Intermediality Revisited
Reflections on Word and Music Relations
in the Context of a General Typology of Intermediality

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Dedicated to Steven Paul Scher
on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday

The essay continues Steven Paul Scher’s well-known and influential typological reflections on the field of word and music relations, which he has devised since the late 1960s, and tries to rechart this field in order to accommodate developments which have since occurred: the rise of intermedia studies in general and, in particular, of musico-literary perspectives that do not merely focus on ‘intracompositional’ phenomena, which can be observed exclusively within given works, but also ‘extracompositional’ relations, which occur between works transmitted in different media. Word and music relations are here seen as part of the wider field of intermediality, of which a general typology is proposed. It is a partial reconceptualization of a previous typology in the light of ongoing research. Former discussions of intermedia or interart relations have tended to focus on what I call ‘intracompositional intermediality’ or ‘intermediality in the narrow sense’ and on its subforms: ‘plurimediality’, and ‘intermedial reference’ through ‘thematization’ and ‘imitation’ of other media. As distinct from this approach, my typological revisiting of intermediality starts from a broader sense of the term, which also includes ‘extracompositional’ intermediality and its subforms ‘transmediality’ and ‘intermedial transposition’. All forms discussed are shown to be of relevance for word and music studies. The essay concludes with some perspectives of research that go beyond typological concerns.

1. Introduction: the multiplicity of the objects of word and music studies
   and of intermedial relations in general as a typological challenge

Four years after the first conference of the International Association for Word and Music Studies (WMA) held at Graz, Austria, the third conference, held at Sydney, still dedicated one of its two sections to the topic: “Word and Music Studies: Defining the Field”. The repeated choice of this topic is not due to a lack of imagination on the part of the conference organizers but points to the fact that the field of word and music
studies still requires general reflections about its delimitation. This does not so much apply to its outer limits, which are relatively easy to define: all phenomena that involve music in whatever form as well as words, verbal texts or literature are legitimate objects of word and music studies. What is less easy to describe and consequently requires our attention is the internal structure of this wide field. In fact, the past few decades, including the as yet short history of the WMA, have revealed an extraordinary multiplicity of research objects that are all affiliated in different ways to word and music studies.

Traditionally, musico-literary research was carried out by literary critics and consequently had a strong literary bias. The most common type of this early research was dedicated to collecting evidence of references to, or occurrences of, music in individual literary works, and to elucidating their uses and functions. The history of musico-literary ‘interart studies’ proper started with Calvin S. Brown’s seminal comparative study on Music and Literature, which focussed on structural analogies between the two arts. In the wake of Brown, to whom the second volume of Word and Music Studies was dedicated (cf. Cupers/Weisstein), a growing number of researchers have cultivated our field. One of the most outstanding scholars among these is Steven Paul Scher, whom it was a pleasure to honour at the Sydney conference. Scher’s first contributions to the field of word and music studies, his research on verbal music (cf. Verbal Music and “Notes Toward a Theory of Verbal Music”), were still literature-centred, but recently word and music studies have opened up to more general subjects, represented, for example, by John Neubauer’s explorations of the possible narrativity of music. In this process of opening up, the former quasi monopoly of literary scholars was relativized by the work of musicologists such as Lawrence Kramer, who was not only a pioneer in the area of a “Musical Narratology” but has also studied “common purposes, effects or values” of music and literature in their historical contexts, applying the method of a “tandem reading of musical and literary works” (“Dangerous Liaisons” 159; cf. also 161). Among the most recent contributions to our field by musicologists one may also mention the research of the host of the Sydney conference, Michael Halliwell, on the transposition of Patrick White’s classic Australian novel Voss into an
opera (cf. “Singing the Nation”)

1. Moreover, this same conference responded to the recent ‘culturalist turn’ in both music and literary studies by including the functions of the musical stage for cultural identity in its schedule.

This multiplicity of subjects of word and music studies may be hailed as an amazing richness; it may, however, also be viewed as puzzling in its heterogeneity. At any rate, it is certainly a challenge for anyone who wants to define this field. A similar problem besets the neighbouring field of word and image studies, from which most – though only partial – typologies of ‘interart’ relations have issued so far

