; see also Jewitt 2005 and 2008 on multimodal literacy, Hartley et al 2008 on

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[14] Compare also "[Thought] is in itself essentially of the nature of a sign. But a sign is not a sign unless it translates itself into another sign in which it is more fully developed. [...] Thought must live and grow in incessant new and higher translations, or it proves itself not to be genuine thought." [CP: 5.594]

[15] See also Siegel's (2006) overview of literature.

digital literacy)[16] literacy today involves not only the ability to understand and produce verbal texts, but includes also visual, audiovisual and other sign systems. Kress's treatment of the subject is also based on his understanding of changes in the concept of representation, which has ceased to be treated as a stable reference in relation to the world of reality "out there" and has become precisely a process of sign-making, possessing a much more difficult relation to that supposed reality (Kress 1997: 101). Jenkins with his colleagues has described what he sees as a necessary capability in the 21st century – 'transmedia navigation' as "the ability to follow the flow of stories and information across multiple modalities" (Jenkins et al 2009: xiv), while Thomas et al (2007) introduced the term "transliteracy", and Dena (2010) proposed "combinatorial literacy" in addition. Executing transmedia storytelling as a pedagogical tool (Herr-Stephenson and Alper 2013, Pence 2011–2012) implies an active role of the learner in creative problem solving as well as perspective switching. This means that knowledge is built by gathering, evaluating and integrating information from different media. And being a full-fledged member of today's society necessitates also fluency of expressing oneself in diverse media while choosing the most appropriate sign systems(s) for a given message taking into account the constraints and affordances of available options. In Jenkins's view, all this is implicitly also a citizen education enforcing participatory culture and active citizenship. At the same time, it is important to remember that for example Internet functions not only as a mediator of information but simultaneously as a living environment for today's students (see Ojamaa and Torop 2015).

From the perspective of transmedial narratology, tracking a story in different media (e.g. a novel in its cinematic adaptation) helps build a deeper understanding of the given story, but also provides students with knowledge of medium-specificity and narrativity as such. For a practical example, using artistic texts in history class and asking which aspects of a given event could be mediated in verbal, which in visual and other sign systems, helps deepen the understanding of a historic event as well as open the ways a given event is kept alive in cultural memory by representing it in new languages and bringing out new aspects eloquent in a given time-space. Similar questions can fruitfully be asked in the context of the relationship between the most contemporary news media and politics, where meanings are culturally constructed via several modes and media. Creating an understanding of cultural phenomena (e.g. a public event, a political figure, marketing techniques of commodities etc.) necessitates trans-disciplinary pedagogic approaches (e.g. Monk et al 2011). At the same time, the devices of transmediation are not suitable only for humanities but more widely (see examples in the context of math class Lundeen 2007, Siegel 1995).

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[16] A complimentary perspective is provided In Wilma Clark's PhD thesis (2010), in which Lotman's concept of semiosphere was applied to study the usage of digital texts like YouTube videos and wikis in Science classroom.

Essentially, transmediation techniques are about repetition, but from a cultural semiotic viewpoint this is always repetition with variation that leads to innovation (see Eco 1994: 97–98, 1997). Text is a communicative entity (Lotman 1991) and its being and functioning in culture implies its reception in dynamic cultural environment, among different generational habitus, and within changing cultural practices (e.g. computer-centered reading). Therefore, juxtaposing or remixing elements from pre-existing texts of different media into a new whole is not only a method of learning, but potentially a way of creating texts with both new meanings and new functions in culture.

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PUBLICATIONS

EESTIKEELNE KOKKUVÕTE

Kultuurilise autokommunikatsiooni transmeedialine aspekt

Sissejuhatavast raamist ning viiest artiklist koosneva väitekirja keskmeks on transmeedia mõiste. Kõige üldisemal kujul tähistab transmeedia tähendusliku terviku paiknemist kahes või enamas meediumis. Lähemal vaatlusel võib see sõltuvalt kontekstist viidata aga pealtnäha üsna erinevatele nähtustele konkreetsest kaasaegsest kommunikatsioonistrateegiast (Jenkins 2006: 97–98) universaalse tekstide kultuuris eksisteerimise mentaalse aspektini (Sütiste, Torop 2007:203, Torop 2008: 725).

