

**Transtextuality in Michael Cunningham's *The Hours* with Relation to
Mrs. Dalloway by Virginia Woolf**

Pauli Jussila
Pro gradu Thesis
English Philology
University of Oulu
Spring 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. MATERIAL.....	2
3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND	4
4. TRANSTEXTUAL ANALYSIS	9
4.1. METATEXTUALITY	9
4.2. ARCHITEXTUALITY.....	18
4.3. PARATEXTUALITY	27
4.4. HYPERTEXTUALITY	30
5. THE EFFECT OF TRANSTEXTUALITY ON THE READING OF <i>MRS. DALLOWAY</i>.....	46
6. CONCLUSION.....	53
BIBLIOGRAPHY	58

1. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary literature is full of allusions and references to preceding literature and this has probably been the case for as long as people have been able to write. Thus intertextuality is a widely recognized phenomenon of literature that has been examined extensively, especially in recent decades, perhaps at least partly due to its pervasiveness in the literary realm. The interaction between texts is such an extensive phenomenon that it felt like a fascinating idea to take a look at an individual work of literature, and see how it is possible for a novel to refer to and loan extensively from another novel and still succeed in creating its world and being an original piece of art.

As Roland Barthes proclaims in his famous essay "Death of the Author", the modern scriptor, as he calls the contemporary author, is merely a mediator who draws his material from the endless source we call culture without actually producing anything original. (Barthes 1986: 57-58) Linda Hutcheon quotes Umberto Eco in her article "Historiographic Metafiction" saying that "I discovered what writers have always known (and have told us again and again): books always speak of other books, and every story tells a story that has already been told" (Hutcheon in O'Donnell and Davis 1989: 8). One may not agree completely with these statements, but one must admit that in the field of contemporary prose most of the works produced, at least in the contemporary literary realm, are connected in one way or another with the history of written language. Although languages are in a state of constant development and naturally also literature along with them, one cannot produce a thoroughly original piece of writing, simply because, in a way, everything has already been written. In much of today's prose, the author attempts to hide or disguise the references they use. However, as will be demonstrated in this thesis, sometimes an author chooses to build his work of art on the foundations of an already existing piece.

In 1998, Michael Cunningham published a novel that is largely based on Virginia Woolf's tour de force, *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925, *MD* from now on) and also on the personal life of Woolf. *The Hours* (1998, *TH* from now on) does not leave any room for doubt as to whose work Cunningham is in debt to, and he does not hesitate to talk about the influence Woolf's novel has had on his own writing in numerous interviews, as will be demonstrated later in the thesis. This being the case, it seemed to be a useful to investigate how the different aspects of intertextuality have been utilized in Michael Cunningham's novel. In this thesis the aim is to find out to what extent references to Woolf's writings have been utilized in the novel, and what effect it creates on the reading of *Mrs. Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf.

2. MATERIAL

Michael Cunningham is an American novelist born in 1952, and his works, besides *The Hours*, include novels such as *A Home at the End of the World* (1990) and *Specimen Days* (2005). Michael Cunningham's novel, *The Hours*, was first published in 1998. *TH* is probably the most acclaimed of his works; after all, Cunningham won the Pulitzer Prize for it. The plot of the novel consists of three stories that narrate a single day in the lives of three women who are all living in different eras. The main characters include Virginia Woolf at the time of writing *MD*; namely in the early 20th century, and a housewife, Laura Brown, who is struggling with her role as a mother and a wife in the United States of the 1950s. The protagonist of the third story is Clarissa Vaughan, a resident of contemporary New York. What is worth pointing out in the light of this particular thesis is that the story on Clarissa Vaughan is essentially a rendition of Woolf's *MD*. As Eerika Kokkonen states about Cunningham's novel in her thesis *Queering the Familiar — Family, Gender and Sexuality in Michael Cunningham's the Hours* (2008): "It can be said that *Mrs Dalloway* permeates the

latter novel so thoroughly that they can be seen to be in constant dialogue as from the structure of the narration to the motifs, thematic choices and finally the textual allusions...” (2008: 6)

MD is one of the most influential works of Virginia Woolf. Published for the first time in 1925, it was considered ground-breaking for its stream-of-consciousness style of writing, which Woolf arguably developed to its peak with her novel, and it has influenced numerous writers ever since. It portrays a single day in the life of Clarissa Dalloway and her friends who are attending the party she is arranging. *MD* has a great deal to say, for example, about the consequences of war on a personal level and also on society as a whole. It also critiques and mocks the upper social classes through unpleasant characters such as Lady Bruton. The focus of the novel is, on one hand, Clarissa's problematic relationships with several of her guests, and on the other hand the personal turmoil of Septimus Smith, who is shell-shocked and deeply troubled after returning from the battlefields of The First World War.

These particular novels were chosen as subjects of my research since in *TH* Cunningham does quite extensive loaning, both stylistically and content-wise, from Virginia Woolf and more precisely from her acclaimed novel, *Mrs. Dalloway*. Thus, my view was that the examples of different types of intertextual allusions to *Mrs. Dalloway* would be easy enough to find from the novel, and what is more important in the light of this particular research, there would be enough material to draw some conclusions with regards to my research questions. It is also necessary to point out at this point that because in this thesis the aim is to study the intertextual relationship between *MD* and *TH*, the emphasis will quite naturally be on the story of Clarissa Vaughan, since her story is written as a modernized version of *MD*.

However permeating *MD* is in terms of its influence on Cunningham's novel, some of this thesis will also deal with references to some other texts written by Virginia

Woolf. These other texts will be essays, most of which can be found in a book called *Selected Essays* (1992). However, most of this thesis will deal with references to *Mrs Dalloway*.

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

During this section I shall describe various theories of intertextuality, concentrating on the theories of Gérard Genette, and present the theoretical framework around which this thesis will revolve, in order to describe the intertextual features of Michael Cunningham's *The Hours*. In order to briefly summarize Genette's theory, I have made use of two survey books on intertextuality; one being a collection of articles on intertextuality called *Intertekstuaalisuus — suuntia ja sovelluksia*, edited by Auli Viikari (1991) and the other a survey book titled *Intertextuality* by Graham Allen (2000). From Auli Viikari's book I have mostly benefited from the article by Pirjo Lyytikäinen called *Palimpsestit ja kynnystekstit* [Palimpsests and paratexts]. However, my main source of information on Genette's theories will be, quite naturally, his seminal work, *Palimpsests*, originally published in 1982.

While reading through an array of theories on intertextuality from the two aforementioned survey books, I came across the theories of Gérard Genette. He is considered to be one of the great names of literary theory, and he is probably most well-known for his work on theories of intertextuality. There are also other well-known theorists who have had quite a lot to say about intertextuality. Julia Kristeva (who has been often credited as the first critic to use the term), Roland Barthes and Mikhail Bakhtin, for example, each have their theories, but as I was familiarizing myself with them, I felt that they did not suit the purposes of this thesis. Namely, they did not actually directly address the aspects of the kind of textual relationships

that this thesis is intended to cover, and thus I came to the conclusion that it would be perhaps most useful to utilize the theories presented by Gérard Genette. However, theories of Kristeva and Bakhtin will be utilized later in the thesis, and their theories will be explained in a detailed manner.