2. Yet it is doubtful whether one should adopt the method used by Ulrich Weisstein, who tried to ‘systematize’ this field by giving a somewhat erratic and, as he himself said, incomplete list of no less than fifteen parallel types of ‘interart’ relations (cf. “Einleitung. Literatur und bildende Kunst” 20-27; Weisstein devised his typology “ohne [...] Anspruch auf Vollständigkeit” [20]). Scher’s more systematic and uncomplicated approach to the forms of musico-literary relations, ‘literature in music’, ‘music and literature’ and ‘music in literature’, is here more convincing. Scher had already devised this triadic typology in 1968 (for further typological reflections cf. also Scher, “Notes Toward a Theory” and “Einleitung. Literatur und Musik”). It has since proved to be the most frequently used typology in the domain of word and music studies and has elicited several modifications, for instance by Albert Gier and myself (cf. 1999a and 1999b, ch. 4), but it has remained recognizable throughout all its rewritings. Scher’s typology, as well as Gier’s and my own former modifications of it, focus, however, on a special kind of musico-literary relations only and cannot account, for instance, for the type of studies mentioned above with reference to Kramer’s “tandem readings” (“Dangerous Liaisons” 161) of different media, Neubauer’s musico-literary narrativity research or Halliwell’s description of an operatic transposition of a novel.

1 Cf. also Halliwell’s book on Henry James and opera, which is currently in preparation and is due to appear in the book series of Word and Music Studies as volume 5.

2 Cf. Kranz and the detailed typological criticism of Kranz by Dieterle 206-212; Hansen-Löwe 303-306; Willems; and Eicher. None of these typologies, however, attempts to transcend the boundaries of word and image relations.
In the following, I therefore propose to rechart the field of word and music studies and its objects so that each of these aspects can be accommodated. At the same time I would like to preserve basic elements of Scher’s typology, while integrating it into a larger context.

This larger context is constituted by the various relations between the media, regardless of their status as recognized art. The most useful term to designate this larger field is ‘intermediality’, a term which originated in German research (the term was coined by Aage Hansen-Löwe in 1983 on the model of ‘intertextuality’) and is now increasingly being used by research in English as well, not least owing to eloquent promoters such as Claus Clüver (cf. “Inter textus”). Since word and music studies are a part of intermedia studies, it is necessary to take this affiliation into account in general typological reflections. I already tried to do so in my paper read at the WMA conference at Graz in 1997 (cf. 1999a) and in my subsequent book on The Musicalization of Fiction. Yet since then a valuable extension and reconceptualization of parts of intermediality has appeared in Irina Rajewsky’s Berlin PhD dissertation on literary-filmic relations (cf. “Im Zeichen der Intermedialität”), which will be integrated into the following rewriting of a general typology of intermediality. In thus ‘revisiting intermediality’ my aims are:

- first, to chart the field of word and music studies and its objects in a relatively comprehensive way, so that its individual areas can all be described in their essentials for the benefit of future research, and
- second, at the same time to provide a typology which can be used beyond the limits of word and music studies and which thus documents their affiliation to the wider and increasingly important field of intermedia studies.

In what follows the reflections will, however, have to be limited to intermediality in cultural artefacts, that is to ‘products’ or ‘productions’. Reflections on the producer as well as on the recipient will therefore remain outside the scope of this essay, as they would require separate investigations.

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3 What is thereby excluded on the producer’s side is, for instance, the phenomenon of Doppelbegabung and, on the recipient’s side, the question of how specific forms of intermediality (especially intermedial
2. Extra- vs. intracompositional intermediality and Scher’s typology of musico-literary relations

As a starting point for the creation of a general typology of intermedial forms Scher’s triadic typology must be mentioned once again. Its main characteristic is its focus on intermedial relations that can be documented within a given work. This applies as much to programme music as a specimen of ‘literature in music’ as to vocal music as an example of the combination of ‘literature and music’ and to ‘word music’ or ‘structural analogies to music’ as an instance of ‘music in literature’. Scher’s typology charts what shall be called intracompositional intermediality. I myself have privileged this type in my own previous research and have called it ‘intermediality in the narrow sense’ (cf. 1999b, 36f.). It can generally be defined as a direct or indirect participation of more than one medium of communication in the signification and/or semiotic structure of a work or semiotic complex, an involvement that must be verifiable within this semiotic entity. However, this type by definition excludes a substantial part of what nowadays is also sometimes addressed as intermediality and what shall be termed extracompositional intermediality.

Integrating this second basic form into the general concept of intermediality necessitates a broader definition of the term, and this is principally why I am here ‘revisiting’ intermediality. In this broader sense ‘intermediality’ applies to any transgression of boundaries between conventionally distinct media of communication: such transgressions cannot only occur within one work or semiotic complex but also as a consequence of relations or comparisons between different works or semiotic complexes. Such a broader sense of intermediality is in fact desirable for the accommodation of the aforementioned research by Kramer, Halliwell and Neubauer because intermediality occurs in their objects of research not as an intracompositional

‘imitation’; see below) affect and/or can be detected by the recipient (for valuable inquiries into this area of reception theory cf. Arroyas and Helbig).