Sissejuhatava raami esimeseks eesmärgiks on terminoloogilise korrastuse loomine. Kaks peamist valdkonda, milles transmeedialisust mõtestatakse, on meediauuringud ja narratoloogia. Neid ühendavaks distsipliiniks on käesolevas töös kultuurisemiootika. Meediauuringute konktekstis vajab transmeedia eristamist ristmeedia (*crossmedia*) mõistest. Ristmeedia on siin üldisem nähtus ning transmeedialine jutustamine selle allvorm (vt Ibrus, Scolari 2012: 7). Kultuurisemiootiline vaatepunkt on aga vastupidine: ristmeedia mõiste kirjeldab pigem kitsamat vastuvõtjakeskset ja intentsionaalset kommunikatsioonistrateegiat, mille käigus erinevate meediumite vahendid koondatakse ühe tekstilise terviku loomiseks ja edastamiseks. Transmeedia aga kirjeldab pigem lähteteksti dominandiga ja spontaanset protsessi, mille keskmes on ühe teksti pihustumine läbi intersemiootiliste tõlgete (Jakobson 1971 [1959]: 261) erinevateks metatekstideks kogu kultuuriruumis. Seega oleks ristmeedialisuse näiteks ühe loo jutustamine ja turundamine ühtaegu trüki- ja audiovisuaalse meedia ning veebiplatvormide kaudu. Transmeedia mõiste kirjeldab aga näiteks kirjandusteose ekraniseeringuid või mõne motiivi rändamist kirjandustekstidest kujutava kunsti tekstidesse, sealt edasi muusikateostesse jne. Samas on selge, et kategoorilist ja universaalset piiri ristmeedia ja transmeedia vahel ei ole. Piiri paiknemine sõltub vaatepunktist. Kasvõi seesama ekraniseering eksisteerib kultuuris ühtaegu nii transmeedialises suhtes oma lähtetekstiga, olles kirjeldatav ja analüüsitav üksnes sellel tasandil, kuid samas paikneb see kaasaegses kultuuriruumis ka ristmeedialise terviku osana, kuna turundatakse seda läbi väga erinevate meediakanalite, millest mõnigi võib ka terviku kontekstis olulist tähendusloomelist rolli omada.

Narratoloogia vaatepunktist on transmeediaalaste uuringute keskseks küsimuseks narratiivi ja selle meediumi vahekord (Herman 2004: 49). Olulisemaks analüüsimeetodiks on eristada kahes või enamas meediumis eksisteeriva loo invariantsed ning variatiivsed ehk meediumispetsiifilised aspektid. Samuti on selles paradigmas uuritud narratoloogiliste kategooriate (nt raam, tegelane jne) varieerumist erinevate meediumite esitustes.

Terminivälju ja kasutuskontekste on "transmeedia" juurega mõistel veel, kuid nende ühisosa näib avavat just kultuurisemiootika vaatepunkt ning sellest

lähtub ka väitekirja raami ülesehituse loogika. Esmalt antakse ülevaade kahest peamisest nimetatud paradigmast, millele järgneb jagatud aspektide markeerimine kultuurisemiootika, eelkõige kultuurilise autokommunikatsiooniga seotud raamistikus. See baseerub arusaamal, et kommunikatsioon ja autokommunikatsioon on praktikas lahutamatud. Esmatasandil eraldiseisvad kommunikatsiooniaktid funktsioneerivad kõrgemal, kultuuri ja traditsiooni tasandil transmeedialise kordusena ehk autokommuniktasioonina. Seega on transmeedialisus kultuuriprotsesside olemuslikuks tunnuseks.