Whereas the earlier theorists such as Julia Kristeva and Mikhail Bakhtin preferred to use the term *intertextuality* in the sense that I have so far done, to cover the interaction and reciprocal relationships between texts, Genette prefers to use the term *transtextuality* to cover the entire "field of intertextuality" and presents five subcategories of transtextual phenomena (Allen 2000, 101). Genette presents these categories of transtextuality in his above-mentioned *Palimpsests*. These five subcategories are not clearly cut and they overlap each other. This is the most noticeable weakness, at least in the light of this particular research, in Genette's theory since the overlapping in some cases is so extensive that it makes it difficult to make out the distinction between the different types of transtextuality. However, Genette himself states that these categories should not be considered as absolutely separate entities, and he in fact claims that the categories are bound to overlap at some point (Genette 1997:7). That being said, in this thesis I will attempt to keep the categories as separate as possible for the sake of clarity. In the following paragraphs all the five types of *transtextuality* will be explained one by one.

The first category of transtextuality is called, confusingly enough, *intertextuality*. According to Allen, Genette's intertextuality refers to the "copresence between two texts or among several texts". (2000: 101) To clarify this, Genette has subdivided *intertextuality* into three different types and these are quotation, plagiarism and allusion. In other words, *intertextuality* in Genette's terms means the kind of straightforward examples of excerpts that are taken directly from another text. According to an article by Pirjo Lyytikäinen (Viikari: 1991) which deals with *Palimpsests*, Genette connects this type of local intertextuality to the way Julia Kristeva and Michel

Riffaterre deal with intertextuality. By doing this he makes it seem that the other types of interactive relationships between different texts he brings up have not been taken into account in their theories.

By *quotation* Genette refers to borrowings from other texts that have been linguistically marked as such (for example, by the use of brackets, quotation marks or italics). Plagiarism, according to him, refers to the unaccredited form of quoting another text. These two first types of intertextuality are somewhat straight-forward and unproblematic, but the third type of intertextuality demands further explanation. Genette's own explanation of the term is rather complicated: "-- an enunciation whose full meaning presupposes the perception of a relationship between it and another text, to which it necessarily refers by some inflections that would otherwise remain unintelligible" (Genette 1997: 2). In other words, *allusion* refers to the type of utterance that must be observed by the reader in order for it to be understood as a reference to another text. As the other theorists of intertextuality were mentioned, it is worth noting here that Genette refers to the theories of Michael Riffaterre in connection with the notion of a reader's perception of the relationship between a text and the texts that have preceded it (Genette 1997: 2). Naturally, this observation of textual relationships is the key in recognizing literary allusions.

Genette calls his second type of transtextuality *metatextuality*. This category deals with texts that comment on an earlier text. For example, critiques on different kinds of texts may be considered as examples of metatextuality. What seems slightly confusing is that this category is quite close to the category of *intertextuality*. This is why I have decided to combine the two first categories, and from now on they shall both be discussed under the term *metatextuality*. Another reason for combining these two aspects of transtextuality into one is that for the purposes of this research it did not seem reasonable to make a division between the intertextual references and commentary of earlier texts since they seem to intertwine in *TH*. Another reason for

calling the category *metatextuality* instead of calling it *intertextuality* is quite simply so as to not confuse the concept with how other theorists have discussed the transtextual phenomena.

The third category of *transtextuality* is called *architextuality*. This consists of all the features that are tied to, for example, a certain genre or type of text. In Genette's mindset, every type of text has its archetype which presets and regulates the properties of other texts that belong to the same category. For example, an epoch has an *architextual* relationship with all the earlier epochs through its archetypical form. (Lyytikäinen 1991: 146) According to Genette, this relationship is somewhat obscure, which at the most is usually referred to outside the actual textual content of a novel. Genette concludes his introduction of architextuality by stating that architextuality has a part in directing the expectations of a reader. (Genette 1997: 4-5) This notion becomes quite obvious if one considers what genres consist of. A certain genre is formed with the features that are conceived as typical for it, and thus, if one comes across with a work of literature that has been labelled as an epoch, for instance, one will have certain expectations regarding the work and will, in addition, direct the way the work is perceived by the reader.

The fourth type in Genette's classification is *paratextuality*. Paratextuality consists of all the texts that surround the actual text. To clarify what is considered an actual text and what is not, we must regard all the titles, dedications, prologues and introductions to a text as belonging to the category of paratextuality. The actual text, itself, is thus the text only and even the subheadings in the midst of the text are considered *paratexts*. Genette also divides paratextuality into two subcategories, namely *peritext* and *epitext*. Peritexts consist of elements that are closely related to the actual text such as titles, chapter titles, prefaces and notes. Epitexts consist of elements that are loosely related to the actual text such as interviews, publicity announcements, private letters and other authorial and editorial discussions related to

the actual text. (Lyytikäinen 1991: 148) In dealing with paratextuality, Genette claims that paratexts are often disregarded by some of the readers. However, he also states that paratextuality is "a treasure trove of questions without answers." (Genette 1997: 4) By this he does not mean that paratexts are not worth considering, but that they raise questions that are impossible to answer in a completely satisfying way.

This brings us to the fifth and last category: *hypertextuality*. By hypertextuality Genette means a relationship that unites two separate texts. Hypertextuality also deals with transformational relationships between two texts. The text being transformed is called a *hypotext* and the transformation a *hypertext*. An example of this kind of relationship presented in an article by Pirjo Lyytikäinen is the relationship between James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Homer's *Iliad and Odyssey* (1991: 155). What distinguishes metatextuality from hypertextuality is that a hypertext does not merely comment its hypotext but is structured, normally with some adaptations, on the foundations of its hypotext. According to Genette, the transformation may be simple or indirect. The example that he uses, James Joyce's *Ulysses*, has transferred the action of the *Odyssey* from ancient Greece to early 20th century Dublin (Genette 1997: 5-6). In *TH*, Cunningham has done a similar transfer by in of the stories in the novel by transferring the action of *MD* from early 20th century London to the contemporary New York.

A major section of Genette's *Palimpsests* is dedicated to analyzing the concept of *pastiche*. According to Genette *pastiche* is either done in admiration or as a mockery. However, Genette also asserts that the most common pastiche is the one that combines mockery with an appreciative rendering of a text. Genette also talks about the difference between reading a novelist and writing in the style of a novelist. Genette utilizes Flaubert and Proust as his example of this two-sided process. In addition, he states that the processes of reading Flaubert by Proust and writing Flaubert by Proust are inseparable (Genette 1997: 103). To put it another way, when

attempting to imitate someone's style of writing, the reading process also affects the way the pastiche is written. Thus, in a reading of *TH*, for instance, one also sees how the author has been reading the work they have been imitating.

Finally, in order to look at how reading *TH* might affect the reading of *MD* I have utilized the theories of Julia Kristeva, which are presented in her book *Language in Discourse*. In addition, I have made use of a collection of articles edited by Susan Franz and Katherine Rennhak called *Women Constructing Men* (2010) in order to examine how the presentation of male characters differs or coincides in the novels in question.

4. TRANSTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

In this section I shall analyse *TH*, concentrating on its transtextual features with relation to *MD*. In addition, as mentioned before, I shall also analyze references made to Woolf's essays, the main focus being, however, on the references to *MD*. This will be done by going through all the categories in the same order as presented above, one by one — with the exception that will be presented in the following subsection— and discussing them in detail.

