

Again and Always: Intertextuality outside of Postmodernism

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Abstract. Intertextuality became one of the most popular and important terms in the culture of the 20th century. It is usually considered in connection with postmodernism and its ironic nature. Contemporary writing is still intertextual, though far from being postmodern. Moreover, even some medieval texts appear to operate intertextual tools systematically. The article presents examples of intertextuality in different novels from both the pre-postmodern and post-postmodern worlds, and searches for a possible explanation for this phenomenon through methodical solutions that would improve our understanding of intertextuality in the frame of literature analysis. It shows that different features of intertextual writing should be carefully considered in the frame of post-postmodern literature and questions the accuracy of our approach to discussing cultural process.

Keywords: intertextuality, irony, postmodernism, metamodernism, carnival culture, Jonathan Foer, David Foster Wallace, Mark Z. Danielewski

Introduction

Analysis of contemporary writing mainly deals with postmodernism and post-postmodernisms, narrative strategies and the cultural situations of the text. These topics are massive and consist of numerous independent themes and concepts that should be considered together in order to provide a full-fledged understanding of what the current situation is. It is dubious, for instance, that any topical and comprehensive literature research can avoid the concept of intertextuality. Indeed, it has changed the way we reflect the writing a lot, occupying our minds tremendously for the past 60 years.

Intertextuality, as a narrative strategy and a subject of literature analysis, has become topical in strong connection with postmodern studies. Because of this it is sometimes considered a vital component of postmodern text, relentlessly indicating postmodernism. Well, the concept of intertextuality originated long before the 20th century, having been part of literature since its very origin. And intertextuality is still present in post-postmodern literature, although not

in the usual postmodern manner, being differentiated by function and tune. Intertextuality is just a narrative strategy, a tool that writers might apply to form different contexts, with different purposes. To understand contemporary writing correctly, we should reconsider intertextuality separately from any particular cultural trends and traditions. Otherwise, our conclusions will be spoiled by endless methodological misunderstandings.

Thus, the aim of this paper is to take a look at the intertexts in pre-postmodern and post-postmodern writing to reveal what is wrong with our understanding of intertextuality and how it has changed since the origination of post-postmodernisms. I will consider a few iconic novels from the 16th to 21st centuries through Umberto Eco's definition of what intertextuality is, in order to check if this definition is accurate beyond the postmodern paradigm. Is intertextuality (in its postmodern or any other frame) an unavoidable part of any text? And what is the difference between its appearances in different cultural situations, for example in postmodern and post-postmodern writing?

So, what is wrong?

Speaking of methodological uncertainty, approaches to intertextuality and its definitions are very diverse. Some of them lead to the postmodern origin of intertextuality as a narrative strategy. Today, the cultural situation seems to move towards post-postmodernism (as a single entity of numerous scenarios – altermodernism (Bourriaud 2009), digimodernism (Kirby 2009), metamodernism (Vermeulen and Van den Akker 2010), performatism (Eshleman 2008), etc.). However, the confusion with intertextuality and its manifestations in literature prevents us from the correct understanding of its origin and functions in contemporary literature. We should reconsider it and its relationship to post-modern literature very carefully.

The term intertextuality, inspired by M. Bakhtin's idea of a dialogue (1924), was developed by J. Kristeva (1969) and then became a sweepingly important part of the postmodern cultural paradigm. No wonder, since the idea of intertextuality appeared to be extremely relevant to J. Baudrillard and R. Barthes' concept. Baudrillard states that "This is the state of simulation, a state in which we are obliged to replay all scenarios precisely... We live amid interminable reproduction of ideals, phantasies, images and dreams which are now behind us, yet which we must continue to reproduce in a sort of inescapable indifference" (1993: 4). Contributing to this concept and proclaiming the "Death of The Author", Barthes says that "every text is an intertext in relation to some other text, but this intertextuality should not convince us that the text has the same origin; all searches for 'sources' and 'influences' correspond to