It is beyond the scope of the present paper to enter into the discussion of the intricate problem of defining ‘medium’ (for recent discussions of this term cf. Wolf 1999b: 35 f. and Clüver, “Inter textus” 29f.).
phenomenon that can be observed within individual compositions or works, but only as an extracompositional one that can be deduced from a comparison between certain works or signifying phenomena. In Kramer’s terminology, this would include both “manifest analogies” between different media and “deep-structural convergences” (“Dangerous Liaisons” 161 and passim) among them. While in intermediality in a narrow, intracompositional sense the transgression of boundaries between different media appears to be a ‘given’ of the works under scrutiny, the analysis of which can largely be carried out within the confines of one discipline, one must be aware that the discussion of intermediality in this broader sense is to a large extent dependent on the choice of, and willingness to adopt, a comparative and interdisciplinary approach.

3. Variants of extracompositional intermediality
and their relevance to word and music studies

Basically, there are two variants of extracompositional intermediality, both of which are relevant to word and music studies. The first concerns phenomena that are not specific to individual media. As non-media specific these phenomena appear in more than one medium and can therefore form points of contact or bridges between different media, bridges that can be used, under certain conditions, for the creation of intracompositional intermediality. Following Rajewsky (cf. “Im Zeichen der Intermedialität”, ch. iv.4.3) these phenomena shall be called ‘transmedial’.

Transmediality as a quality of cultural signification appears, for instance, on the level of ahistorical formal devices that occur in more than one medium, such as motivic repetition, thematic variation, or to a certain extent even narrativity, a feature which cannot be restricted to verbal narratives alone but which also informs opera and film and which can moreover be found in ballet, the visual arts and, as Neubauer and Kramer

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5 It could be argued that narrativity, which I have classified as a ‘transmedial’ phenomenon, is actually a form of intermedial transposition, since it originates in verbal narrative. However, while narrativity may be a typological borderline case inside the field of extracompositional intermediality and while certain phenomena tend to be transmitted by some kinds of media rather than by others, it would be difficult to
have argued, to some degree even in instrumental music\(^6\). Further possible objects of transmedial research are characteristic historical traits that are common to either the formal or the content level of several media in given periods, such as the pathetic expressivity characteristic of eighteenth-century sensibility, which can be traced in drama, fiction, poetry, opera, instrumental music and in the visual arts. Finally, transmediality can equally appear on the content level alone. This is, for example, the case in certain archetypal subject matters and ‘themes’ such as conflicts between generations and genders or the stages of a love romance, which can be observed in verbal texts, the visual arts, film, the opera or – as far as the gender tension is concerned – even in the classical sonata form, at least in its genderized reading by Adolf Bernhard Marx. What marks these content phenomena as transmedial is the fact that they do not have an easily traceable origin which can be attributed to a certain medium or that such an origin does not play a role in the gestation of the works in question.

There are, however, cases in which discernibly similar contents or formal aspects appear in works of different media and where at the same time a clear origin can be attributed for them in another medium. In these cases a transfer between two media can be shown to have taken place. This type of intermediality is not a case of transmediality but should be called ‘intermedial transposition’\(^7\). As with transmediality, this variant can apply both to parts or to the entirety of individual works. An instance of partial intermedial transposition in the field of formal devices is the transposition of a narrator – a typical component of the medium of verbal fiction – to film or drama. In drama such

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\(^6\) Another interesting parallel between music and literature which could be explored from a transmedial perspective is self-reflexivity and distance-creating devices in, e. g., metafiction and what one, by analogy, may call ‘metamus’ (for illuminating perspectives on this widely neglected field with an emphasis on ‘irony’ cf. Bonds).

\(^7\) Transposition, however, is not yet generally acknowledged as a form of intermediality (cf. Balme 154); Balme’s exclusion of “Medienwechsel” from intermediality rests on a concept of intermediality in a narrow sense (“im engeren Sinn” [155]), which is even more restrictive than my original definition of intermediality (cf. 1999b, ch. 3.1) and only includes the ‘realization of medial conventions of one or more media in another medium’ (“die Umsetzung medialer Konventionen eines oder mehrerer Medien in ein anderes” [155]).
transposition leads to the ‘undramatic’ incorporation of a ‘presenter’ character in what characteristically is referred to as ‘epic drama’, and in film the result of such a transposition is the well-known device of ‘voice over’. According to Halliwell’s study of “Narrative Elements in Opera”, the operatic orchestra can in part also be regarded as fulfilling narratorial functions and could to this extent be seen as a transposition of a narrator – at least of his commenting function – into music.