Transmeedialise jutustamise (*transmedia storytelling*) märksõnaga tegeleva uurimissuuna keskseks autoriks on siiani Henry Jenkins, kes mõiste aastal 2003 avaldatud artikliga laiemasse kasutusse tõi ja 2006. aastal trükitud konvergentskultuurile pühendatud raamatuga ka kinnistas. Sealt peale seostatakse terminit eelkõige kaht või enamat meediumit hõlmavate ning seejuures ka uue meedia vahendeid rakendavate meelelahutusmaailma jutustamispraktikatega. Lähedases tähenduses kasutas sama mõistet rohkem kui dekaadi võrra varem aga Marsha Kinder, kes analüüsis 1991. avaldatud monograafias erakordse kommertsedu osaliseks saanud lastele suunatud animaseriaale ("*Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*" jt), millega kaasnes laiaulatuslik valik eelkõige tegelastega seotud tarbekaupu. Kommertsedu on siin oluline märksõna, sest kaasaegse transmeedialise jutustamise algimpulss pärineb just turunduse vallast. Frantsiisiloome on seejuures üheks keskseks võtteks, mis aitab köita võimalikult laia publikut võimalikult pikaks ajaks, kasvatades seeläbi projekti tuluallikaid. Tänaseks on aga nii paljude transmeedialiste lugude loojate kui nende analüüsijate huvikeskmesse liikunud pigem kompleksse poeetilise sidususe loomise võimalused.

On ilmne, et uut tüüpi jutustamine toob kaasa ka uut tüübi retseptsioonipraktikad. Informatsiooni vahendamine erinevate meediaplatvormide plahvatusliku kasvu ajastul eeldab ka uut kirjaoskust, mis ühendab verbaalse ja visuaalse keele valdamise ning ka nende omavaheliste ülekannete pädevuse. Tehnoloogiliste vahendite võrdlemisi hõlbus kättesaadavus on hägustanud ka autori ja vastuvõtja vahelist piiri, kuna lugeja osalemine tähendusloome protsessides on muutunud harjumuspäraseks praktikaks. Olemasolevate teadete teistele platvormidele kohandamise ja jagamise ning kommenteerimise kõrval on üha nähtavam ka vastuvõtjate kaasautorlus fiktsionaalsete maailmade loomisel ja arendamisel. Kultuurilise vahendamise muutuvad praktikad on niisiis otseselt seotud kirjaoskuse ja kultuurikeelte õpetamise probleemidega. Väitekirja artikkel **V "Kultuurilise autokommunikatsiooni transmeedialisus" ("*Transmediality of cultural autocommunication*")**, mis on kirjutatud koos Peeter Toropiga, käsitleb seda problemaatikat muuhulgas empiirilise näite, pedagoogilise transmeediaprojekti "*Inanimate Alice*" varal. Ühtlasi asetab artikkel transmeedialisuse laiemasse kultuurilise autokommunikatsiooni konteksti, näidates, kuidas aegade vanune kultuurikogemus suhestub uue tehnoloogilise keskkonnaga, mis ühtlasi tähendab implitsiitse transmeedialisuse muutumist konkreetsetes tekstides avalduvaks eksplitsiitseks transmeedialisuseks. Juri Lotmani autokommunikat-

siooni mõiste, mis on seotud nii kultuuri talletavate kui loovate protsessidega, on siin võtmemõisteks, mille arengus võib samuti esile tuua implitsiitseid viiteid kultuuri transmeedialistele toimemehhanismidele, mis on muutunud nähtavaks ja seeläbi ka paremini analüüsitavaks just kaasaegses meediasfääris. Üheks konkreetseks näiteks Lotmani tööde hulgas on artikkel "Kultuuri-semiootika ja teksti mõiste" (1981), milles eristatakse viit teksti sotsio-kommu-nikatiivset funktsiooni. Nende kaudu avaldub tekst mitte üksnes konkreetse materiaalselt fikseeritud teatena, vaid keeruka süsteemina, millele on omane mäletamise- ning loova suhtlemise võime. Nii sisaldub tekstis juba olemuslikult ka selle transmeedialiste korduste aspekt.