4.1. METATEXTUALITY

As mentioned, intertextuality, according to Genette, is an umbrella term for the quotations, plagiarism and allusions that create a copresence of two texts inside one single text. As the definition for metatextuality seems to be so close to the definition of intertextuality in Genette's theories, I have decided to discuss them both together under the term *metatextuality*. One reason for using this particular term instead of intertextuality is that it might seem confusing if the term that is normally used in the

sense that Genette uses transtextuality would be applied here. Another reason for this is that if an allusion is made to an earlier text, it may also be perceived as a commentary of the text that has been alluded to. To remind us about the definition of metatextuality, it concerns the commentary on the earlier text and, as mentioned, at least in my view, intertextual allusions and such can be viewed as a mode of commenting another text. Next, I shall move on to discuss the metatextuality in *TH*. One must keep in mind that the examples addressed within each category will be mostly those that refer to Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, and possible references to other works of literature will be left for the possible future researchers to consider, notwithstanding the mentioned exceptions of Woolf's essays.

The amount of metatextuality in *TH* is remarkable in its amount and also in variety. There are, for example, direct quotations from *MD* (the quotations are identified by the use of italics in the novel) and they are mostly presented in the story of Laura Brown, an American housewife, who is torn between her roles as a mother and a wife, while feeling suffocated by the demands that these roles force on her. In the story, she is reading *MD*, during the course of which quotations of the book are presented. For example the first chapter of the story of Laura Brown opens with the following excerpt from *MD*:

Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself. For Lucy had her work cut out for her. The Doors would have to be taken off their hinges; Rumpelmayer's men were coming. And then, thought Clarissa Dalloway, what a morning—fresh as if issued to children on a beach. [Italics in the original] (TH: 37)

After the quotation, it is stated that the year is 1949 and the place is Los Angeles. Then it is described how the room in which Mrs. Brown is reading feels to her and her feelings are explained with the quotation above. It is stated that “her bedroom (no, their bedroom) feels more densely inhabited, more actual, because a character named Mrs. Dalloway is on her way to buy flowers” (*TH*: 37). As one can see, the quotation works as a means of setting the mood, but also in expressing the mood the

passage is suggested to set in the mind of a particular character. As James Schiff states about Laura Brown in his article about different renderings of *Mrs Dalloway* : “Through her presence, Cunningham creates a metafictional experience for his own reader, who, in effect, is invited into the pages of *The Hours* (Schiff 2004: 368). In other words, as Laura Brown immerses herself into the pages of *MD*, the reader is simultaneously lured into the world of *TH*.

Another rather noticeable feature related to this quotation is what precedes it. The previous chapter has been about Virginia Woolf and how she is in the midst of creating *MD*. The chapter ends with the following: “She picks up her pen. *Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself.*” (*MD*: 35) As one can see, the last sentence of the quotation is the same one that begins the first chapter of “Mrs. Brown”. Thus, as well as mood-setting for a scene and explaining the feelings of a character, the quotations are also used as a means of transition, and as a way of linking together two stories that seem separate at first sight. A few pages after the quotation presented above, a longer excerpt from *MD* is presented, and again, the quotation is used to create a similar kind of effect as in the example above. As the quotations are at the same time commented through the characters, they also function on the level of mood-setting and linkage, and on the basis of the first two examples they are not quotations that have been inserted in the novel merely to please the readers who might be familiar with *MD*.

As the story of Mrs. Brown unfolds, one realizes that the quotations from *MD* are used as a mode of providing background and explaining the feelings of the character in question. It is also noticeable in *TH* as a whole, that only in the story of Laura Brown are the quotations used for this purpose. In the story “Mrs. Woolf” quotations from *MD* are also presented, but they work in the reverse order. First the emotions and thoughts of Woolf are presented and only after that a quotation from *Mrs Dalloway* is presented. As a vivid example one might consider the following

passage:

Writing in that state is the most profound satisfaction she knows, but her access to it comes and goes without warning. She may pick up her pen and follow it with her hand as it moves across the paper; she may pick up her pen and find that she's merely herself, a woman in a housecoat holding a pen, afraid and uncertain, only mildly competent, with no idea about where to begin or what to write.

She picks up her pen.

Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself.

(*TH*: 35)

In the example above, the emotions of Virginia Woolf are described and as mentioned, only after her emotions are depicted is the quotation presented. The reason why the author has decided to use this type of technique in the case of the story of Woolf seems to be to offer the reader an image of the state of mind in which a certain excerpt from *MD* might have been written, and also to connect Virginia Woolf and Laura Brown with each other.

In addition to the aforementioned effects, the quotations in the story of Laura Brown also connect her with Clarissa Dalloway. At the beginning of "Mrs. Brown" a well-known citation from *MD* is presented: "*What a lark, what a plunge!*" (*TH*: 38) The introduction of the quotation also shows how Laura Brown feels as she picks up the book and starts reading; it is an escape for her from "... the anguish of having to bear the responsibility of parenting almost entirely by herself as her husband goes to work in the morning." (Kokkonen 2008: 11) In addition to the quotation, the time of year is also the same as in *MD* as Clarissa is going out to buy the flowers for her party. Laura has a party to throw as well since it is her husband's birthday. However, she receives flowers from her husband in the morning and consequently she feels guilty for not getting the flowers for her husband on his birthday. In a way, Laura Brown is an imperfect reflection of Mrs. Dalloway in that she has a party to give, but fails to go through with it in the end. Of course, Clarissa Dalloway's party is also affected by the suicide of Septimus Smith. Laura Brown also reflects Clarissa in a way that is

hinted at through the writing process of *MD* in “Mrs. Woolf”. At one point in the story, Woolf is considering whether she should kill the main character of her novel or not. In the end, she decides that it is not Clarissa who should die, but Septimus, the mentally ill acquaintance of Clarissa who has been traumatized by his experiences during the First World War. It gets a little more complicated when one looks at how a similar type of pattern is constructed in the two other stories in *TH*. As Cunningham’s novel comes to an end, the stories “Mrs. Dalloway” and “Mrs. Brown” have become intertwined as it is revealed that Richard is the same Richard that is presented as Laura’s son in “Mrs. Brown”. In “Mrs. Brown” Laura contemplates suicide but in the end decides not to kill herself. On the contrary, in “Mrs. Dalloway”, Richard who has been weakened by AIDS and tormented by schizophrenia decides to commit suicide by jumping out of an open window of his apartment. By constructing the narrative of his novel this way, Cunningham has intricately made an allusion to *Mrs Dalloway* through the writing process of Woolf’s novel.

Suicide is also present in the prologue of *TH* as it is described how Virginia Woolf walks into a river with the pockets of her housedress filled with stones. In the passage, Virginia Woolf’s mindset resembles that which she herself has created in the character of Septimus in her novel. Mental illness and war seem to be a common cause of misery for both of the characters. Although Septimus has been more directly involved in the war, the misery of Cunningham’s Woolf is also connected with the imagery of war which one can see in the following excerpt: “The headache is approaching and it seems (is she or is she not conjuring them herself) that the bombers have appeared again in the sky.” (*TH*: 4) As one can see, in the passage above there is also an allusion to imagining things, which is also presented as manifestation of Septimus’ mental instability in *Mrs Dalloway*. The apparition of bombers is, of course, a reference to the effects of the war, which were still very much present as Woolf was writing her novel. The aspect of war will be more closely

examined in section 4.4.