The most common variant of intermedial transposition in contemporary culture, however, does not apply to elements of specific media but to entire works. This is the case in the well-known procedure of transforming novels into films (nowadays the process is even frequently reversed in novels based on films). Music, or rather the musical theatre, is also frequently involved in this type of intermediality, as is exemplified not only by the aforementioned creation of an operatic version of Patrick White’s Voss but also by the transposition of Pierre-Augustin Beaumarchais’s comedy Le Mariage de Figaro into Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s opera Le Nozze di Figaro and by numerous similar cases. As is typical of extracompositional intermediality in general, in all of these cases the intermedial quality is primarily located in the space between the two works, here: in the process of gestation, but not in the end product. In fact, Mozart’s Le Nozze di Figaro can be understood without previous knowledge of Beaumarchais’s pre-text, though there is no doubt that his comedy is the source of Lorenzo Da Ponte’s libretto and hence of Mozart’s opera: this genetic relation, however, does not essentially contribute to the signification or meaning of the opera as such since intermedial transpositions characteristically result in relatively independent signifying units. Consequently, in this and in similar cases, hardly any references to the original pre-text are included in the end product. In filmic versions of novels sometimes even the original title is changed so that the only remaining reference to the source is relegated to a mention of the original text in the opening or closing credits.

As we have seen, intermedial transposition as well as transmediality go beyond word and music relations, but both of these extracompositional forms of intermediality are

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8 This was, for instance, the case in the German version of Michael Winterbottom’s 1996 filmic version of Thomas Hardy’s Jude the Obscure, which appeared under the title Herzen im Aufruhr, a title which was also adopted in a recent German translation of Hardy’s novel (cf. Hardy).
also relevant to research within our more specific field, especially for those who approach intermediality with an interest in cultural studies, general aesthetics, interart periodization, and comparative media studies. Yet so far, among musico-literary scholars, including Scher, the extracompositional variants of intermediality have not been granted as much attention as their intracompositional counterparts. The reason for this bias is perhaps linked with the history of the discipline: its origins are to be found in comparative literature as practiced by scholars raised in the tradition of close textual readings, and this is where a predominant interest in what elsewhere I have called ‘literature-centred’ intermediality (cf. 1996) has emerged. In contrast to this kind of intermediality, literature does not necessarily play a central role in extracompositional intermediality, even if it (also) involves words and music, and this is certainly the main reason for its neglect by literature-orientated scholars. This absence of literary dominance is most obvious in transmediality, but it also applies to many instances of intermedial transposition since literature, where it appears, is in such cases more often the source rather than the target medium.

4. Variants of intracompositional intermediality
and their relevance to word and music studies

A much more central role can be attributed to literature in many cases of the second main form of intermediality, i.e. intracompositional intermediality. Like its extracompositional counterpart, this form can also appear in two variants: ‘plurimediality’ and ‘intermedial reference’, both of which meet the condition stipulated above that intermediality in such cases is an integral part of the signification and/or the semiotic structure of the works under consideration.

The most obvious form of such intracompositional intermediality is multi- or plurimediality. As far as musico-literary relations are concerned, plurimediality corresponds to what Scher calls ‘literature and music’ and is best exemplified in opera as a synthesis of drama and music or in song as a union of poetry and music. Generally
speaking, this variant of intermediality applies if two or more media with their typical or conventional signifiers are overtly present in a given work at least in one instance. In this form intermediality itself and the original components of the intermedial mixture are directly discernible on the surface of the work, that is, on the level of the signifiers, since they appear to belong to heterogeneous semiotic systems, although these components need not always be ‘quotable’ separately. The range of variants, which have been explored by Walter Bernhart for the lied and include the possibility of one medial component interpreting or even imitating elements of another component (cf. 2002), can be located between the poles of pluri- or multimedial ‘combination’ and intermedial ‘fusion’. With reference to opera Clüver has rightly pointed out that ‘multimedial’ separability here applies to the textually fixed aspects only, namely to the libretto as opposed to the musical score, whereas the performance of an opera constitutes a form of medial fusion whose components cannot be separated without losing the performative character of opera (cf. “Inter textus” 25). An even closer medial fusion occurs in the performance of ‘sound poetry’, as also discussed by Clüver in a recent article (cf. “Concrete Sound Poetry”). Other examples of plurimediality that involve words and music include not only the various genres of vocal music but also melodrama and the insertion of musical notation in novels or other literary texts. As is the case with the other basic types of intermediality, plurimediality is, of course, not restricted to relations between words and music but may extend, for instance, to ballet as a synthesis of dance, non-verbal dramatic elements and music, or to comic strips or illustrated novels as combinations of words and images. In all of these cases the various forms of combination or fusion allow us to consider plurimediality as resulting in

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9 This extension of ‘plurimediality’ to the overt involvement of only two different media in an artefact is why I prefer this term to ‘multimediality’: ‘multimediality’ may be a more usual term but could sound odd for cases where less than three media occur.

