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## REPOSE, REPORTS

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### How Can We Keep Reducing the Inhuman Factor?

#### A Response to J. Handke in *The European English Messenger* 16.2 (2007), 47 ff.

Rüdiger Zimmermann (Marburg, Germany)

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It was an unpleasant surprise to read in a humanities journal that the main issue addressing us in the framework of the Bologna process is that we should “reduce the human factor to a minimum” (p. 49), “reduce the degree of human assistance” (50), “the in-class phase can be reduced, ..., or it can be omitted altogether” (57).

E-learning of a particular kind “seems to be most promising” (47) to overcome the capacity and innovation problems caused by the Bologna process. Phases “of self-explanatory self-study that do not require further human assistance” (49) are advocated.

Most supporting evidence comes from a volume that Jürgen Handke co-edited (Handke/Franke 2006), with contributions by members of his project.

In the light of the independent critical evaluations by D. Wolff and M. Mankel in the same volume (esp. pp. 190-193 and 208-217) it is surprising that the partial or complete omission of human assistance, i.e. by academic teachers, is still proposed. Here are some of the main observations by Wolff (which I quote at some length in order to avoid bias in paraphrasing):

“The disadvantage of this learning environment seems to lie in the fragmentation of knowledge but also in the fact that a course instructor (when available in the virtual environment) is not sufficient to adequately help learners with their individual problems of organizing their learning and structuring the learned items during the Virtual Sessions. ...Most students believe that for these restructuring processes a teacher or a peer is absolutely necessary....Virtual learning environments do not seem to engage learners in independent thinking processes.” (191)

“The students’ comments on the virtual learning environment should remind us of the tenets of modern learning psychology that

learning is a social process which necessitates face-to-face interaction ... Students seem to need human guidance...” (191 f.)

As for the “highly interactive and self-explanatory e-learning units” (Handke 2007, 57) Mankel observes: “With the exception of one learner, communicative elements such as the message board or the live-chat facility were not used at all” (217). On the contrary, “group work happened purely on the basis of real-life communication that is without the use of synchronous or asynchronous communication devices offered by the learning platform” (216). Therefore “except for two students all participants formed learning groups. They considered working in a group the most efficient way to cope with the difficulties of the material” (216). This reminds us of the fact that internet ‘interactivity’ is a far cry from real interaction, especially in the foreign languages. Communicative interaction is absolutely necessary for the development of advanced language proficiency

In addition, Handke’s claim that “all those new courses of study that have been accredited recently do not deserve the name and should not have been accredited at all” (48) is a bit much. His example of an adequate solution (57 ff.) with differentiation for two learner groups from different programs can be performed as easily in a traditional in-class course; in fact, academic teachers have always used internal differentiation, and why should it be easier to omit unnecessary material from a learning platform than from a book?

The difference lies in the fact that full-time in-class teaching needs sufficient academic staff, whereas e-learning dangles the possibility of reducing academic personnel in front of politicians’ noses: “...the VLC solution uses the in-class time that is normally confined to one class to serve several classes at the same time” (57).

To avoid a possible misunderstanding: Many (most?) instructors in English Linguistics in Germany (including the writer of these lines) do use various internet resources for both research and teaching purposes, e.g. electronic corpora and e-learning platforms that offer various modules such as an electronic bookshelf, modules for online communication

via electronic mail, chat, and discussion boards, as well as exercises and tests and other learning modules. They also introduce students to the possibilities of using these themselves (including documentations in the VLC). But this is always done with human support. Let us stay as human as possible, particularly in the humanities!

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## **The NAES in Ireland: Plans for New Members and a 2009 Conference**

*Aoife Leahy (NAES President, Ireland)*

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The NAES or National Association of English Studies is the Southern Ireland affiliate of ESSE and our membership currently stands at 240. Happily, our membership has been steadily increasing over the last few years. I became Treasurer of the NAES in late 2006 and this gave me an excellent opportunity to become acquainted with all of our members. This year I am the incoming President, following Dr John Scaggs' departure from Ireland to take up a post in Kansas. Ireland's loss is the USA's gain and we wish John the very best for the future in Southwestern College, Winfield. Still thinking like a Treasurer, perhaps (and indeed I have continued to accept dues until a new Treasurer can take over), I hope to attract many more academics to the NAES in the near future.