the filiation myth of a work, while the text is formed from anonymous elusive and yet read quotations – quotations without quotes” (Barthes 1989: 418). Despite the Barthes presumption that intertextuality is the nature of any text, the understanding of the concept as part of the postmodern paradigm has rooted quite well. It is usually considered an important part of “postmodern sensuality” and is treated as part of the ‘postmodern toolkit’ (as in Hatcheon 1989; Ilyin 2001; Shinyev 2010). Apart from Barthes, Umberto Eco also regards intertextuality as a component of postmodern text. He mentions four main features as defining intertextuality: *metafiction*, *dialogism*, *double coding* and *intertextual irony* (1985; 2004). These features appear to be necessary and sufficient to define intertextuality following Eco’s understanding.

It is clear that while Bakhtin, Kristeva and Barthes described a specific method of writing (though in Barthes’ understanding this method is to be found in every text), Baurdillard uses the term to describe the specific state of mind linked with the postmodernist worldview. Umberto Eco goes even further and links intertextuality to the specific structure of a feeling, specifically the postmodern feeling, describing its specific features and manifestations and thus tremendously narrowing the concept.

According to Eco, *metafiction* is the self-reflection of fiction on its fictional status, where the authorial voice breaks the flow of the text to comment on it openly. Further, *dialogism* is establishing a dialogue with other texts, because a “book always speaks of other books” (a principle that was mistakenly considered postmodern). Unlike Eco, who stresses the intertextual relationship between creative and re-creative acts, Bakhtin states that the dialogic quality of language arises at the level of any single utterance (Allen 2000: 28). *Double coding* is the act of addressing the reader on two or more levels at the same time, using references and stylistic or rhetoric solutions on the one hand, and popular entertainment tools on the other hand. Finally, *intertextual irony* is an interaction with other texts and traditions for the purpose of comic effect (Cerri 2020: 459–460).

The extensive study of intertextuality during the last decades (for instance, see Still and Worton 1990; Martínez Alfaro 1996; Allen 2000; Irwin 2004) has resulted in numerous detailed classifications of the concept in general, and the implementation of intertextual strategies in the analysis of literature, cinema, etc. Torop’s 1995 study of the relationship between inter- and intext, and an extensive classification of text interactions by Genette (1982), are also worth mentioning here. The latter distinguishes intertextuality (quotation, allusion, plagiarism), paratextuality (the relation of the title, epilogue, etc., with the text), metatextuality (the relationship between pretext and text), hypertextuality (parody and ridicule of other text) and architextuality (the genre interrelation of texts). All of these, however, are just different methods of classifying the

same phenomenon, described by Kristeva, Barthes and Eco. Following these numerous definitions and classification models, one can say in summary that intertextuality is a general term to describe the processes and strategies of internal and external communication between one piece of text and another. This includes allusion, referencing and other specific tactics when talking about the particular methods used to produce intertextuality.

Apart from theoretical studies, some scholars have investigated this phenomenon in contemporary writing, usually considering it in relation to postmodern literature. Indeed, intertextuality is sometimes analyzed as a constant satellite of postmodern writing. However, contemporary literature requires different theoretical frameworks, and specifically an approach to the interpretation of intertextuality. Today, when post-postmodern writing needs to be grasped in the theoretical frame we have to understand it in its relationship to narrative strategies of the last century. Use of intertextuality as a pattern, sign or criteria of postmodernism would be inaccurate and misleading.

Meanwhile, there is a kind of tradition to consider intertextuality and irony as key concepts of postmodern aesthetics (as was proclaimed several times by Eco (2004), Jameson (1991) and Huyssen (1986)). Following this tradition, scholars consider the possibility of labelling texts postmodern because of their intertextual nature (Rustad and Schwind 2017). For instance, analysing Jonathan Franzen's writing, Stephen J. Burn states that "Franzen's intertextual dialogues make plain his postmodern origins" (Burn 2008: 19). Clearly, there is some cognitive link between intertextuality and postmodernism that makes us conclude that intertextual texts rather belong to postmodernism – a simple statement that something is intertextual often means that it belongs to the postmodern paradigm, which is not necessarily true.