10 I am hereby modifying my too sweeping characterization in 1999b, 40, where I insisted on separate quotability as a criterion of plurimediality or, as I called it there, “overt intermediality”.

11 Similarly, a song may theoretically be split into melody and text, yet it goes without saying that a song is, of course, more than a mere juxtaposition of words and music. This is why the singing of a song is rather a synthesis than a combination of media, although for the sake of analysis, the two medial components can still be clearly distinguished.
medial hybrids, even if the regular use of such hybrids may result in the creation of a new syncretistic medium, such as the sound film or the opera.

As opposed to plurimediality, **intermedial reference** does not give the impression of medial hybridity of the signifiers or of a heterogeneity of the semiotic systems used but rather of a medial and semiotic homogeneity, since intermedial reference does not imply the incorporation of the signifiers of other media. In fact, as opposed to the directly perceptible intermediality in the variant ‘plurimediality’, the involvement of another medium in ‘intermedial reference’ takes place only indirectly: through the signifiers (and the signifieds) of the work in question. This means that a monomedia work remains monomedia and displays only one semiotic system, regardless of the existence of an intermedial reference. For this reference is carried out by the signifiers of the ‘dominant’ medium which is used by the work in question, so that the other, ‘non-dominant’ medium (the medium referred to) is actually only ‘present’ as an idea, as a signified and hence as a reference. Such reference, which I hereby propose as a supplement to my previous description of ‘covert’ or ‘indirect’ intermediality (as opposed to ‘overt’ or ‘direct’ intermediality, cf. 1999a and 1999b, ch. 3.2), can point to another medium in general – in which case it could be seen as a parallel to what in intertextuality theory is called ‘system reference’; alternatively, intermedial reference can also point to an individual work transmitted in another medium – in which case the term ‘individual reference’, which is also derived from intertextuality theory, would be applicable. In both system reference and individual reference intermedial reference can occur in the following two subforms:

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12 Cf. Rajewsky (“Im Zeichen der Intermedialität”), esp. her typology in ch. v. Rajewsky terms this type “Intermediale Bezüge” or “Referenz” and opposes them to “Medienkombination” (in my terminology: ‘plurimediality’) and “Medienwechsel” (in my terminology ‘medial transposition’). In her general overview (cf. 406), the second ‘extracompositional’ form of intermediality, which I have called ‘transmediality’, does not appear, although she mentions a similar concept in ch. iv.4.3.

13 For the analogies between intertextuality and intermediality cf. Wolf 1999b, ch. 3.4; Rajewsky (“Im Zeichen der Intermedialität”) also uses the terms “Systemreferenz” and “Einzeltextreferenz” (406).
The first subform is **explicit reference** or **intermedial thematization**\(^{14}\), a term which may alternatively be used especially for verbal media. In verbal media such explicit reference is easiest to identify. In principle, it is present whenever another medium (or a work produced in another medium) is mentioned or discussed in a text\(^ {15}\). Explicit reference can also appear in the form of representatives of other media, such as painters or musicians as characters in a novel, and the same applies, of course, to fictional viewers of paintings and to listeners of music\(^ {16}\). In non-verbal media, which arguably can only ‘thematize’ another medium in a metaphorical sense of the word, explicit reference can nevertheless occur: namely whenever another medium is represented by employing the signifiers of the intermedial work in question in their usual denoting capacity. Thus music or literature may explicitly be referred to in painting by representing a musician or a person reading a book. Since music cannot unambiguously refer to a reality outside itself, let alone to such abstract concepts as a different medium, the possibilities of explicit reference are extremely limited in music, and this is why in musico-literary relations Scher’s type ‘music in literature’ can include ‘thematization’, but the reverse case ‘literature in music’ can hardly do so\(^ {17}\).

In instrumental music, any reference to literature is in fact restricted to the second subform of intermedial reference: as opposed to explicit reference or intermedial thematization, this perhaps more interesting subform is **implicit reference** or

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\(^{14}\) Cf. 1999b, 44-46, where I also employed the term ‘telling’ for the designation of this mode of intermedial reference. The use of the terminology here proposed (‘plurimediality’ vs. ‘intermedial reference’) with ‘explicit thematization’ as a subform of intermedial reference allows me to avoid a terminological problem which appeared in my previous typologies of intermediality: ‘explicit’ thematization as a sub-category of ‘covert’ intermediality. (I am grateful to Walter Bernhart for critical comments in this respect).

\(^{15}\) However, this need not mean that all references of this kind must be relevant to an interpretation.