Traditionally, NAES membership has been made up of the staff and postgraduates of universities and colleges that are attached to universities. The small size of Irish academia means that it is both feasible and desirable for the NAES to invite postgraduate members to join. On behalf of the NAES I was very pleased to welcome a number of postgraduates from the University of Ulster (Northern Ireland) as members in 2007.

One of my aims as incoming President is to encourage academics from Institutes of Technology to join us in the NAES as well. Many Humanities scholars can be found in Irish Institutes of Technology or ITs, since the subjects taught in ITs are certainly not limited to science and technology in spite of the name.

I would also like to see more post-doctoral fellows and independent scholars as members.

A considerable number of young academics have attained PhDs in recent years from Irish universities and institutes, meaning that there are plenty of scholars who are not currently in a teaching post. Some are hosted by universities while pursuing further research, while some are working independently for now. Researching can sometimes feel like a lonely occupation, and we can all benefit from meeting up with other academics in a friendly and supportive context.

I am also very aware of our members who have recently retired from teaching posts but who are continuing to produce valuable research. All in all, I hope that our upcoming NAES conference will provide a good opportunity for a diverse group of academics to get together.

On February 28<sup>th</sup> 2009, the School of Business and Humanities at the Institute of Art Design and Technology, Dun Laoghaire, County Dublin, will host our National Association of English Studies conference under the auspices of the Centre for Public Culture Studies. We are very grateful for the help and encouragement of Dr Paula Gilligan and Dr Barbara Hughes in the School of Business and Humanities in facilitating the event.

The theme of the conference is "Europe in Popular Literature." The Secretary of the NAES Dr Eve Patten (Trinity College Dublin) and I wanted a theme that would look outwards to Europe. Popular Literature is a highly relevant topic at present – modules on detective fiction and science fiction, for instance, are very much in demand in Ireland - and the combination of the European connection and Popular Literature

was irresistible. As an institution IADT is keen to form Erasmus partnerships in the near future, so the European theme of the conference also seems very appropriate to its setting.

IADT Dun Laoghaire exemplifies why we are keen to welcome more of our colleagues in ITs to join the NAES. A wide curriculum of English Literature modules is available in IADT under the BA in English, Media and Cultural Studies, ranging from Renaissance Literature to 20<sup>th</sup> Century Irish Writing. Students combine their literature studies with subjects such as Scriptwriting and Film Studies. Many universities are now moving in the same direction and including Film Studies and Literature Studies on the same programmes of study, particularly in cases where Humanities departments are amalgamating into schools. There has never been a better time for academics in universities and ITs to join together and discuss our common ground.

If you ever find yourself in Dublin, jump on the 46A bus! I have spent a great deal of time on this route myself. As many visitors to Dublin will know, the 46A bus is on an academic-friendly route that stops at Trinity College Dublin in the city centre, University College Dublin to the south of the city and IADT near the coast. We hope that our members from these institutions – and indeed academics throughout Ireland and Europe - will also connect in shared

research interests at the conference. It is also easy to travel to Dun Laoghaire by local rail and transfer onto a connecting bus to the campus. Dun Laoghaire is situated in South County Dublin and is a pleasant seaside town. It would be an attractive destination for any ESSE members who would like to combine a trip to Ireland with a conference.

Proposals for the conference should be made on an individual basis rather than for a particular panel, on any theme that is related to “Europe in Popular Literature.” Panels will be determined only after papers have been accepted. The conference theme can be interpreted as popular literature set in a European location or as any European influence on a popular genre. While popular literature is often taken to mean bestsellers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are open to proposals looking at earlier writing if a convincing argument can be made. All papers must be delivered in English but can be based on literature written in another language if desired.

Inquiries about the NAES 2009 conference can be made to Dr Aoife Leahy at <aoife.leahy@ireland.com> Proposals of approximately 300 words should be made to the same email address by the 30<sup>th</sup> of November 2008. If you are interested in simply attending the conference, I will accept inquiries up to and including February 2009.