Furthermore, this leads us to the above-mentioned stereotype that there are some 'postmodern narrative strategies' (Timmer 2010: 109–110; 359) that can serve as the basis for text analysis (Hatcheon 1989). Consequently, the latest research on metamodernism is plagued by the idea of "postmodern literature methods, aimed at achieving modernist goals" (Holland 2013: 201). Scholars keep providing literature analysis based on this concept (Rustad and Schwind 2017) or typologise literary phenomena through the lens of "postmodern methods" (Constantinou 2017). There is even an opinion that metamodernism should not be considered as something independent as it does not provide any new narrative strategy (Eshelman 2017). However, each component of these "postmodern methods" should be dissected and reconsidered in the frame of the post-postmodern world to avoid misleading bounds with postmodern theory. Such a methodologically clear and strict approach is the only possible way to successfully define the end of postmodernism and consider the new cultural

state, whatever that might be. While we are more than half a century away from the first endeavours to understand what postmodernism is, this question seems to lack a final solution, for now. This puts us at risk of getting stuck at ‘the end of art’ instead of moving forward in our understanding of literature and culture. Once again, to move forward we need to look backwards.

Pre-postmodern intertextuality

Each narrative method developed somewhere in the past was rather inherited by successors than disappeared with the developer. This is why one should think that intertextuality will become one more narrative tool, used often after its peak in the postmodern era. Indeed, any contemporary literary writing must be intertextual due to the technological conditions, speed of information transfer and the demands of exacting audiences. We can’t, therefore, think of intertextuality as of a strictly postmodern strategy. It was developed long before postmodernism and will survive long after. In fact, there is not a single narrative strategy that would be typical for a specific cultural paradigm. All of them were invented long before their active use, developing over millennia. This is especially true for intertextuality.

To begin with, numerous intertextual novels were written before postmodernism, or even the 20th century. Tracking back in time, we can highlight a few of the brightest examples of intertextuality as narrative strategy. One of them is *La vie de Gargantua et de Pantagruel* by François Rabelais. Although it was published in the middle of the 16th century, the novel is full of allusions, references and direct quotes from antique authors such as Flaccus or Aulus Gellius, medieval troubadours, religious events (for example liturgies) or their carnival parodies. We can easily find all four features of Eco’s definition of postmodern intertextuality in the Rabelais’ novel. Indeed, the authorial voice often breaks into the text to make comments (showing the *metafictional* nature of the text) not only in the author’s prologue, but also throughout the text.

The novel is also rich in *dialogism*. From the very beginning, the first sentences of Chapter 1 Rabelais addresses the writings of both antique and medieval authors. He not only names, but also repeatedly quotes, them: “... and of Flaccus, who says that there are some kinds of purposes (such as these are without doubt), which, the frequentlier they be repeated, still prove the more delectable” (Rabelais 1994 [1534]). He mentions and quotes Aulus Gellius almost literally, creating a few mystifications concerning Aristotle, etc., and widely quoting medieval poetry and classics: “At the end of the book there was a little treatise entitled the Antidoted Fanfreluches, or a Galimatia of extravagant

conceits”; the final part of “Antidoted Fanfreluches” was written by Mellin de Saint-Gelais (Rabelais 1994 [1534]).

There are also some example of *double coding* in which the author addresses the reader on two levels, creating intertextual references to other texts. The well-known phrase “*revenons à nos moutons*” (let us return to our sheep) is a quote from the extremely popular *La Farce de Maître Pathelin*, written in the 15th century.

Finally, many examples of *intertextual irony*, and their connection to the comic and humorous nature of the text, were studied extensively by Bakhtin (1990). He states that:

Rabelais’ writing is extremely complicated. It contains numerous allusions, often understandable only to the closest contemporaries and friends of Rabelais. The novel is extremely encyclopaedic; there are numerous special terms from different fields of knowledge and technology. Finally, there are numerous new and unusual words, introduced for the first time. Obviously, the novel requires comment and interpretation. Rabelais initiated this himself by adding the “Brief declaration” (“Briève declaration”) to the fourth book of his novel (Bakhtin 1990: 124).