As mentioned, Genette divides *metatextuality* into three subcategories: plagiarism, allusion and quotation. The cases of allusion and quotation have already been dealt with, but there are also some instances of plagiarism in *TH*. For example, as Richard is sitting on the window sill of his apartment right before he ends his life the following dialogue is presented:

“... There. End of story. Now come inside.”
 “Fresh as if issued to children on a beach,” Richard says.
 “You could say that.”
 (*TH*: 199)

The line “fresh as if issued to children on a beach” has been taken directly from *MD* (*MD*: 3). This makes one wonder why Cunningham has decided to utilize it as a part of a dialogue between Clarissa and Richard. Perhaps the reason for this is that he has assumed that the excerpt is generally known amongst his readers, and that they would recognize it to be a quotation from *MD*. However, there must be some deeper meaning for “stealing” the sentence, since plagiarism does not present itself too often in his novel; at least not in the way Genette has defined the concept. One reason might quite reasonably be that if the part would be acknowledged as a quotation from *MD* the events that follow this exchange between Clarissa and Richard would not work to the same effect. After all, after the dialogue the example above was taken from Richard commits suicide by jumping out of an open window. The fact that Richard, on occasion, calls Clarissa Mrs. Dalloway, because of her first name and because Richard seems to think there is something similar between Mrs. Dalloway and Clarissa partly explains this instance of plagiarism as well. However, this is one of the few instances in which Cunningham quotes Woolf’s novel without actually acknowledging it and that is why it is such an eye-catching excerpt.

There are also a few borderline cases (in terms of plagiarism) in *TH* that have not been taken directly from *MD*, but closely resemble excerpts from it. For example, in

Woolf's novel, a reference to "leaden circles" that "dissolve in the air" is presented on several occasions. In *TH*, Cunningham mentions the leaden circles a number of times during "Mrs. Woolf", but not in the exact same form. As one comes across these short passages, one cannot help but think of *MD*. However, this echoing might be lost on the reader if one is not familiar with *MD* before reading Cunningham's novel. Personally, as I read *TH* before *MD*, the echo effect simply was not there, as I was not aware of the presence of a similar expression in Woolf's novel. This brings about the feature of transtextuality briefly touched upon earlier; the familiarity with the texts a novel is referring to. It is arguably a prerequisite for being able to acknowledge the specific references in any piece of literature. Overall, being familiar with *MD* is almost essential for the reader in order to fully appreciate the multifaceted usage of metatextual references in Cunningham's novel. The familiarity with *Mrs Dalloway* will also assist the reader in observing a number of echoes and linkages between the two novels, which will almost certainly be lost without familiarity with both of the novels.

Apart from the direct quotations from *MD*, a more subtle kind of metatextuality is visible in *TH* as well. In the story of Clarissa Vaughan the names of some characters closely resemble those in *MD*, and also their characteristics are also similar to those in Woolf's novel. For example, there is a character called Richard, who is Clarissa's husband in *MD*. In *TH* however, Richard is a friend of Clarissa's, ravaged by AIDS. They have also been romantically involved in their youth. According to Schiff, Richard is a mixture of four characters from *Mrs Dalloway*, namely, Septimus Smith, Richard Dalloway, Sally Seton, and Peter Walsh (Schiff 2004: 367). Another striking example of the character similarities between *TH* and *MD* is the character of Sally. In *MD*, it is revealed to the reader that Clarissa has been infatuated with Sally in her youth and even kissed her. At times during the course of *Mrs Dalloway* Clarissa is wondering what might have been if she had chosen a relationship with Sally instead of getting married to Richard. In *TH* Clarissa and Sally are living together and have

a romantic relationship. James Schiff has noted that although in *TH* Clarissa has ended up in a lesbian relationship, she still feels insecure about her choices in life and wonders if she might have been happier had she chosen Richard as her life partner (2004: 368). As one can see, Clarissa's uncertainty about her life choices and sexual orientation is an aspect of Woolf's novel that Cunningham has retained completely as he has transformed Clarissa's story. On one hand, it reflects the change in the society, in that Clarissa Dalloway has been limited in her choices by a strict set of social conventions and the rules of society, and is thus confused about her sexuality and life choices. By contrast, Clarissa Vaughan has similar feelings, but in her case the uncertainty is caused by freedom of choice, a luxury that is unknown to Clarissa Dalloway.

As one can deduce from the above paragraph, Cunningham has turned over the positions and statuses of some of Woolf's characters, and transformed them to fit in with the world of his novel. The change in the relationship between Clarissa and Sally is not the only change he has made to the characters from *MD*. Cunningham has also taken characteristics from other figures of *MD* and inserted them into some of his characters. For example, in *MD* there is a war veteran Septimus Smith, who is suffering from shell shock. Consequently, he hears voices, is emotionally unstable and at the end of the book kills himself by jumping out of an open window. In *TH*, Richard, in addition to his AIDS, is suffering from a mental disorder that has similar symptoms as Septimus' mental illness. In Richard's case the reasons for his mental disorder are never revealed. At the end of the novel Richard throws himself, not unlike Septimus, out of an open window.

There are also other examples of similar transformations that have taken place in the characters of *TH*. For instance, Clarissa Vaughn's friend Louis shares features with Hugh Whitbread from *MD*. Hugh Whitbread is a character in Woolf's novel whose wife is suffering from an incurable disease. In *TH*, Clarissa Vaughn's friend Louis

also has a partner that has a condition that cannot be healed; only in this case the person suffering from the disease is also a male. This way the context in which the novels were written should also be taken into consideration when dealing with the transtextuality concerning these two novels. Although homosexuality is dealt with also in *MD* it is not as ubiquitously present as is the case with *TH* and this is most clearly reflected in the difference in the depiction of male characters in both of the novels. This difference can be partly explained also by the fact that at the time when Woolf wrote her novel, homosexuality was considered a crime, whereas in Cunningham's time homosexuality has become more accepted in society.

Another aspect that differs because of context, at least partly, when the two novels are compared is the way in which the male characters in the two novels are depicted. In a collection of articles titled *Women Constructing Men* (edited by Sarah S.G. Frantz and Katharina Rennhak) Virginia Richter deals with how Virginia Woolf depicts her male characters in her novels in an article called "The Differential Construction of Masculinity in Writings of Virginia Woolf". According to Richter, Woolf's male characters in *MD* are riddled with insecurity and restricted by their rigid masculinity on one hand, and on the other hand some of her characters are "fluid" in their masculinity (Richter 2010: 157-158). If one considers this statement with relation to the male characters in *TH*, one can certainly see a similarity between the novels in that both of them contain this dualism in the depiction of male characters. However, if one focuses the attention on "Mrs. Dalloway" in *TH* there is a certain pattern that recurs in the presentation of male characters. All the male characters, apart from Oliver St. Ives, seem to belong to the category of fluid masculinity, in that they have male companions and are portrayed as fragile as well as somewhat feminine beings. For example, as Louis is visiting Clarissa, his eyes begin to tear up as he is discussing his newly found lover with her (*TH*: 134). He is also described as a person prone to shedding tears quite freely. In this the male characters differ between the novels. Not a single tear is shed by a male character in

MD, except for the character of Septimus Smith. Peter Walsh is also a character who, according to Richter, belongs to the category of fluid masculinity since he seems to be riddled with insecurity. However, he does not express his emotions as openly as Septimus does. This particular feature may, at least partly, be explained by context. Although it seems that Virginia Woolf has made an attempt to widen the range of how male characters are depicted, she has still been restricted by the time she has been living in. An apparent exception to this is Septimus Smith, as mentioned. Fighting in the First World War has not made him tougher or more “masculine”. Quite the contrary, Septimus has been traumatized by his experiences in war, which makes him a fragile being in many ways. For example, as Septimus looks up to the sky to read a trail of text made by an airplane he starts crying because he feels he is witnessing “exquisite beauty...” (*MD*: 23). At another time Septimus is observing the nature around him and he is awed by the beauty of the birds, plants and insects that surround him (*MD*: 76). However, it is revealing that the only (apart from Peter Walsh) male character, who is apparently a representative of fluid masculinity in Woolf’s novel, has been traumatized and only this, it seems, has made it possible for him to appreciate beauty and express his emotions openly.