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**17th Annual CDE Conference, University of Siegen,  
Akademie Biggese, Attendorn, Germany, 1-4 May 2008**

*Mark Berninger (Mainz, Germany)*

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***Adaptations – Performing across Media and Genres***

Adaptation is still a much contended but also underrated academic field and remains one of the most exciting and challenging areas of interdisciplinary and intermedial research. The German Society for Contemporary Theatre and Drama in English (CDE) consequently adopted adaptation as the topic of this year’s annual conference, organised by Eckart Voigts-Virchow and Monika Pietrzak-Franger from the University of Siegen. The conference topic was chosen with the deliberate intention to test the

boundaries of drama and theatre and to explore the often neglected “performance across media and genres”, putting in mind that adaptation has always been a central element of theatre and is maybe more present on the contemporary stage than ever. In its 16th year of existence, CDE also geographically returned to its roots at the University of Siegen, where the society was founded in 1992. This year’s gathering included playwrights Stella Feehily, David Eldridge and Jo Clifford, the director Max Stafford-Clark,

renowned theatre studies experts Christopher Innes, John Bull, and Albert-Rainer Glaap, as well as other scholars and theatre practitioners from around the globe.

The conference discussions were opened with a “report from the workshop” by Scottish playwright and adapter Jo Clifford, who took to the challenge to speak in Germany on his 2006 adaptation of the most revered of German classics, Goethe’s *Faust* (Parts I and II).

In the following keynote lecture, Max Stafford-Clark spoke on what he highlighted as the Royal Court Theatre’s central ambition: to produce new plays as if they were classics and classics as if they were new writing. As an example of the latter, he singled out his 2004 adaptation of *Macbeth* for the touring company Out of Joint. The “Scottish play” was set in an African framework by Stafford-Clark and thus accentuated both the timeless quality of the Shakespearean text and possible contemporary allusions such as the civil war in Rwanda or images of child soldiers. Max Stafford-Clark’s lecture was supplemented with comments by the Irish actor and playwright Stella Feehily, whose plays *Duck* (2003) and *O Go My Man* (2006) have been produced by Out of Joint.

Another theatre practitioner, David Eldridge, celebrated both for his original plays and his stage adaptations, discussed the processes which lead to the numerous adaptations appearing on the British stage. For his main example he drew on his own 2004 adaptation of the Danish cult film *Festen* for the Almeida Theatre, which proved a resounding success and sparked off several new commissions for adaptations, e.g. of Ibsen plays such as *The Wild Duck* (2006) and *John Gabriel Borkman* (2007).

The fruitful tension between adaptation theory and interpretations of individual pieces of adaptation was approached in several joint papers, the first of which was given by Katja Krebs (Bristol) and Marta Minier (Glamorgan). Minier’s analysis of the 2002 NT production of Jeanette Winterson’s novel *The Powerbook* was given a theoretical framework by Krebs, who connected Winterson’s own adaptation of her novel with Judith Butler’s theory of performativity. Kathy Smith (London

Metropolitan University) worked the other way round, i.e. with a deductive rather than an inductive method. Starting from the example of three productions of Rona Munro’s *Iron* in Edinburgh, Athens, and Osaka, she investigated the intercultural appeal at the core of the play.

Anja Müller (Bamberg) and Mark Schreiber (Siegen) probably bridged the widest gap between theory and dramatic practice by applying typologies of adaptation and postmodernist theory to the sometimes hilarious and sometimes startling versions of Beckett plays on the internet platform Youtube. Ewa Kębłowska-Lawniczak (Wrocław), in a paper on the intertextual use of paintings in contemporary drama, showed the various functions of the adaptation of pictorial art in plays by Tom Stoppard, Shelagh Stephenson and Edward Bond.

Surveying adaptations of 20th-century Anglophone theatre classics on the stages of the “Weltbühne Wien” (World Stage Vienna), Ewald Mengel and Margarete Rubik (Vienna) focused on the changing reception and the different approaches towards plays, in particular Edward Albee’s *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf*. Albert-Rainer Glaap (Düsseldorf) approached the theme of recontextualised classics by comparing two productions/adaptations of *King Lear* from New Zealand and Canada (*Leah* by Geraldine Brophy and Simon Bennett and Richard Rose’s project *Hysterica*).