\(^{16}\) For a similar inclusion of intermedial representatives in the discussion of intermediality cf. Mosthaf.

\(^{17}\) At best, one could consider ‘intermusical’ quotations to approach the form of ‘thematization’, but this is certainly not ‘literature in music’; in addition, such quotations could only be regarded as intermedial thematization if they involve the crossing of the boundaries separating related media such as the quotation of an operatic melody in an instrumental composition or vice versa.
intermedial imitation\textsuperscript{18}. If in the mode of thematization the signifiers of the dominant medium of the work under scrutiny are used in the customary referential and denotative way without being iconically affected by the explicit, direct reference to the other, non-dominant medium, in intermedial imitation the signifiers of the work and/or its structure are affected by the non-dominant medium, since they appear to imitate its quality or structure (this does not rule out the fact that in both forms the signifieds are also necessary for the transmission and identification of the intermedial reference). In the imitative variant of intermediality the reference to the other medium therefore always involves some kind of iconicity\textsuperscript{19}, although on the surface the dominant medium retains its typical aspect and homogeneity as much as in intermedial thematization.

Like intermedial transposition, ‘imitation’ involves a kind of translation. However, the objects of translation differ: in imitation the objects are primarily the nature and structure of the signifiers of the source work or medium, and it is the characteristic traits of these signifiers that are translated as much as possible into the target medium; in contrast to this, in intermedial transposition the objects of translation are the signifieds of the source work or medium and/or their effects\textsuperscript{20}. As a consequence, the preservation of traces of the original signifiers is accidental and in most cases negligible in intermedial transposition, whereas it is intentional and central in intermedial imitation, since these traces constitute the defining quality of intermedial imitation as a reference to another medium that is at the same time a part of the signification of the work in question\textsuperscript{21}.

\textsuperscript{18} This differentiation between ‘thematization’ and ‘imitation’ was already prefigured by the coiner of the term ‘intermediality’, Hansen-Löwe, in his opposition of “thematisieren” and “realisieren” as modes of literary reference to painting (305).

\textsuperscript{19} For the relation between intermedial imitation and iconicity cf. Wolf 2002a.

\textsuperscript{20} In the light of this differentiation I would now hesitate to squarely classify a phenomenon occurring in some musicalized novels, namely what I called “imaginary content analogy” (1999b, 63), as a form of intermedial imitation, since this translation of the effects and possible ‘meaning’ of specific pieces of music into imaginary literary contents, pictures, stories, etc., shows clear symptoms of intermedial transposition.

\textsuperscript{21} Since above, I have spoken of the possibility, within plurimediality, of one medial component imitating elements of another component (e. g. a baroque piece of vocal music in which a melody forming a running scale accompanies a text containing the idea of running), one may argue that in certain cases intermedial imitation may be seen to have affinities with yet another typological variant of intermediality,
Examples of such intermedial imitation, which can inform entire works or only parts of them, include instances of pictorialization in the realist novel, as can be found in some of Thomas Hardy’s descriptions, most notably in his novel *Under the Greenwood Tree* subtitled *A Painting of the Dutch School* (cf. Wolf 2002a, ch. 2, and for further examples of pictorialized novels Mosthaf). Intermedial imitation is moreover present in the ‘filmicization’ of fiction, as investigated by Rajewsky with reference to Italian novels (cf. “Im Zeichen der Intermedialität” and *Intermediales Erzählen*); in literatures in English, novels such as John Dos Passos’s *U.S.A. Trilogy* or the last chapter of David Lodge’s *Changing Places*, which is written in the manner of a film script (cf. Wolf 2002a, ch. 3) come to mind. As for intermedial imitations involving music, one may mention the musicalization of literature as exemplified, perhaps most famously, by Aldous Huxley’s *Point Counter Point*, the musicalization of the visual arts, as experimented with by Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky, and the well-known literarization of music in nineteenth-century programme music.

With respect to word and music relations, intermedial imitation is clearly a part of Scher’s categories ‘music in literature’ and ‘literature in music’. Imitation is of special interest, since it contains unusual, often innovative and hence historically significant experiments with the potential of individual media, and it is no coincidence that Scher has dedicated a considerable part of his interart studies to the exploration of techniques and forms that contribute to imitating music in literature. As a result of this research we now possess some essential and wide-spread concepts and helpful means of intermedial analysis, in particular terms such as ‘word music’ and ‘structural analogies to music’, and one could also mention ‘verbal music’, a special form of ‘translating’ individual pieces of music and their effects into literature. Much could be said about these devices, yet it is not my present aim to go into the details of intermedial techniques but rather to give a typological outline of the various general forms that intermediality, including the relations between word and music, can have.