Transmeedialise jutustamise kui innovaatilisele kommunikatsioonipraktikale on omane ulatuslik enesekirjelduste laine, mida iseloomustab võrdlemisi harva-nähtav praktikute ja teoreetikute omavaheline dialoog. Kiiresti areneva vald-konnaga seotud diskussioonide kõige loomulikumaks keskkonnaks on erinevad internetiplatvormid, ehkki ka trükis on avaldatud nii teoreetilisi määratlusi ja piiritlusi välja pakkuvaid kui praktilisi käsiraamatu ja õpiku vormis tekste. Üheks erinevaid kirjeldusi ühendavaks omaduseks on kontseptuaalsete meta-fooride, eriti ruumimetafooride kasutamise sagedus, millele juhib tähelepanu väitekirja artikkel **II "Transmeedia ruum" ("Transmedia space")**, mis on samuti kirjutatud koostöös Peeter Toropiga. Ühtlasi pakub tekst välja oma-poolse mõtestamiskatse, lähenedes transmeedialisele jutustamisele tekstiruumi, meediaruumi ja kultuuriruumi üksteist täiendavate mõistete kaudu, kasutades empiirilise näitena "Harry Potteri" romaaniseeria põhjal loodud interaktiivset veebikeskkonda *Pottermore*. Tekstiruumi aspektis keskendub artikkel teksti-listele vahenditele loomaailma (*storyworld*) loomiseks, kuivõrd transmeedialise jutustamise alustalaks ei peeta niivõrd üht terviklikku lugu kui loomaailma, millest võib potentsiaalselt lõputul hulgal erinevaid lugusid välja kasvada. Meediaruumi märksõna all vaadeldakse suhteid teksti ja selle intersemiootiliste tõlgete vahel, kuna just viimased on igasuguse transmeedialise jutustamise põhimehhanismiks. Teksti- ja meediaruumi aspektid on ühendatud kultuuri-ruumis, mis avaldub kommunikatsiooni ja metakommunikatsiooni aegruumina. Narratiivsed tekstid paiknevad selles ühtaegu topoloogilise invariandi ehk loomaailmana ning tüpoloogiliste ehk meediumipäraste variatsioonidena. Transmeedia ruum on seega korraga nii invariantne kui variatiivne, peegeldades seega kultuurimälu toimimise üldisi printsiipe.

Transmeedialise narratoloogia (*transmedial narratology*) suunale pühendatud peatükk 2 algab – nagu mitmed varasemad narratoloogialased tööd (Herman 2004, Ryan 2005, Wolf 2003) – meeldetuletusega, et algses strukturalistlikus arusaamas oli narratiiv justnimelt transmeedialine, mitte üksnes verbaalne kontseptsioon nagu valdav osa empiirilistest uurimustest arvata lubaks. Sõna-kesksus on lääne kultuuriruumi kirjeldanud pikka aega ning sellest lähtuvalt on just sõnakunstiteoseid muutunud omamoodi kriteeriumiks, mille taustal hinna-takse teisi narratiivseid tekste. Sellega domineeris ka ekraniseeringute vallas