The importance of adaptational processes for musical theatre and opera was the subject of a joint paper by Christopher Innes and Brigitte Bogar (Toronto) and a talk by Kara McKechnie (Leeds). While Innes and Bogar analysed the reworking of biblical material in the musicals *Godspell* (1970/1) by Stephen Schwartz and John-Michael Tebelak or *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1970/1) by Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber, McKechnie discussed adaptation in opera productions. She took Phyllida Lloyd’s Opera North production of Benjamin Britten’s *Gloriana* (1997/9) and its TV version (2000) as an example of how, in a process of repeated adaptation, historical events are turned into historiography and a historical novel, then into

an opera libretto and celebratory opera, and finally into a new opera production and film.

The question of the adaptation of history in drama was taken up again by Sarah Giese (Bamberg), who analysed Abby Mann's 2001 Broadway version of his own film *Judgement at Nuremberg* and Richard Norton Taylor's dramatisation of the Nuremberg trials for the Tricycle Theatre, *Nuremberg* (1996). The political dimension of adaptations was also addressed in Julia Boll's paper on recent productions of Euripides' *Women of Troy*. Boll highlighted the tragic consequences of a "clash of civilisations" both in classical myth and in early 21st-century politics. Adaptation becomes an even more direct tool of political campaigning in activist performance groups such as *Billionaires for Bush*, whose parodic adaptation of political campaigning to invert political messages and to "invade" and undermine the machinations of the public media space were explored by Pia Wiegink (Siegen). On a less political but still highly intertextual note Davide Maschio (Turino) analysed the adaptation of James Joyce's *Ulysses* in Dermot Bolger's *A Dublin Bloom* (1994).

Academic discussion was further fuelled by talks of John Bull and Graham Saunders (both Reading). Bull picked up on the interaction of German and English drama, concentrating on the adaptations of Bertolt Brecht's *Leben des Galilei* for English stages by Howard Brenton (1980), David Hare (2005), and David Edgar

(2005). Saunders then addressed the adaptation of the genre of the *city comedy* from its roots in the early 17th century to the contemporary stage. With examples drawn from the 1970s (Barrie Keeffe's *A Mad World My Masters*), the 1980s (Caryl Churchill's *Serious Money*), and the early 21st century (David Eldridge's *Market Boy*), Saunders showed how a theatrical form developed under specific historical circumstances can be revitalised in a different age through processes of adaptation.

All these papers and discussions of the conference were complemented by practical theatre work in the form of a workshop by Michael Fry (Essex) and theatrical productions by ACTS (Stuttgart) and Desperate Thespians (Siegen).

During the conference, CDE also proudly presented young scholars with the fifth biannual "CDE Award for Outstanding Research in the Field of Contemporary Theatre and Drama". This year, the award was split between two very different but also complementary studies: Ricarda Klüßendorf's *The Great Work Begins. Tony Kushner's Theatre for Change in America* and Janine Hauthal's *Metadrama und Text-Theatralität: (Selbst-) Reflexionen einer intermediären literarischen Gattung am Beispiel englischer und nordamerikanischer Meta- und Postdramatik* (Metadrama and Textual Theatricality: (Self-) Reflections of an Intermedial Literary Genre in Selected English and North American Metadramas and Postdramatic Plays).

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### **Third International Conference for Literary Journalism Studies 15-17 May 2008, Lisbon**

*Isabel Soares Santos (Universidade Técnica de Lisboa, Portugal)*

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From 15-17 May 2008 the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies (IALJS, <[www.ialjs.org](http://www.ialjs.org)>) held its third annual meeting. After a first conference in 2006 at the University of Nancy, France, and a second at the renowned Institut D'Études Politiques de Paris (Sciences Po), specialists in literary journalism from all around the world gathered this year in Lisbon at the Institute for Social

and Political Sciences (ISCSP) of the Technical University Lisbon. In addition, IALJS also sponsored a seminar at the ESSE 9 conference in Denmark in August this year.