The reason for this many intertextual instances in the novel is probably that it originates from medieval carnival culture and has a strong *carnival feeling*. This is notable because of the strong relationship between medieval carnival culture and postmodernism, which has been mentioned and studied several times (Zatonskiy 2000; Radchenko 2015).

Such a strong intertextual component is present in many pre-postmodern texts, not only medieval, but also Roman (such as *Metamorphoses* by Apuleius) and post-medieval. This, in some way, separates intertextuality from post-modernism, or any cultural paradigm, as it is present in different works from different ages. Another good example of the intertextual novel in classic literature is the picaresque novel *Der abenteuerliche Simplicissimus Teutsch* written by Hans Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen and published in 1668. This novel belongs to the so-called Lower Baroque style and contains numerous references to European literature. In this case the novel’s structure and the author’s style give rise to the novel’s metafictional nature. It is also rich in irony and mockery (generally performed by means of carnival culture) and contains numerous examples of dialogism from the first page:

Tis certain Romulus and Remus were shepherds, and Spartacus that made the whole Roman world to tremble. What! was not Paris, King Priam’s son, a shepherd, and Anchises the Trojan prince, Aeneas’s father? The beautiful Endymion,

of whom the chaste Luna was enamoured, was a shepherd, and so too the grisly Polypheme. Yea, the gods themselves were not ashamed of this trade: Apollo kept the king of Admetus, King of Thessaly; Mercurius and his son Daphnis, Pan and Proteus, were all mighty shepherds: and therefore be they still called by our fantastic poets the patrons of herdsmen. Mesha, King of Moab, as we do read in II Kings, was a sheep-master; Cyrus, the great King of Persia, was not only reared by Mithridates, a shepherd, but himself did keep sheep; Gyges was first a herdsman, and then by the power of a ring became a king; and Ismael Sophi, a Persian king, did in his youth likewise herd cattle. So that Philo, the Jew, doth excellently deal with the matter in his life of Moses when he saith the shepherd's trade is a preparation and a beginning for the ruling of men... (von Grimmshausen 1912 [1668]).

The whole text fragment is an intertextual flood that requires the reader to know not only Greek literature and mythology, but also world history and even the Bible. Together with other components and features this affects the novel, turning it into an intertextual product that is at the same time strongly related to medieval carnival culture. This is quite intriguing also because of the connection between von Grimmshausen's novel and postmodern texts that has already been noticed and studied by S. Varetska (2004; 2008).

Intertextuality is obviously a frequent guest in the pre-postmodern literature of the 20th century. Some texts by modernists are in fact even richer intertexts than some of those by postmodernists. Among numerous European avant-garde writers, James Joyce is still, probably, one of the most proactive creators of intertextuality. Although his last novel, *Finnegan's Wake*, is considered postmodern because it constantly crosses ontological borders, and because of the absence of a stable world (Nestleev 2019: 45), Joyce's Modern prose is also rich in instances of intertext. Even his first essay, "Giacomo Joyce" (1907, published in 1968), written in a stream of consciousness style, was replete with numerous references to classical literature, especially Shakespeare. Even though there are several studies connected with intertextuality in Joyce's writings (see, for instance, Bassnett 2007), and a few attempts to analyse "Giacomo Joyce" from different, often experimental, viewpoints (Chattopadhyay 2016; Longacre 2019), it seems that this essay "has received less than its due from Joyce criticism" (Brown 1990: 132). To present the intertextuality in "Giacomo Joyce", I'll mention just a few examples, though this essay requires much more attention than is possible here.