namely plurimediality. Yet, unlike in intermedial imitation as defined above, in such cases the imitating medium is present together with the imitated element, and hence it makes more sense to classify these cases as (imitative) variants of plurimediality rather than as a form of intermedial reference.
5. A general typology of intermediality illustrated with musico-literary examples

With the presentation of intermedial imitation as one of two forms of intermedial reference I have completed this outline. I should, however, add that the forms of intermediality discussed do not necessarily occur separately in individual works but can be combined in various ways. Thus, an opera, which is by definition a plurimedial form, can be the result of a medial transposition and may in addition contain transmedial elements, perhaps even traces of intermedial imitation (in cases where, for instance, ouvertures appear to have affinities with programme music).

As a result of the foregoing reflections, a general typology of intermediality emerges, which can be visualized, together with some examples from the field of word and music studies, in figure 1. The order of arrangement in this diagram roughly follows, from left to right, the increasing degree to which the presence of intermediality is perceptible in a given work:

**Transmediality** is certainly the least obvious form, since it comprises phenomena that can only be revealed to involve more than one medium on the basis of comparative reflection. This does not preclude that some transmedial devices such as ‘variation’ may have acquired the connotation of a specific medium, in this case music, and hence be used as a structural analogy for intermedial imitation.

The next form in the order of intermedial obviousness is **intermedial transposition**: here intermediality is still relatively obscure, since, as already said, its place is primarily in a creative process and not necessarily in the finished work, in which all traces of the intermedial transposition having taken place can be deleted.

In **intermedial reference** intermediality still appears in an indirect or ‘covert’ form, since the works in question retain a homogeneous surface as far as the media and semiotic systems used are concerned. However, the degree of covertness may vary: in **intermedial imitation** it is relatively high. This does not come as a surprise if one remembers that this **implicit** form of **reference** is somewhat akin to intermedial transposition to the extent that both forms involve a process of translation of one
Figure 1: System of intermedial relations illustrated with musico-literary examples

INTERMEDIAILITY
(broad sense)

extracompositional intermediality

intracompositional intermediality
(intermediality, narrow sense)

transmediality
intermedial
transposition

intermedial reference
(using a single semiotic system)

plurimediality
(displaying signifiers that appear to belong to more than one semiotic system)

implicit reference
(intermedial imitation)

explicit reference
(intermedial thematization)

intermedial
fusion
combination

- narrativity of music and lit.
- variation in music and lit.
- musicalization of fiction
- programme music
- ‘music in lit.’;
- composer characters
- ‘lit. in music’
- discussions of music in lit.
- performance of opera
- basis of ‘music and lit.’

performability of intermediality
medium into another. However, owing to the lack of significance of the intermedial link in intermedial transposition, the result is here often a ‘seamless’ integration of the transposed substance of the ‘old’ medium into the ‘new’ one, so that the new medium retains its familiar aspect. In contrast to this, the significance of intermediality in intermedial imitation frequently leads to, or is expressed by, a certain defamiliarization of the new medium. The fact that this defamiliarization is not due, for instance, to a general experimental aesthetics but refers to a specific medium, is, however, not self-explanatory. This is why intermedial imitation as an implicit reference needs some elements which render the intermediality explicit. As a rule, intermedial imitation therefore requires intermedial thematization/explicit intermedial reference in order to be discernible as such.

The next form, explicit intermedial reference, is by definition easier to spot as a case of intermediality, since the reference to another medium is here unmistakably expressed by the denotation of the signs of the dominant medium without defamiliarizing them.

Finally, intermediality is most clearly or directly and ‘overtly’ discernible in plurimediality, since in this case the surface of a work, the very texture of its signifiers, displays a simultaneity or succession of at least originally distinct media. Within plurimediality the combination of media constitutes the maximum of intermedial obviousness, owing to the fact that the medial components are more prominent than in intermedial fusion.

6. Beyond typology: perspectives of musico-literary research

Typologies could be regarded as unfashionable, since they seem too reminiscent of outmoded structuralist approaches with their notorious emphasis on static, ahistorical models. In addition, typologies may appear to some as heuristically barren and generally problematic, since they inevitably create artificial boundaries and are flawed by borderline cases or the possibility of multiple classification. Thus, as has been said, the
occurrence of the formal device of ‘variation’ in a literary text can contribute to an imitation of music in literature (if this implicit intermediality is made explicit by the thematization of music), but it can also be a simple specimen of transmediality (if not accompanied by such a thematization)\(^{22}\).