As one can see, apart from the actual characters that have been “borrowed” from *MD*, also some of the novel’s events have been taken and inserted into the storyline of *TH*. The events that are borrowed from *MD* will be examined more closely in section 4.4. on hypertextuality.

4.2. ARCHITEXTUALITY

To recap, *architextuality* concerns all the features that are typical, for example, of a certain type of text or a genre of literature. Genette states that this is the most implicit of the categories of transtextuality. The architextual relationship is usually of a silent nature, either since it is considered as unworthy of mention, or to avoid any generic

classification that might limit the reception of a piece of writing (Genette 1997: 4). In Cunningham's case the first scenario seems to be truer than the second one. After all, he has named his novel after one of the working titles of Virginia Woolf's novel, and stylistically it is paying homage to the stream-of-consciousness style of writing, a style which was forerun by Virginia Woolf. Stream-of-consciousness is certainly a style of writing that distinguishes itself from the conventions of traditional storytelling, and thus this section will concentrate on the stylistic similarities between the novels. Apart from the metatextual references to *MD* that are present in *TH*, the novels are written in a style very similar to each other. In both of the works the stream-of-consciousness style is adopted and in this section I shall try to demonstrate how Cunningham has drawn influences from the style of Virginia Woolf into his own way of representing the consciousness of his characters in *TH*.

Mick Leech and Geoffrey Short discuss the stylistic analysis of literature in *Style in Fiction* (2007). They have dedicated a chapter to thought presentation in the novel, and in this particular section they discuss Virginia Woolf's way of presenting the thoughts of her characters. According to Leech & Short, many of the leading novelists in the 19th and 20th century have been concerned with representation of internal speech (Leech & Short 2007: 270). They also claim that thought presentation is seamlessly linked with the stream-of-consciousness style of writing. In *Style in Fiction* Leech & Short present five different categories of thought presentation: Free direct thought (FDT), direct thought (DT), free indirect thought (FIT), indirect thought (IT) and Narrative Report of a Thought Act (NRTA). From now on I shall refer to the categories of thought presentation by their abbreviations. In order to make the above categories more comprehensible, Leech and Short provide examples for each of the styles of thought presentation:

Does she still love me? (FDT)
 He wondered, 'Does she still love me?' (DT)
 Did she still love him? (FIT)
 He wondered if she still loved him (IT)
 He wondered about her love for him (NRTA)

(Leech & Short 2007: 270-271)

As the types of thought presentation are discussed in the book, it is stated that many a time it can be quite difficult to decide on which category of thought presentation a particular expression or excerpt belongs. Leech & Short utilize *MD* as one of their examples of this problematic ambiguousness. For an author, they state, the ambiguousness provides an opportunity to “slip from a narrative statement to interior portrayal without the reader noticing what has occurred...” (Leech & Short 2007: 272). What is more, the narrator and the characters might merge into one. This is probably one of the most prominent features in Woolf's way of presenting thoughts of her characters, much like in the following excerpt: “‘Beautiful!’ she would murmur, nudging Septimus that he might see. But beauty was behind a pane of glass. Even taste (Rezia liked ices, chocolates, sweet things) had no relish to him.” (*MD*: 96) In the passage, it is practically impossible to discern if it is Rezia's thoughts that are being presented, or if the author is providing information about Rezia and Septimus. The same applies to the writing of Michael Cunningham, as one can see in the following example: “His heart rises. She is older but – no point in denying it – she still has that rigorous glamour; that slightly butch, aristocratic sexiness.” (*TH*: 127-128) The excerpt begins with what seems to be external description of the man's reaction but the second sentence shifts stealthily into the inner monologue of Louis.

One of the consistent characteristics of Virginia Woolf's style of writing is the usage of FDT, and the same applies, quite naturally, to Cunningham's style as well. In FDT, a thought of a character is presented without inverted commas or other linguistic references to the fact that its voice is not that of the narrator. This creates an illusion of narrator's absence although it is in fact the narrator who is telling the reader what the character is thinking. There are several examples of this type of thought in both novels presentation; presented below a few of them:

Both seemed queer, Maisie Johnson thought.

(MD: 28)

Well, better to have a son, thought Mrs. Dempster

(ibid: 29)

I'm so prim, Clarissa thinks...

(TH: 15)

She looks older, Louis thinks in astonishment.

(ibid: 125)

The effect this stylistic choice creates is that the narrator and the character, in a way, seem indistinguishable from each other. In other words, the narrator takes on a number of roles, although, in fact, it is the narrator who is still telling the reader what his characters are thinking. As was mentioned in connection with Leech & Short's book, this also makes it difficult for the reader to decide whether it is the narrator's or the character's voice. Leech & Short also touch upon the conversational style of thought presentation in Virginia Woolf's novel. According to them this stylistic choice makes it seem that the characters are in complete control of their thought process. (Leech & Short 2007: 275)

One of the most noticeable similarities between the novels is that they are both mostly narrated from a third person point-of-view, but when the narration moves on to depict the thoughts of a character, it shifts towards first-person narrative. This change in the narrative is noticeable for example in the following excerpts from *TH* and *MD*.

For so it had always seemed to her when, with a little squeak of the hinges, which she could hear now, she had burst open the French windows and plunged at Bourton into the open air. How fresh, how calm, stiller than this of course, the air was in early morning...

(MD: 3)

Virginia awakens. This might be another way to begin, certainly; with Clarissa going on an errand on a day in June, instead of soldiers marching off to lay the wreath in Whitehall. But is it the right

beginning? Is it a little too ordinary? Virginia lies quietly in her bed...
(*TH*: 29)

When one compares these passages with each other, it is noticeable that the aforementioned shift in describing the emotions of a character is subtly presented and it is not immediately clear to whom the voice belongs to. This is probably due to the fact that when the shift occurs, the characters are not unquestionably speaking to themselves. To clarify, there is not any first person pronoun present in the stream-of-consciousness when the thoughts of the characters are presented.

Another quite apparent stylistic similarity between the novels is the extensive use of brackets. It seems that in most of the cases where brackets are utilized, they encircle a passing thought of one of the characters. For example, in *MD*, Mr. Bentley's thoughts are presented in the following way as he notices an aeroplane flying in the sky: "Away and away the aeroplane shot, till it was nothing but a bright spark; an aspiration; a concentration; a symbol (so it seemed to Mr. Bentley, vigorously rolling his strip of turf at Greenwich) of man's soul;" (*MD*: 30). As one can see, the sight of an aeroplane inflicts a thought upon Mr Bentley, concerning what the aeroplane symbolizes for him at that particular moment. The following excerpt from the story "Mrs. Woolf" is a similar example in terms of utilizing brackets in thought presentation in *TH*: "First come the headaches, which are not in any way ordinary pain ("headache" has always seemed an inadequate term for them, but to call them by any other would be too melodramatic)." (*TH*: 70) In addition to encircling a passing thought of a character, the brackets seem to have the function of providing additional information to the sentence preceding the brackets, which is the most common way of using brackets. In the first quotation, the information given is that the thoughts presented in the preceding sentence belong to Mr. Bentley. The bracketed part of the quotation from *TH* is utilized to clarify what is extraordinary about Virginia's headaches.