The text is full of *dialogism*. Joyce addresses Shakespeare (which is typical for almost all of his texts), quoting or mentioning him directly: "I expound Shakespeare to docile Trieste: Hamlet, quoth I, who is most courteous to gentle and simple is rude only to Polonius" (Joyce 1968: 10). He also names other

authors and historical personalities (“Swedenborg, the pseudo-Areopagite, Miguel de Molinos, Joachim Abbas” (Joyce 1968: 1)), although this is rather connected with the stream of consciousness narrative style than with intertextuality as a narrative strategy. Finally, the way in which Joyce’s presents his other novels (also quite typical for him) is also a sign of dialogism: “...had *The Portrait of the Artist* being frank only for frankness’ sake, she would have asked why I had given it to her to read” (Joyce 1968: 12).

Obviously, the essay contains several good examples of *double coding*. The most noticeable is, probably, “Not hunc sed Barrabam!” (Joyce 1968: 16), which addresses the reader both as part of the mind-flow and as a reference to the New Testament. Another line, considered a reference to Shakespeare’s coat of arms, is opaque and sophisticated: “Her arms: casque, gules, and blunt spear on a field, sable” (Joyce 1968: 16).

Although Joyce’s essay was written in direct speech, it is rather non-*meta-fictional*. James Joyce never speaks directly to the reader and does not break into the frame of the text using the narrator’s power. Similarly, the intertextuality of “Giacomo Joyce” is rather serious, emotional and spontaneous than ironic. This is essential to understanding the function intertext in the essay. Without metafiction and (which is much more important) irony, Joyce’s intertextuality is far from Eco’s, Rabelais’ or Grimmshausen’s. Although the narrative strategy is more or less the same, the function and nature of intertext is different, and thus, it has another cause and effect.

It becomes clear that (non-) postmodern intertextuality was rather adopted by postmodernism from classical, mostly medieval, literature and transmitted further into post-postmodern literature, where it is also widely present. This might have happened through the appearance of intertext in modernist texts when this well-known strategy was naturalised to address the current needs of literature. However, it seems that the approach to intertext used by Rabelais and Grimmshausen is much closer to postmodern than Joyce’s, fitting Eco’s postmodern model of what intertextuality is much better.

Post-postmodern intertextuality

Our understanding of intertextuality in pre-postmodern literature is not a huge methodological issue, though it is still a very interesting subject to study. However, this effect in contemporary literature should be considered carefully because of possible associations with ‘postmodern style’. It is quite obvious that today intertextuality is a frequent guest in any text. Rather than a postmodern leftover, it is an effect of several causes.

Since the amount of information we receive daily has grown significantly, we know much more ‘intertextually productive’ information than we did before. Therefore, it is much easier to produce intertext and to understand it. Readers feel ‘smarter’ and ‘more incorporated’ in the process of reading when they track and understand the intertext. As a consequence, literature has to be intertextual to be enjoyable. Thus, the main reason why every text tries to be intertextual is the *progress of science and technology*, which is a consequence of increasingly fast information speeds.

Furthermore, one of important features of ‘new sincerity’, metamodernism and some other post-postmodern scenarios is *nostalgia* for the simple, comfortable past (Radchenko 2019: 498; Syundukov and Svishchenko 2016). Specific subjects and memories – something iconic and recognisable – are required to feel nostalgic about the past. Such references bring in intertextuality once again. Using the same strategy for textual communication and applying the same old tactics, post-postmodern intertextual writing has new purposes: it is intended to provoke the reader’s sincere feelings and tighten the connection between him/her and the text, searching for a common experience and common thoughts. It is intended to cause nostalgia and return affective involvement to the recipient. Intertextuality is no longer ironic *per se*: it is not needed because its main functions have changed.

At long last there is indeed a postmodern influence that affects the post-postmodern writing style. However, the reason for producing intertext has changed and therefore it is no longer part of the postmodern agenda.

A good example of intertextuality caused by nostalgia is the novel *Bleeding Edge* by Thomas Pynchon, a work that has been analysed in detail and is proven to be a metamodern text (Radchenko 2019). Obviously, the novel is not as intertextually intense as *La vie de Gargantua et de Pantagruel* or *Der abenteuerliche Simplicissimus Teutsch*, although it does contain a few iconic labels and names connected with popular music, TV shows, etc., that are examples of *dialog* and *double coding* (for instance Rachel from *Friends* or songs by Guns-n-Roses). It is free from irony, mockery or any semblance of postmodern intertextual tunes. Rather, the novel is an expression of the author’s/characters’/readers’ nostalgia for the world before 9/11.