The heuristic value of typologies, like the definitions of the concepts that are incorporated into them, is certainly limited, as is eloquently pointed out with respect to the inevitable metaphoricity of word and music terminology in this volume by Eric Prieto. On the other hand, I am convinced that attempts at defining essential concepts and phenomena are a \textit{sine qua non} of scholarly research, and that it is a dangerous mistake to disparage such endeavours. As for typologies, we must admit that they at least chart a field and make us see its diversity. In addition, they sometimes reveal the very existence of phenomena hitherto neglected. In the case of musico-literary relations, the insertion of these relations into a general typology of intermediality moreover shows connections to neighbouring fields, and in fact the same typology could be applied to word and image or literature and film studies.

Nevertheless, typologies are no end in themselves, and we must indeed go beyond typological attempts at defining the field of word and music studies. I will therefore conclude by showing a number of perspectives for some of the sections identified in the typology of our wide field which to me seem particularly interesting.

\(^{22}\) In the field of word and image relations a similar ambiguity can be seen in shaped poems or pattern poems: this device could arguably be identified as a form of the pictorialization of poetry (and this is how I saw it in Wolf 1999b: 42) since on the surface of shaped poems only one system of signifiers is used whose iconic potential is foregrounded in a similar way in which in ‘word music’ the acoustic potential of language is foregrounded as a means of musicalizing literature. However, shaped poetry could also be viewed as a specimen of plurimediality, since the verbal signifiers are here employed in two distinct ways (symbolic and iconic as typical of literature and painting) which are cognitively processed in different ways (cf. Gross). In some rare – ekphrastic – cases shaped verse can also show elements of intermedial thematization (cf. Clüver 1992, 305f., the discussion of Ivo Vroom’s “hommage à mondriaan” [sic; 1966]). In addition, there are borderline cases in the field of extracompositional intermediality, too, namely in cases to which the term ‘intertextuality’ also seems appropriate. This can be seen in comparisons between allegedly ‘transmedial’ phenomena appearing, for instance, in drama and fiction, or in medial transpositions of, for example, a Shakespeare play into one of Thomas Bowdler’s narrative versions in his 1818 \textit{Family Shakespeare} (for the terminological ambivalence in this latter case cf. Zander, esp. 178n1). In all of these cases the criterion will be the heuristic focus of the interpreter: if the emphasis is, e.g., on the moral ‘bowdlerization’ of Shakespeare’s text in Bowdler’s rewriting, the term ‘intertextuality’ will certainly apply; if, on the contrary, the focus is on the transformation of theatrical aspects into the narrative medium, ‘intermediality’ will be more appropriate.
In the **extracompositional** section of **transmediality** a systematic comparative investigation into phenomena and concepts shared by two or more media, including music, is still a *desideratum*. The project of a dictionary of word and music terminology discussed at the Sydney conference would be a first step in this direction. In addition, it would certainly be fruitful to continue the reflections about narrativity and the different media that can be informed by narrative structures (cf. Wolf 2002b).

As far as I can see, **intermedial transposition** has to date mainly occupied scholars involved in literature and film studies. However, this is a variant of intermediality that deserves more attention also within musico-literary research. What happens when a novel or a drama is transformed into opera is certainly not only a subject for librettologists, who have frequently dealt with musico-literary transpositions, but requires a systematic approach that transcends libretto-logy.

As a further concern that embraces both intra- and extracompositional intermediality investigations into the cultural functions of intermediality, and in our case of musico-literary intermediality, would be a valuable contribution to current discussions. The section of the present volume dedicated to cultural functions of the musical stage is a good case in point.

Lastly, at least for intermedia scholars with a literary background, there is still a lot to do in the area of text-centred **intracompositional intermediality**. This is, for instance, true with reference to my own special field, the musicalization of fiction, in which there are still many texts waiting to be discovered\(^2\). Further discoveries are also to be expected in neighbouring areas such as musicalized poetry and drama.

As we see, word and music studies is a wide and exciting field. After having defined its outer limits and inner structure I think it is now time that we direct our energies to individual sections, as just outlined. Yet from whatever angle we cultivate this common field, no-one will be able to overlook the vast area charted by our doyen, Steven Paul Scher, and most musico-literary scholars, I am sure, will continue in the furrows that

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\(^2\) Among further candidates on the list one may mention an interesting novel by the Canadian writer Nancy Huston, *Les Variations Goldberg* (1981), a homage to Johann Sebastian Bach in the form of structural analogies to his *Goldberg Variationen* (cf. Wolf 2002a, ch. 4), and Paolo Maurensig’s *Canone Inverso* (1996), in which mirroring effects are related to the musical structure mentioned in the title.
have been traced by him. In grateful acknowledgement of my own indebtedness to his research, which was largely responsible for my decision to join word and music studies some ten years ago, I hereby dedicate these reflections to him.

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