pikalt nn truudusdiskursus, mille raames sai iga filmikeelse tõlgenduse olulisemaks eesmärgiks algteksti võimalikult täpne edastamine. Seejuures unustati, et filmile kui märgisüsteemile on võrreldes kirjandustekstiga omased täiesti teistsugused semantilised ja süntaktilised printsiibid. Siiski ei toimi kumbki kultuuris ka isoleeritud süsteemina, vaid kirjandus ja film ning teisedki kultuurikeeled on omavahel dünaamilises vastastikmõjus. Väitekirja artikkel **II "Eesti ekraniseering"** lahkab kirjanduse, filmi ja ekraniseeringu omavahelise piiritlemise problemaatikat ning annab ülevaate sellest, milliseid kirjandustekste on eesti täispikkade filmide hulgas aastatel 1923–2012 ekraniseeritud. Avaldub, et ekraniseeringu kui kirjandusteksti transmedialise siirde roll kultuuris on läbi vaadeldava perioodi läbinud hulga muutusi. Sellegi poolest on ekraniseeringud omanud läbivalt selget seost (rahvus)kultuurilise identiteediga, toiminud eksplitsiitselt autokommunikatiivses funktsioonis. Eesti Vabariigi algusaastatel peeti kirjandusklassika kinolinale toomist keskseks ülesandeks kohalikule filmikunstile tervikuna, kusjuures muu maailmaga võrreldes oli see üsna erandlik seisukoht. Ekraniseeringuplaane oli palju, kuid teostus neist vaid Konstantin Märska "Jüri Rumm" (1929), põhinedes Hans Varesoo vähetuntud pseudonüümi all kirjutatud raamatul, mis omakorda vahendab legendaarse vagabundi Rummu Jüriga seotud lugusid. Ekraniseeringute kuldaeg jääb 1960. aastatesse, mil talurahvaidentiteeti toetav rahvuslik kirjandusklassika omanäoliste filmikeelsete tõlgendustena tõepoolest kinolinale jõudis. Alates 1990. aastatest on ekraniseeringute suhtarv küll vähenenud, kuid lähtematerjali valiku aspektist on tendentsiks saanud lääne kultuuriruumist pärinevate ning teisalt kaasaegsete populaarsete kirjandustekstide adaptatsioonid. Teostunud ekraniseeringute sügavamaks mõtestamiseks pakub ühe võimaliku aluse aga just transmedialine narratoloogia.

Transmedialine narratoloogia kui eraldi uurimissuuna alguseks võib pidada David Hermani 2004. aastal ilmunud kogumikuartiklit "Transmedialise narratoloogia poole" ("*Toward a transmedial narratology*"). Teksti lähtekohaks on hüpotees, et erinevate meediumite narratiivid rakendavad küll sarnaseid konstruktsiooniprintsiipe, kuid teevad seda eriomastel meediumipärastel viisidel või teatud viiside real, mis lähtub konkreetse meediumi omadustest (Herman 2004: 51). Väitekirjas rakendavad transmedialise narratoloogia lähenemist artiklid I ja IV. Artikkel **I "Tühirand eesti kultuurimälus: kirjandus-, filmi- ja teatripärase esituse transmedialine analüüs"** käsitleb tekstide kooslust, millese kuuluvad Mati Undi lühiromaan "Tühirand. *Love Story*" (1972) prototekstina ning Ingomar Vihmari samanimeline lavastus teatris "Vanemuine" (2006) ja Veiko Õunpuu film "Tühirand" (2006) selle intersemiootiliste tõlgetena. Analüütilise fookuse huvides keskendub uurimus ranna motiivi meediumipärastele variatsioonidele. Rand on neis tekstides ühtaegu narratiivne ruum, tegevuse toimumise paik, kuid teisalt ilmselgelt ka sümbol, peategelase mentaalne aegruum. Kõik kolm teksti paiknevad kultuurimälus ühelt poolt eraldiseisvate üksustena. Teisalt aga asetsevad need omavahelises dialoogisuhtes ning moodustavad sedakaudu kõrgemal tasandil dünaamilise terviku, milles võib eristada

invariantset, kõigis esitustes korduvat (rand kui piiritsoon kahe eksistentsiaalse vastandi vahel), mis avaldub läbi meediumispetsiifiliste variatsioonide. Tekstide omavahelise, potentsiaalselt lõputult jätkuva dialoogi kaudu toimub tühiranna kujundi semiootiline kasvamine kultuurimälus.