Another way the brackets are utilized in both of the texts is to describe an object or a landscape a character is seeing. To put it another way, these “descriptive brackets” are signs of authorial intrusion. In general it seems that the narrator in both of the novels stays in the background and only sees the world through the character's observations, but these additions in brackets make the reader aware of narrator's presence. The use of brackets also gives the reader an impression that world of the novel is perceived through the eyes of a character, created by the author instead of thinking that the author has crafted the world of the novel in his own head. Consequently, the world of the novel escapes from creating a feeling of an artificially created universe by showing it through the characters that are living in it, much like a movie camera in films.

A striking characteristic of Cunningham's style in *TH* is repetition. For instance, when Louis meets Clarissa after a long time, his mind is filled with a single thought, and this is depicted by means of repetition: “She looks older, Louis thinks as he follows Clarissa into the apartment (eight steps, turn, then another three steps). She looks older, Louis thinks in astonishment.” (*TH*: 125) Virginia Woolf seems to prefer similar means to illustrate a character's temporary obsession which revolves around one single thought. Take for example the first page of *MD* in which Clarissa is trying to remember a thing Peter Walsh used to repeat to her: “...standing and looking until Peter Walsh said, ‘Musing among the vegetables?’ - was that it? – ‘I prefer men to cauliflowers.’ -was that it?” (*MD*: 3) This feature hints at what Cunningham appreciates in Woolf's style of writing. It portrays quite realistically what happens inside one's mind when a single thought is stuck in it for a period of time.

Both of the authors also have a tendency to use quite complex sentences, this being one of the most characteristic features of stream-of-consciousness writing. The complexity of the sentences presents itself, for example, in the use of semi-colons, colons, and also in the way both of the authors utilize lists of words. In addition, they

also tend to link several subordinate clauses one after another. Arguably this is due to the attempt to concentrate on “realistic” depiction of mental processes. Below are examples from both of the novels:

Up in the sky swallows swooping, swerving, flinging themselves in and out, round and round, yet always with perfect control as if elastics held them; and the flies rising and falling; and the sun spotting now this leaf; and the sun spotting now this leaf, now that, in mockery, dazzling it with soft gold in pure good temper; and now and again some chime (it might be a motor horn) tinkling divinely on the grass stalks — all of this, calm and reasonable as it was, made out of ordinary things as it was, was the truth now; beauty, that was the truth now.
(*MD*: 76)

He'd have wanted to talk about how the bag (say it had contained potato chips and overripe bananas; say it had been thoughtlessly discarded by a harassed, indigent mother as she left a store amid her gaggle of quarrelling children) will blow into the Hudson and float all the way to the ocean where eventually a sea turtle, a creature that could live a hundred years, will mistake it for a jellyfish, eat the bag, and die
(*TH*: 20)

As one can see from the above excerpts, both of the authors utilize semi-colons, brackets and commas and this makes it possible for the sentences to be several dozens of words long. However, it should be noted that Cunningham's tendency to use complex sentence structures does not seem to present itself to the same extent as Woolf's.

As one can see in the example of Mr. Bentley's observation of an airplane, Virginia Woolf uses a list of words to describe the things the airplane evokes in Mr. Bentley's thoughts. Similar usage of word lists is also characteristic of Michael Cunningham's style in *TH*. “... (a bird had flown in through the open window of her classroom, violent, dreadful.)” (*TH*: 49) The author could have simply described the classroom in the following way: “Her classroom, which was violent and dreadful.” This stylistic choice has to do with how a person's mind works. It is rarely the case that one thinks in full and grammatically correct sentences.

Stella McNichol states in her introduction for *MD* that Woolf's style of writing is "very cinematic". McNichol declares that Woolf makes use of such stylistic devices known from movies such as "montage, close-ups, flashbacks, tracking shots and rapid cuts in creating a three-dimensional story" (*MD*: xii). This is hardly a surprise when one considers the time in which *MD* was written. The Film as a new media had just arrived in Europe and Virginia Woolf was clearly impressed by this new art form, for she also wrote an essay titled "The Cinema" just after *MD* was published. In the essay Woolf states the following about the art form in question: "All is bubble bubble, swarm and chaos. We are peering over the edge of a cauldron in which fragments seem to simmer, and now and again some vast shape heaves and seems about to haul itself up out of chaos and the savage in us starts forward in delight" (*MD*: 172). The cinematic devices are also clearly present in *TH*. In fact, in *TH* there are also allusions to cinema. In a scene in which Clarissa is startled by a sudden noise coming from the outside of a florist's boutique (present in both of the novels), it turns out that the noise is caused by a film crew. In addition, the use of flashbacks and tracking shots, for example, is quite frequent in *TH*. The following is a concrete example of a cinematic scene in *TH*:

She imagines Barbara still in the cool dimness on the far side of the door. Continuing to live in what Clarissa can't help thinking of now as the past (it has to do, somehow, with Barbara's sorrow, and the racks of ribbons on the back wall) while she herself walks into the present, all this: the Chinese boy careening by on a bicycle: the number 281 written in gold on dark glass; the scattering of pigeons with feet the colour of pencil erasers... (*TH*: 49)

The excerpt above contains a flashback (Clarissa thinking of her past) and a montage-like description of what is happening around Clarissa in New York City. As one can see, the scene moves from Clarissa's thoughts towards the description of what is happening around her in the city. The thoughts of Clarissa about her old friend evoke a flashback from Clarissa's youth, which then shifts into a montage of several events taking place around Clarissa in the present world. A similar usage of

montage can be found in *MD* also: “And everywhere, though it was still so early, there was a beating, a stirring of galloping ponies, tapping of cricket bats; Lords, Ascot, Ranelagh and all the rest of it.” (*MD*: 3) As one reads through the aforementioned passages, one can almost see a film camera capturing the scenes of New York and London that the passages are depicting.

For considering the stylistic features of both of the novels, it proved to be quite revealing to take a look at Virginia Woolf's essay “Modern Fiction” published in a book called *Collected Essays II*, first published in 1966. In her essay Woolf states the following: “Life is not a series of gig-lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end.” (Woolf 1966: 106) In her essay, Woolf uses most of the space by criticising the “materialist” writers because in her opinion they are obsessed with concrete notions when they should be concentrating more on the spiritual ones. At the same time, she is describing her personal style as a writer and her description of modern fiction, a representative of which her writings also arguably belong to, also applies to Cunningham's style. Both of the writers concentrate more on writing about the thoughts that go through the heads of their characters and their inner worlds. Another noticeable feature in Cunningham's style of writing is that the description of milieus and settings does not play as significant part as it tends to do in literature in general and the same can be stated about *MD*.