Despite some particular examples, *Bleeding Edge* is comparatively poor in intertextuality. In contrast *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, by Jonathan Safran Foer, contains numerous references for various readers. This novel also describes life after 9/11, in its own way, through the eyes of a 9-year-old boy who misses his father. It is both much more emotional and affective than Pynchon’s novel, and far from being ironic or sarcastic in that all the characters try to show is sincerity and nostalgia in order to be honest and sympathetic. Meanwhile,

examples of *double coding* are widely presented in the novel: the main character, Oskar, is a 9-year-old boy who plays tambourine, obviously a reference to *The Tin Drum* by Günter Grass. By the way, Anna, Oskar's grandfather's first love had the same name as Oskar Matserat's grandmother in Grass's novel (Foer 2005). Oskar's friend, Mr Black, was born on January 1st, 1900 and witnessed the whole of the 20th century, an allusion to Grass's novel *My century*.

Apart from numerous references to 20th century literature (such as Grass, Camus, Shakespeare, etc.) the novel references songs by The Beatles, mentioning and even directly quoting them depending on the situation and Oskar's tune: "I am the Walrus", "Eleonore Rigby", "Yesterday". These are probably the clearest references in the novel and are great examples of intertextuality.

Mr Black's flat is iconic because of numerous symbols from different times and from the places he has visited, as well as the people he mentions (and catalogues in his filing cabinet) and the artefacts he keeps – bullets, sheets of paper, masks, etc. Many of these things are well known to the reader, creating an informational background to the chapter (and, in some way, to the whole of the 20th century):

The list in my head was getting incredibly long:
Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald, powdering her nose, Churchill, Mustang convertible, Walter Cronkite, necking, the Bay of Pigs, LP, Datsun, Kent State, lard, Ayatollah Khomeini, Polaroid, apartheid, drive-in, favela, Trotsky, the Berlin Wall, Tito, Gone With the Wind, Frank Lloyd Wright, hula hoop, Technicolor, the Spanish Civil War, Grace Kelly, East Timor, slide rule, a bunch of places in Africa whose names I tried to remember but had already forgotten. It was getting hard to keep all the things I didn't know inside me (Foer 2005).

Obviously, intertext is widely used in any contemporary writing that is strongly connected with postmodernism, although considered through the framework of post-postmodernism. One of the most famous and discussed examples is *Infinite Jest* by David Foster Wallace (1996), a truly intertextual work full of sarcasm. The writing of David Foster Wallace is widely known and studied (for instance, see Redgate 2019; Clare 2018). Moreover, it is generally interpreted as an example of a post-postmodern worldview (Timmer 2017) with Wallace often considered a key figure in 'new sincerity' and the literature beyond post-modernism.

The encyclopaedic and allusive nature of *Infinite Jest* has already been proven and described "not as an isolated object, but as a node in a connectionist network" (Burn 2003: 74). It is also strongly connected with other works by Wallace, thus the novel is intertextual and recursive within the frame of his writing (Holland 2019: 128).

The novel contains numerous references to American literature and cinema, many of which require comprehensive, detailed research. Other references are obvious to a broad audience worldwide, such as quotations or allusions to Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*: "I know everybody thinks it's horrible. That old cartridge, Nichols and the big Indian. Distortion. They give you a general here, right? They put you under" (Wallace 1996). The first lines of the novel might also be considered an allusion to Kesey's writing style.

Wallace quotes classical American TV shows considering them within the modern-postmodern frame in a very curious manner:

Chief Steve McGarrett of 'Hawaii Five-0' and Captain Frank Furillo of 'Hill Street Blues' are useful for seeing how our North American idea of the hero changed from the B.S. 1970s era of 'Hawaii Five-0' to the B.S. 1980s era of 'Hill Street Blues.'