Artikkel **IV "Kultuurimälu transmeedialisus: Rand Teise maailmasõja paadipõgenemisi vahendavates kunstitekstides"** lähtub arusaamast, et oma ajaloo mõistmiseks loob parimad eeldused kirjelduste paljusus: mida enam on meediumeid ja diskursusi, milles mõnd ajaloolist sündmust mõtestatakse, seda sügavam on selle sündmuse mõistmine kultuurimälus. Analüüsi keskmeks on kolm kunstiteksti, mis vahendavad 1944. aasta septembrikuus aset leidnud üle mere põgenemistega seotud lugusid: August Gailiti romaan "Üle rahutu vee" (1951), Sulev Keeduse film "Somnambuul" (2003) ja Eerik Haameri õlimaal "Perekond vees" (1941). Artikkel keskendub taaskord rannakujundile, mis ei ole esmapilgul üheski neist tekstidest dominantne motiiv. Lähemal analüüsil aga avaldub, et ranna vahendamiseks valitud viisid ja vahendid modelleerivad ühtaegu ka tekstide keskseid mitteruumilisi tähendusi. Rand kui invariant seostub identiteedikaotusega ning iga tekst esitab seda variatsioonina vastavalt autorikontseptsioonile ning konkreetse meediumi vahenditele. Kokkuvõttes joonib selline paljukeelne kordamine taaskord alla transmeedialise toime, mis on omane kultuuri kommunikatsioonile iseendaga iseenda mõistmiseks.

Veel üheks autoriks, kes esindab transmeedialise narratoloogia paradigmat, on intermeedia-alaste uuringute taustaga Werner Wolf. Wolfi terminoloogias toimib transmeedialisus aga meediumiülesuse tähenduses. See on intermeedialisuse allvorm, täpsemalt ekstrakompositsioonilise intermeedialisuse versioon, mis samas eristub intermeedialisest transpositsioonist. Viimase puhul on tähtis lähte- ja sihtteksti vaheline (ülekande)suhe, samas kui transmeedialisuse puhul ei ole nende eristamine kas oluline või isegi mitte võimalik. Wolfi uurimuste keskmeks on narratoloogilised kategooriad, mis avalduvad narratiivides meediumist sõltumatult. Algselt eritles autor neid kolmes kategoorias: vormivõtted (nt motiivide korratused, temaatilised variatsioonid), kindlale ajalooperioodile omased jooned (nt paatoslik ekspressiivsus 18. sajandi tekstides) ning sisutasandi arhetüübid (nt kangelane) (Wolf 2002: 18–19). Hiljem on Wolf transmeedialiste kategooriatena analüüsinud näiteks raami (2006), kirjeldust (2007), metareferentsi (2009) ning immersiooni ja distantsi loomist lugejakogemuses (2013).

Väitekirja raami 3. peatükk keskendub kõiki artikleid ühendavale kultuurisemiootilisele vaatepunktile, tuues kontsentreeritud kujul välja sõlmküsimused, mis on ühised nii transmeedialise jutustamise kui transmeedialise narratoloogia teemakäsitlustele. Siinkohal asetub transmeedialisus laiemasse konteksti, mille fookus kandub lookeskuselt kultuurikesksusele. Transmeedialiste tekstide puhul on Lotmani kultuurikäsitluses sisalduv arusaam teksti ja semiosfääri isomorfiast eriti ilmne. Hõlmates erinevaid, konstruktsiooniprintsiipidelt omavahel tõlkimatuid märgisüsteeme, vahendavad need ometi teatavat tervikut. Ilmne on siin seega teksti piiride küsimus, kuivõrd juba alguse ja lõpu kategooriad ei pruugi

transmeedialiste tekstide puhul sugugi üheselt määratletud olla – lugejad võivad loomaailma siseneda erinevate alltekstide kaudu ning vastavalt sellele võib erineda ka nende tervikukogemus. Samuti on erinevate meediumite jadas talletatud transmeedialised tekstid ilmseks näiteks Tartu-Moskva semiootika-koolkona teesides kirjeldatud teksti omadusele toimida erinevatel tasanditel "teksti, teksti osa või tekstide kogumina" (Lotman et al 2013: 109). Kont-septualiseerides transmeedialise üksusena erinevatel aegadel eri meediumites loodud tekstide kooslust, on oluline mõista, et tervik ei seisne siin juhuslikus alltekstide summas, vaid kujutab endast sisemiselt hierarhiseeritud süsteemi, mis on vastavuses märgisüsteemide hierarhiaga konkreetses kultuuris.