Finally, it should be considered how Cunningham's architextual allusions to *MD* might affect its reading. The fact that both novelists have a similar manner of presenting the thoughts of their characters might somewhat disturb the readers, in that they might think that Cunningham's writing is derivative and unoriginal, but once one overcomes the probable initial shock, one notices that Cunningham has in fact merely used Woolf's style as a springboard to create his own style of writing. As James Schiff states:

What becomes apparent in *The Hours* is that almost every technique, trope, motif, and theme derives from Woolf... However, Cunningham employs these Woolfian elements to create something slightly different, something that is his own.
(Schiff 2004: 370)

It should be also kept in mind that as Cunningham has been writing his novel, he intentionally echoes Woolf's style of writing more than usual, since one of the storylines of his novel has been derived from her novel. However, this aspect concerning the novels will be examined more closely in section 5 of the thesis.

4.3. PARATEXTUALITY

Next I shall discuss the paratexts in *TH* that are somehow connected to *MD*. In Genette's terminology, paratextuality consists of all the texts in a particular piece of literature that is not considered as the actual text. Paratextuality is also divided into two subcategories, *peritexts* and *epitexts*. Those texts which have a close relation to the actual text are called peritexts and those that are loosely related to the actual texts are called epitexts. Peritexts are texts such as the title of the book, subheadings of chapters and so on. Epitexts are texts such as editorial letters, the interviews concerning the actual text, public announcements et cetera. It is also worth noting that book covers are also included in this category according to Genette. Thus actual text refers only to the parts where, in this case at least, the actual story is moving forward. First I shall be analyzing the peritexts that are to be found in *TH* that are somehow linked to *MD*.

Perhaps the most obvious case of paratextual referencing to *MD* is that Cunningham has decided to use the words Mrs. Dalloway as a subheading of the story of Clarissa Vaughan. It is a well-founded choice by the author, since he has written the story of Clarissa Vaughan as a rendition of *MD*, although with some changes in the story and the relationships between characters. The fact that her friend, Richard, calls her Mrs.

Dalloway several times during the novel also validates this choice.

At the end of the edition published in 1998, there is a letter from the author in which he comments on the sources that he used in writing his novel. Among other things he comments on the paratexts that he had found from the different editions of *MD* before writing *TH*; more precisely he speaks about the introductions to the editions. This means he is in fact creating a pretext using an earlier paratext as a reference point, and although he is not referring to the actual text of *MD*, he is thus, perhaps unconsciously, referring to aspects of *MD*. This way an author may direct the reader of a particular novel to familiarize oneself with the texts that the author considers worth mentioning

Another paratextual reference to *MD* is the title of Cunningham's novel, *The Hours*, that is also known to be one of the working titles for Woolf's novel and it has even been published under the same title. Both of the novels also revolve around the subjective experience of the concept of time and this is also related to the title of the novel. In addition, the events in both of the narratives are placed inside a very limited time frame, *MD*'s events all occur during a one single day and in *TH* all of the three narratives concentrate on a one day on the lives of their protagonists.

As *TH* is probably the most acclaimed of Cunningham's novels, it is quite natural that in a remarkable amount of interviews he has been asked about how Virginia Woolf, and especially *MD*, has affected his style of writing. For example, in an interview made with PBS Newshour, the first question asked by Elizabeth Farnsworth has to do with the influence Cunningham has drawn from Virginia Woolf. In fact, the first half of the interview deals with practically only the effect Woolf and *MD* had on *TH*. In another interview for Bomb Magazine found online at Bombsite.com, Cunningham has the following to say about *MD*:

MC: Here I was, an aspiring criminal, an authority on the lyrics of Bob Dylan, and something in this novel that chronicled a day in the life of a

52-year old, upper-class English woman just knocked me down. That book feels almost as much a part of my life, my experiences, as my childhood does, or the time I lost my virginity, or the first time I fell in love— the experiences everyone has that are some of the traditional material for novels. Mrs. Dalloway got mixed up in there, along with falling in love and losing my virginity. It felt like part of my own life story.

Based on the above passage from the interview, I believe it is safe to say that interviews that deal with *TH* have a great deal to do with *MD* and the influence Cunningham has drawn from Virginia Woolf's works. The fact that Cunningham compares reading *MD* to the first time he fell in love gives the reader an impression of how remarkable *MD* has been for him in general, and also how it has influenced the writing process of *TH*.

In another interview, in barnesandnoble.com, Cunningham discusses the influence *Mrs Dalloway* had on him in the following way:

I hadn't known, until then, that you -- that anyone -- could do such things with language; I'd never seen sentences of such complexity, musicality, density, and beauty. I remember thinking, "Hey, she was doing with language something like what Jimi Hendrix does with a guitar." *Mrs. Dalloway* made me into a reader, and it was only a matter of time until I became a writer.

In addition to stating why Cunningham was drawn into the writings of Virginia Woolf in the first place, in the passage Cunningham also reveals to his audience what it exactly that he appreciates in her style of writing is. The complexity and density of Woolf's writing certainly may be seen in *TH* as well, as was demonstrated earlier. In the same interview Cunningham is also asked about his favorite writers, and it comes as no surprise that here also Cunningham mentions Virginia Woolf and *MD*. In fact, Cunningham states that he appreciates the fact that *MD* concentrates on one single day in the life of a woman. If one looks at how *TH* is constructed, one can see this preference clearly. After all, the novel consists of three stories, in which events of one single day in the lives of three women are depicted. Finally, James Schiff quotes

Cunningham stating the following about what he has been trying to accomplish with *TH*:

What I wanted to do was more akin to music, to jazz, where a musician will play improvisations on an existing piece of great music from the past—not to reinvent it, not to lay any kind of direct claim to it, but to both honor it and try to make other art out of an existing work of art. (Schiff 2004: 367)

Cunningham is not claiming he has written something completely original, but that he has wanted to pay a tribute to a piece of writing he considers important.

As mentioned, the book's cover is also considered as a paratext by Genette. The 1998 edition of *TH* by Picador Publishing has flowers and flower petals on its cover. When one contemplates what an important motif flowers are in *MD*, the cover as well can be seen as a paratextual reference to *MD*. However, the 1992 edition of *MD* does not have flowers on its cover, but a shadow that vaguely reminds one of a woman, perhaps Virginia Woolf or Clarissa Dalloway. In spite of this, on the back cover of *MD* there is a picture of Virginia Woolf, with wallpaper filled with flowers in the background. This can very well be a coincidence, but it reinforces the notion that in Cunningham's book, the cover refers to *MD*, or at least to Virginia Woolf, although admittedly in a very superficial manner.

4.4. HYPERTEXTUALITY

Finally, I shall discuss the *hypertextuality* in *TH*. To remind ourselves, hypertextuality deals with the transformational relationship between two texts. *Hypotext* is the text that is structured on the basis of its *hypertext*. In her article, Pirjo Lyytikäinen uses James Joyce's *Ulysses* as an example of a hypotext of *Odyssey* by Homer. A similar relationship is built between *TH* and *MD* and during this section I shall demonstrate how that relationship is structured. This subject was also touched upon under the section of metatextuality, since these types of transtextuality

somewhat overlap.

As mentioned under the section on metatextuality, the events in the story of Clarissa Vaughan coincide with those in *MD*. At this point it is necessary to point out that as a whole *TH* cannot be considered a hypotext for *MD*, since only the story of Clarissa is structured upon Woolf's novel. Thus, during this section mostly one part of *TH* will be dealt with. One will certainly find some similarities with *MD* from the stories of Laura Brown and Virginia Woolf as well, but when one contemplates the definition in the background section, according to a strict interpretation the two other stories cannot be considered as hypotexts since they do not use *MD* as a basis. This being said, there are still features of the two other stories in Cunningham's novel that are so closely related to Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, that I will deal with them also under this particular section.