Chief Steve McGarrett is a classically modern hero of action. He acts out. It is what he does ... Chief Steve McGarrett single-mindedly acts to refashion a truth the audience already knows into an object of law, justice, modern heroism.

In contrast, Captain Frank Furillo is what used to be designated a 'post'-modern hero. Viz., a hero whose virtues are suited to a more complex and corporate American era. I.e., a hero of reaction ... Captain Frank Furillo of 'Hill Street Blues' is a 'post'-modern hero, a virtuoso of triage and compromise and administration ... But what comes next? What North American hero can hope to succeed the placid Frank? (Wallace 1996)

Although these references require some knowledge of the cultural context, Wallace frames them into the flow of the cultural process along with his thoughts on the nearest future of these processes, clearly presenting his views on the topic.

Some of the films or TV shows in the novel are referencing the real ones, for example "Sixty Minutes More or Less" can easily be associated with the political TV show "60 Minutes". The same can be said of the characters' names, the most obvious example being John Wayne, a reference to the famous American actor and director.

Another complex intertextual system in the novel is related to the apocalyptic game Eschaton and its rules, moderated by Otis P. Lord, who, by the way, shows "how to dicky the lock to Schtitt's office at night with a dining-hall meal card and plug the D.E.C. into a three-prong that's under the lower left corner of the enormous print of Dürer's 'The Magnificent Beast' on the wall by the relevant edge of Schtitt's big glass desk..." (Wallace 1996). Obviously Dürer's painting also refers to the Apocalypses and the apocalyptic 7-headed beast, as well as to the Eschaton in general.

Infinite Jest contains numerous instances of what can be considered intertext. Despite the fact that some of them are rather postmodern artifacts, the novel moves beyond postmodernism to new ideas and concepts. However, while *Infinite Jest* seems to overcome the postmodern paradigm, contemporary writing is still rich in texts based on postmodernism or its narrative strategies, yet it would require a separate study to define what postmodern has already become, and what it has not. To provide such a study we should once again raise the question of a clear definition for what strategies, ideas and concepts are (or aren't) postmodern.

A significant text for this discussion in contemporary American literature is *House of Leaves*, by Mark Z. Danielewski. Since the novel's publication in 2000 it has been followed by a number of papers and discussions on the cultural origin and nature of the text. Some consider *House of Leaves* to be mainly a postmodern text due to the concept of the labyrinth and clearly postmodern narration (Noah 2012; Travers 2016). However, some researchers considered the novel from the metamodern or at least post-postmodern point of view because of its "new structure of feeling" and "reconstructive shift" (Huber 2014; Southward 2015). Despite different opinions on the main cultural logic of the novel, it is clear that the text is quite distinctive and ambitious in terms of narrative strategy. It is full of different instances of every feature of intertextuality (in its own particular manner).

While metafiction, dialogism, double coding and intertextual irony are all present in the novel, they all act at different levels. The narrators (both Zampano and Johnny Truant) constantly communicate with each other, while Johnny also addresses his thoughts to the reader. Moreover, from the first lines ("This is not for you" (Danielewski 2000: viii)) the text itself speaks to the reader, aside from the narrators' voices. Indeed, the novel is *metafictional* in a manner not seen before. While Rabelais speaks to the reader directly in a number of situations, the narrators of *House of Leaves* constantly speak to us and to each other, overcoming the distance between us and them.

The constant references to other texts, films and buildings in the footnotes provides a huge amount of *dialogism*. Zampano (and thus Danielewski) communicate to a different kind of cultural heritage (both existing and imagined) creating walls of references and a number of dialogs with other texts:

For example, there is nothing about the house that even remotely resembles 20th century works whether in the style of Post-Modern, Late-Modern, Brutalism, Neo-Expressionism, Wrightian, The New Formalism, Miesian, the International Style, Streamline Moderne, Art Deco, the Pueblo Style, the Spanish Colonial, to name but a few, with examples such as the Western Savings and Loan Association in Superstition, Arizona, Animal Crackers in Highland Park, Illinois,