Transmeedialiste tekstide eksplitsiitne heterogeensus tõstatab ka märgi-süsteemide vahelise tõlke küsimuse. Teksti osade omavahelise dialoogi ja tervikuloome võtete analüüsimiseks on vajalik mõista esiteks ülekandeid võimal-davaid jagatud elemente, see tähendab näiteks verbaalse või diskreetse teksti pildilisi või kontinuaalseid aspekte ja vastupidi. Teisalt tuleb eristada tõlki-matuid aspekte, mis tagavad dialoogi viljakuse, võimaldavad uue tähenduste sündi. Sellise lähenemise kaudu on võimalik kirjeldada innovatsiooni, mis põhineb vanade jutustamisviiside tõlkimisel uue meediumite ja meediakoos-luste väljendusvahendite keelde. Uuenduslikkus on kultuuris aga vältimatult seotud mäletamisega ning transmeedialisuse teema on seega ühtlasi küsimus mäletamise keeltest. Minevik on kultuuris alati vahendatud, ühes või teises meediumis taasesitatud. Iga meedium aga modelleerib objekti erineval viisil ning seega on erinevate meediumite representatsioonid kultuurimälu seisukohast üksteist täiendavad. Selline olemuslik mitmekesisus on seotud ühelt poolt kultuuri loova funktsiooniga, teisalt aga kordab iga uus versioon objekti in-variantset aspekti, toetades selle tuuma, põhiolemuse mõistmist ja mäletamist. Sedakaudu loob transmeedialine paljusus kõrgemal tasandil ka kultuuri sidusust ning enesemõistmist, olles kultuurilise autokommunikatsiooni olulisemaks mehhanismiks. Põhineb ju kultuuriline identiteet eelkõige mineviku kirjelduste ja kaasaegsete kommunikatsioonikeelte omavahelisel dialoogil. Niisiis on trans-meedialisuse problemaatika kokkuvõttes sama vana kui inimkultuur, kuid kaasaegsed kommunikatsioonitehnoloogiad ning nendega seotud tekstitüübid on muutnud transmeedialisuse universaalsed toimepõhimõtted nähtavamaks ning paremini analüüsitavaks.

Väitekirja raami viimane peatükk on pühendatud eelkõige võimalikule uurimis-töö jätkamissuunale. Nimelt on kultuurilise autokommunikatsiooni teema praktikas otseselt seotud hariduse valdkonnaga. Igasuguse teksti kui kommu-nikatiivse nähtuse mõistmine eeldab võimet mõtestada seda muutuvates kultuuri-kontekstides, kultuurikeeltes ja kultuuripraktikates, ehk teisisõnu transmeedia-lisena. Laiemalt on see aga küsimus keeltest, mille kaudu vahendatakse maa-ilma ja iseenda mõistmist.

CURRICULUM VITAE IN ENGLISH

Name: Maarja Ojamaa
Date of birth: September 11, 1983
Citizenship: Estonian
Contact address: Department of Semiotics, University of Tartu, Jakobi 2,
                    Tartu 51014
E-mail: maarja.ojamaa@ut.ee

Education

2009–2014   University of Tartu, doctorate studies,
                    Semiotics and Culture Studies
2007–2009   University of Tartu, master's studies,
                    Semiotics and Culture Studies, MA
2003–2007   University of Tartu, bachelor's studies,
                    Semiotics and Culture Studies, BA
2002–2003   University of Tartu, bachelor's studies,
                    Sociology, Social Work and Social Policy
1999–2002   Miina Härma Grammar School, secondary school