As a promising and expanding field of studies, literary journalism has now its own association, the IALJS, which gathers together theorists, educators and researchers from the most diverse universities and research centers

worldwide. However, it is mainly in the Departments of English, Departments of Journalism and Departments of Creative Writing that both teaching and research in the area are being carried out. Literary journalism is, in fact, a flexible discipline prone to be approached from the most diverse angles, such as literature, journalism and cultural or historical studies. Thus, bearing in mind these multivocal perspectives, the program of the conference included two panels addressing the teaching of literary journalism, at graduate and undergraduate levels, from the points of view of both writing and literature. A third panel, titled "Short-form Literary Journalism: Testing the Boundaries", focused on less studied or emerging forms of literary journalism, namely those now found in the language of blogs, and focused also on the interconnection between newspapers and columnists who fictionalize.

Besides these three panels there were four poster/work-in-progress sessions and an equal number of research paper sessions, each bringing to light innovative lines of research and all bearing testimony to the polyvocality of academic analysis of literary journalism. As such, among the topics covered by speakers were such distinct issues as the narrator's voice in literary nonfiction, the interweaving of fact and fiction in literary journalism pieces, the diverse national traditions, and the hybridity of this form or genre or the political/politicized discourse appropriated by literary journalists.

As in previous years, the conference included a keynote speech by an outstanding scholar in the field. This time, the IALJS was deeply honored to welcome Professor Thomas Connery of the University of St. Thomas, USA, whose contribution to the promotion of debate in this field carried the title of "By Its Very Nature: Literary Journalism's Critique of Conventional Journalism" (a short film of the keynote speech, as well as most of the other presentations, can be found on the website). Introduced for the first time in the program of the conference was a scholar's breakfast, a unique opportunity for discussion, in a more informal environment, of pressing subjects related to literary journalism. Professor Norman

Sims of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, USA, inaugurated the debate and also what we hope will become a tradition, by prompting the question of the future of literary journalism and literary journalism studies and what younger generations of both practitioners and researchers are doing in the field. Most suggestively, the debate was entitled "Future Binary Stars: A Conversation About of Both Literary Journalism and Literary Journalism Scholarship".

The conference would not have been complete without the association's annual meeting at which the chairs of the executive committee produced their annual reports for the appreciation of members. Simultaneously, as expressed in the association constitution and bylaws, this was election year for a new executive committee. In consequence, after the exceptional presidency of Professor John Bak of the University of Nancy, for whose efforts and commitment the IALJS shows its debt of gratitude, a new President and Vice-President were elected, respectively Professor David Abrahamson, Northwestern University, USA, and Dr. Alice Trindade, ISCSP, Portugal.

As already agreed during the 2007 conference, in 2009 the annual meeting of IALJS will be held under the auspices of the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University in Evanston, USA. A call for papers is already available on the IALJS site.

The conference also promoted a diversified social program that included a very Portuguese "Port of Honor", a cocktail reception for all the participants, and a conference banquet by the River Tagus. It ended most pleasantly with a ride on one of the old trams through the hills of Lisbon (pictures from all of these events can be found on the website's "Conference" page).

In sum, quite a positive conclusion can be drawn from the holding of this conference both in terms of the number of international scholars present (see statistics below) and in the fact that this was a unique opportunity, as a forum of discussion, to enhance the study of literary journalism and to promote the activities and name of the IALJS internationally.

Data by country and university/research

centers represented:

**Portugal:** Technical University Lisbon, Open University, New University of Lisbon

**United States:** Northwestern University; Virginia Technical University, Penn State University, University of St. Thomas, Washington & Lee University, SUNY Cortland, The College of NJ, Georgia College & State University, University of South Florida, New York University, St. Louis University, Goucher College, Baltimore, University of Massachusetts–Amherst, Emerson College

**Canada:** Brock University, Ryerson University

**France:** Université de Nancy 2, Université

Paris-Est, American University in Paris

**Belgium:** Université Libre de Bruxelles

**Slovenia:** University of Ljubljana

**Turkey:** Fatih University, Anadolu University

**Brazil:** Universidade de São Paulo, Academia Brasileira de Jornalismo Literário

**Great Britain:** Roehampton University, Stirling University

**Australia:** Griffith University, Edith Cowan University, Bond University

**Chile:** Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

**People's Republic of China:** Shanghai International Studies University

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## **“Metareference in the Arts and Media”: An International Symposium Organised as Part of the Intermediality Programme at the Karl-Franzens-University Graz, 22-24 May 2008**