Pacific Design Center in Los Angeles, or Mineries Condominium in Venice, Wurster Hall in Berkeley, Katselas House in Pittsburgh, Dulles International Airport, Greene House in Norman Oklahoma, Chicago Harold Washington Library, the Watts Towers in South Central, Barcelona National Theatre, ...” (Danielewski 2000: 180)

The footnotes can be considered points of *double coding* in the novel. Furthermore, as some of the cited works, buildings and cinema mentioned by Zampano are imagined and never existed, the reader can join the game of trying to distinguish what is real and what is not. Indeed, the author addresses us on a different level by creating a wall of cultural links and connections to the House at the same time revealing the huge background to the story he is presenting. Obviously, the most important and well-known code is implemented in the structure of the novel itself. The myth of the Labyrinth and the Minotaur is reproduced not only in the plot and footnotes, but also in the names of the chapters and even in the novel’s layout.

Last but not least, manifestations of *intertextual irony* in *House of Leaves* are also quite unusual. Although the references and allusions are not ironic as they are given, their abundance creates some space for a game with the reader. Typically for a postmodern text, the novel invites us to play a complex game and get lost in the labyrinth of intertext, intext, broken narrative and unusual layout. One of the chapters, “Labyrinth”, literary reproduces the structure of a labyrinth, forcing the reader to go through footnotes several times in different directions and even to use a mirror to read a number of the abundant references. This is not an example of intertextual irony, rather of the role intertextuality plays in the postmodern goal of involving us in a state of play.

The intertextuality of *House of Leaves* is much closer to the postmodern definition of intertext than that found in David Foster Wallace’s or Jonathan Safran Foer’s novels. Yet, it is arguable that it is connected with the postmodern structure of feeling. In the same way, it is dubious (and yet undetermined) as to whether the novel itself is post- or metamodern. Once again, it is worth mentioning that intertextuality is not part of the toolkit, and its use differs depending on specific conditions. Each case requires its own approach and an accurate study to finally get to the truth.

Conclusions and beyond

Intertextuality is not an invention of the postmodern era. Indeed, it was adopted and carefully reshaped in the frame of postmodernism according to the technological and cultural situation. As a narrative strategy, it developed long ago,

probably together with what Bakhtin calls carnival culture. Apparently, Barthes was right and every text is an intertext, although many different approaches to the creation of intertextuality developed over the millennia.

It would be quite surprising to think that intertext will disappear from literature once postmodernism is replaced by something new. This would be especially strange considering Baudrillard's concept of the human inability to create something beyond a simulation of a simulation (of a simulation). Therefore, it is obvious that intertextuality is present in post-postmodern texts now (as shown above), and it will be in the future.

However, this is not the same intertextuality that was defined by Umberto Eco and flooded postmodern texts. It differs tremendously in its role and function both in pre-postmodern and post-postmodern writing. Consequently, we should reconsider Eco's idea of *intertextual irony* as a feature of intertextuality because intertext can be "irony-free". The irony described by Eco is probably related to postmodern texts almost independently of intertextuality as the narrative strategy of these texts.

The role of intertext has changed once again. From ironic quotation it was almost completely reshaped into a sign of nostalgia and 'irony-free' feelings. Despite the same tools and features, the idea of intertextuality for David Foster Wallace, Jonathan Safran Foer or Thomas Pynchon is not the same as for Umberto Eco and Günter Grass or even François Rabelais. It is worth noticing that the use of intertextuality by Rabelais, von Grimmshausen and Danielewski is much closer to the postmodern intertextuality defined by Eco than intertexts created by Joyce, Wallace or Foer. Despite the centuries between them, *La vie de Gargantua et de Pantagruel* is still more postmodern than, for instance, *Infinite Jest*. It is clear now that analysis of contemporary writing (or any writing) should consider the complex nature of intertextuality apart from postmodern or post-postmodern collisions. This is how we reach methodological accuracy, which is our only way to interpret complex and multi-facet post-postmodern literature correctly.

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