Further education and training

2009 September   New Bulgarian University, Sozopol, Bulgaria;
                    XV Early Fall School of Semiotics
2005 autumn   semester Università degli Studi di Bari,
                    Facoltà di lingue e lettere straniere;
                    Erasmus student exchange
2005 August   Università per Stranieri di Siena
                    intensive course in Italian

Employment

2013–2014   Tallinn University, Baltic Film and Media School; lecturer
2011–2014   University of Tartu, Faculty of Philosophy,
                    Institute of Philosophy and Semiotics,
                    Department of Semiotics; lecturer
2010–2014   Tartu Descartes Lyceum; teacher
2009–2013   Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences;
                    lecturer

Administrative responsibilities

2012–2014   Estonian Semiotics Association, member of the board

Dissertations supervised

2014 Liina Sieberk, Master's Degree; Raimond Valgre Eesti kultuurimälus lavastuse "Autori surm" näitel (Raimond Valgre in Estonian Cultural Memory: the Case of "The Death of the Author"); University of Tartu, Faculty of Philosophy, Institute of Philosophy and Semiotics, Department of Semiotics; co-supervisor prof. Peeter Torop

Research topics

transmediality, adaptation studies, cultural autocommunication, semiotics of culture

Selected publications

Ojamaa, Maarja; Torop, Peeter (2015). Transmediality of cultural autocommunication. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 18(1), 61–78.

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ELULOOKIRJELDUS

Nimi: Maarja Ojamaa
Sünniaeg: 11. september 1983
Kodakondsus: eestlane
Kontaktaadress: Tartu Ülikooli semiootika osakond, Jakobi 2, Tartu 51014
E-post: maarja.ojamaa@ut.ee

Hariduskäik

2009–2014   Tartu Ülikool, doktoriõpe,
            Semiootika ja kultuuriteooria
2007–2009   Tartu Ülikool, magistriõpe,
            Semiootika ja kultuuriteooria, MA
2003–2007   Tartu Ülikool, bakalaureuseõpe,
            Semiootika ja kultuuriteooria, BA
2002–2003   Tartu Ülikool, bakalaureuseõpe,
            Sotsioloogia, sotsiaaltöö ja sotsiaalpoliitika
1999–2002   Miina Härma Gümnaasium, keskharidus

Täiendavad koolitused

2009 september: New Bulgarian University, Sozopol, Bulgaria;
                    XV Semiootika sügiskool
2005 sügissemester: Università degli Studi di Bari,
                    Facoltà di lingue e lettere straniere;
                    Erasmus üliõpilasvahetus
2005 august: Università per Stranieri di Siena itaalia keele
                    intensiivkursused

Teenistuskäik

2013–2014   Tallinna Ülikool, Balti Filmi- ja Meediakool;
            lepinguline õppejõud
2011–2014   Tartu Ülikool, Filosoofiateaduskond,
            Semiootika osakond; lepinguline õppejõud
2010–2014   Tartu Descartes'i Lütseum; õpetaja
2009–2013   Eesti Ettevõtluskõrgkool Mainor;
            lepinguline õppejõud

Muu teaduslik organisatsiooniline ja erialane tegevus

2012–2014   Eesti Semiootika Seltsi juhatuse liige, laekur

Juhendatud väitekirjad

2014 Liina Sieberk, magistrikraad; Raimond Valgre Eesti kultuurimälus
   lavastuse ''Autori surm'' näitel; Tartu Ülikool, Filosoofiateaduskond,
   Semiootika osakond; kaasjuhendaja prof. Peeter Torop

Peamised uurimisvaldkonnad

transmeedialisus, adaptatsiooni uuringud, kultuuri autokommunikatsioon,
kultuurisemiootika

Olulisemad publikatsioonid

Ojamaa, Maarja; Torop, Peeter (2015). Transmediality of cultural autocom-
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DISSERTATIONES SEMIOTICAE
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