*Jeff Thoss (Graz, Austria)*

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The term ‘metareference’ refers to any form of self-reference where one moves from a first cognitive and communicative level to a higher one on which thoughts, expressions and elements from the first level become objects of reflection and communication in their own turn. In literary studies, this phenomenon has already been studied for a while, yet efforts to explore metareference in other arts and media have remained sparse so far. Thus it is not surprising that after Kassel (2005), Gießen (2005) and Edinburgh (2007) the Graz symposium “Metareference in the Arts and Media” was only the fourth one that explicitly aimed at remedying the one-sidedness of hitherto existing, predominantly mono-medial ‘meta-research’ through a transmedial approach and thus contributing to an adequate study of meta-phenomena not only in literature. For this purpose the anglicists Werner Wolf and Walter Bernhart invited international speakers from the humanities to Graz for three days. At the same time, the conference also served as starting signal for the research project “Metareference – A Transmedial Phenomenon”, which will be pursued over the next three years through

several PhD theses and a further conference (on the remarkable, unprecedented proliferation of metaphenomena in contemporary culture).

The symposium opened with a series of lectures devoted to general theoretical issues of metareference. To begin with, Werner Wolf (Graz) delineated the area of research, established metareference as a particular case of self-reference and proposed parameters with which one can further differentiate this phenomenon. By asking whether metareference was rooted in the recipient and/or in the medium, and whether the categories of explicit and implicit metareference could be distinguished rigorously, Wolf at once raised issues which were extensively discussed over the next three days. Next, semiotician Winfried Nöth (Kassel) outlined his notion of ‘performative metareference’ and offered a detailed examination of the specifics of language as compared to non-verbal media. Irina Rajewsky (Berlin/Cologne) analysed forms of implicit metanarration that question the concept of narrative mediation and criticised the common practice of ‘exporting’ narratological concepts into other media without paying attention to their particularities. How an

adequate ‘export’ might look like was subsequently demonstrated by Sonja Klimek’s (Neuchâtel) lecture on metalepsis, a concept she illustrated with examples taken from literature, theatre, film and painting. Andreas Böhn (Karlsruhe) introduced the term ‘quotation of forms’ and – distinguishing between intra- and intermedial contexts – made clear under which circumstances this type of quotation could be considered metareferential. Next, Hans Ulrich Seeber (Stuttgart) pleaded for a distinction between rational and emotional factors in metareference and explained how English literature reacted with a metareferential impetus to the emergence of new media like film or photography around the turn from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Claus Clüver (Bloomington, IN) argued that concrete poetry is by its very nature metareferential since it always refers to its own means of production and furthermore frequently includes references to other media. The first section of the conference ended with a talk by Karin Kukkonen (Mainz/Tampere), who highlighted forms of covert metareference in the comic *Fables* by means of the concepts of ‘textworld’ and ‘storyworld’.

The symposium’s second section dealt with the intricate question of metareference in music, a question that was answered in the affirmative by all speakers, albeit from very different viewpoints. Tobias Janz (Hamburg) showed how Beethoven’s “Prometheus-Variations” reflect the circumstances of their own genesis and make use of parody and irony. Hartmut Möller (Rostock) emphasised the crucial role played by context when it comes to spotting metareferences in music. His notion of explicit metareference in music gave rise to intense discussions as this possibility had previously been ruled out by Wolf and Nöth. Afterwards Jörg-Peter Mittmann (Detmold) returned to the topic of quotations and explained their metareferential potential in contemporary music with the ‘use’/‘mention’ distinction: only in the case of ‘mention’ can one speak of metareference. A different approach was chosen by Hermann Danuser (Berlin), who identified titles as a versatile instrument to denote metaisation in musical compositions. Harald Fricke (Fribourg)

treated metareference in opera and used his revised typology of ‘itération’ to classify various kinds of metaphenomena in this medium. In analogy to Janz, René Michaelsen (Cologne) recognized irony and parody as prime strategies of metareference in music, which he illustrated with Robert Schumann’s instrumental music and its affinities with literary Romanticism. While up to now classical music of the past had been the focus of attention, the last two speakers proved that metareference is also very prominent in today’s popular music. David Francis Urrows (Hong Kong) shed light on Andrew Lloyd Webber’s partly affirmative, partly critical treatment of music history in his *The Phantom of the Opera* and coined the term ‘destructive homage’ for this purpose. Finally, Martin Butler (Duisburg-Essen) dealt with pop music, especially political pop music, and clarified to what extent text, music and performance can contribute to metareference in this case.

Metareference in the visual arts was the following section’s topic. Andreas Mahler (Munich) stressed the fact that the deictic ‘this’ – as, for instance, in Magritte’s famous painting *Ceci n’est pas une pipe* – has no clear referent to support the reflections on metareference he developed through a transmedial comparison of Shakespeare and Ahsbery. In Russian futurist Vladimir Mayakovsky’s work, which encompasses poetry, painting, theatre and film, Erika Greber (Erlangen-Nürnberg) presented a lively example for an intermedial accumulation of metareferences in one and the same artist. Katharina Bantleon and Jasmin Haselsteiner-Scharner (Graz) discussed photographer Thomas Struth’s cycle “Museum Pictures”, referring to the tradition of the ‘gallery painting’ as an intrinsically metareferential genre and emphasising the importance of the ‘artspace’ as an object of reference for processes of metaisation in the visual arts.

Cinema and TV formed the topic of the fourth part of the conference. Jean-Marc Limoges (Québec) spoke about different grades of metareferentiality taking place in films as a result of such criteria as coincidence or diegetic motivation. How metadramas are turned into metafilms was the topic of Janine Hauthal’s

(Wuppertal) lecture, who distinguished transgeneric and medium-specific means of transformation. Barbara Pfeifer (Vienna) focused on the relationships between novel and film in Marc Forster's *Stranger Than Fiction*, which she identified as a new, intermedial type of metafilm. At the end Joan K. Bleicher (Hamburg) offered an survey of metareference in German television, paying particular attention to the fact that metaphenomena are not always grasped as such by the audience.

The last two sections covered media and art forms which had not been dealt with elsewhere. Fani Paraforou (Munich) coined the notion of 'performative metarepresentation' in relation to a video by Eve Sussman which referred to Velázquez's *Las Meninas* as well as Michel Foucault's interpretation of it. Next, Daniella Jancsó (Munich) explored the connections between poetry and painting in the verse of William Carlos Williams and explained how Williams uses the differences between these two to elevate and criticise poetry at the same time. Ingrid Pfandl-Buchegger and Gudrun Rottensteiner (Graz) used the Jacobean masque as an example of metareference in dance, which in the case of the anti-masque manifests itself primarily in the form of deliberate deviations from norms and systemic conventions. In her talk on the the forms and functions of metareference in audioliterature Doris Mader (Graz) elucidated how audioliterature as a composite intermedial art form can comment on its own development as a genre and its technical prerequisites. Henry Keazor (Frankfurt) dealt with meta-architecture, opposing the overt, ironic metareferences found

in the work of the American postmodernists to the covert, more subtle ones present in the buildings of French architect Jean Nouvel. Eventually, Fotis Jannidis (Darmstadt) discussed computer games, which, as he argued, can contain anything from self-reflexive insider jokes and games-within-games to explicit forms of self-criticism.

In the final discussion, Werner Wolf tried to work out a common concept and a uniform typology for metaphenomena based upon all that had been said over the previous three days. Among other things, the participants questioned whether metareference always leads to 'medial awareness' in the recipient and whether one should not replace 'awareness' by 'focalisation'. The participants were moreover reminded not to underestimate the diversity of functions and effects which metareference can possess or trigger. The discussion ended with the announcement of a follow-up conference planned to take place from 1–3 October 2009, once again in Graz, centring on the 'meta-referential turn' in postmodernism and contemporary culture in general and the possibilities of explaining this remarkable phenomenon.

On the whole the symposium can be rated as a complete success. The lectures and discussions were consistently lively and on a high level, and the opportunity to meet researchers from other academic disciplines was felt to be very rewarding. The conference proceedings are set to be published in summer 2009 (Werner Wolf, ed. *Metareference in the Arts and Media: Theory and Case Studies*. Amsterdam/New York, NY: Rodopi).