Right from the beginning of the "Mrs. Dalloway" section it is made clear to the reader that Clarissa Vaughan is the contemporary version of a character created by Virginia Woolf, Clarissa Dalloway. Both of the characters are going to buy flowers for a party they will be giving on that same day. Both of the Clarissa's are also giving the party at the same time, at the end of June. One can see the similarity vividly, as one compares the beginnings of both "Mrs Dalloway" and *MD*:

Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself.

For Lucy had work cut out for her... And then, thought Clarissa Dalloway, what a morning — fresh as if issued to children on a beach.

What a lark! What a plunge! For so it had always seemed to her when, with a little squeak of the hinges, which she could hear now, she had burst open the French Windows and plunged at Bourton into the open air. [Indents in the original.]

(*MD*: 3)

There are still the flowers to buy. Clarissa feigns exasperation (though she loves doing errands like this), leaves Sally cleaning the bathroom, and runs out, promising to be back in half an hour.

It is New York City. It is the end of the twentieth century. The

vestibule door opens onto a June morning so fine and scrubbed Clarissa pauses at the threshold as she would at the edge of a pool, watching the turquoise water lapping at the tiles, the liquid nets of sun wavering in the blue depths.

(*TH*: 9)

As one may observe, the above passages are strikingly similar to each other. First of all, in both of the excerpts it is explained how Clarissa is going to buy flowers for a party and leave someone to run other errands that are also necessary in order to ensure that the party will ensue as planned. In addition, the vocabulary connected with water is utilized to express how the beautiful summer morning affects Clarissa's mind. In *MD*, Clarissa is feeling as if she is "plunging" onto the streets of London to run her errand of getting the flowers. In *TH*, Clarissa is depicted as stopping at the threshold of her apartment building "as she would at the edge of a pool". In other words, in both of the novels Clarissa is preparing for a plunge that is the equivalent of entering the busy streets of a large city. As one compares these passages, it seems obvious that Cunningham has intentionally written the passage in a way that will make the reader think of *MD*. Naturally, if the reader has not read *MD*, they will not probably notice anything out of the ordinary at the beginning of "Mrs. Dalloway".

Clarissa Vaughan is giving the party to her terminally ill friend, Richard to celebrate a literary award he has won. The reason for the party Mrs. Dalloway is giving is never revealed, but the reason seems to differ from that in *TH*. The events coincide with *MD* in other ways too, but there are also some events present in *MD* that are not there in *TH*. In fact, the narrative is lot more condensed in *TH* than in *MD*. The obvious explanation for this is that Cunningham has decided to tell the story of Clarissa within far fewer pages than Virginia Woolf did. Much of the flashbacks and other techniques that Woolf uses to make her characters go back in time and their thoughts sidetrack to something that has happened in their past or to some other character. This does occasionally occur in *TH* as well, but not quite as often as it does in *MD*. This being said, a more reasonable question arises from the notion that

Cunningham's narrative is more condensed than that of Woolf's. Namely, what has Cunningham decided to omit from his narrative and how does it affect the transformation of *MD*?

To begin with, flowers play a major part in both of the novels. In fact, it seems to be a central motif in both of them. *MD* and Clarissa's story in *TH* both start in a similar way, as one notices from the passages quoted above, by stating that Clarissa will get the flowers for the party. In the story of Mrs. Brown also, Laura is thinking of going to buy flowers since it is her husband's birthday. To Laura Brown the flowers seem to indicate ideal circumstances and happiness. However, there is a passage in which she is thinking of the flowers she is going to buy her husband and when she notices that her husband has bought her flowers she starts feeling guilty, for she feels she should have bought the flowers for her husband, Dan. The flowers seem to illustrate the feelings of the characters in that on several occasions where flowers are being referred to, they seem to cause an emotion for the central characters as in the aforementioned case. In *MD*, flowers are also connected with death as Septimus imagines that his dead friend Evans is rising from a flowerbed at which he is looking. The flowers are also connected with death in *TH* as in "Mrs Woolf" Virginia's niece and two nephews find a dead bird and want to give it a funeral. Consequently, they arrange a deathbed for the bird out of flowers they find from Virginia and Leonard's (Virginia's husband) garden.

As the framework for the stories on Clarissa Vaughan and Clarissa Dalloway is very similar, some of the events are clearly taken from *MD* but adapted to fit the contemporary mindset, and Cunningham has clearly created his own world using *MD* as basis for his own way of telling a story. As mentioned, in *MD*, there is the character of Septimus, a war veteran who suffers from hallucinations and at the end of the novel kills himself by throwing himself out of an open window. In *TH*, it is Clarissa's friend Richard who hears voices in his head and ends up killing himself in

the same way as Septimus. In *Women Constructing Men*, Virginia Richter characterizes Septimus in the following way:

If Septimus, as Bradshaw's antipode, can be interpreted as the representative of a new, less domineering and predatory, more fluid and sensitive masculinity, it also must be said that this new concept is presented as marginal and ultimately silenced, as not —yet—viable in a society whose modernization is more superficial than it appears.
(Richter 2010: 161)

As was pointed out earlier, Richter has categorized Woolf's male characters into men who represent rigid masculinity and those who represent fluid masculinity. As stated in the quotation above, Septimus is representative of this fluid and sensitive masculinity. However, as it happens, partly because of this sensitivity, he ends his life at the end of *MD*. Richard is, in a sense very similar to Septimus, yet in Richard's case the traumas have been caused by his illnesses, schizophrenia and AIDS virus, which render him unable to enjoy life. Septimus and Richard share other qualities as well. For instance, they both appear to be imagining Greek voices in their heads. In Septimus' case the voices he hears are caused by birds. Richard hears voices inside his head in Greek, as he tells Clarissa in *TH*.

Another remarkable similarity between *TH* and *MD* is the passage in which Clarissa goes to the florists. As Clarissa is choosing the flowers for the party she will be giving, something surprising happens. What is different between the scenes is that in *TH* Clarissa and the florist hear a shattering sound which somewhat later turns out to be noise made by a film crew. In *MD*, the florist and Clarissa hear what is described as a "violent explosion" (*MD*: 14), which turns out to be a sound made by a car backfiring. What follows in both of the novels is that it is described how a famous person is seen and people try to think who the person might be. In *TH* it is, quite naturally, a film star, perhaps Meryl Streep or Vanessa Redgrave and in *MD* it seems that the mysterious person is the prime minister. This passage, although only a page long seems to have a major significance in both of the novels. In both of the novels the florist seems to feel some sort of affection towards Clarissa, and in both of the

scenes Clarissa seems to feel at least slightly guilty for not reciprocating this feeling. There is also a peculiar difference between the novels in how the florist and Clarissa interact with one another. Whereas in *MD* the florist is called formally by her last name, in *TH* the florist is known by her first name only.

It was also mentioned in the section dealing with metatextuality that the characters, more precisely their names and personalities in the story of Mrs. Vaughan, are based on the characters that are present in *MD* as well. However, the characters in Cunningham's rendition live in a totally different era than the characters of *MD*, and perhaps Cunningham has wanted to imagine how the lives of the characters could have been, were they living during the latter part of the 20th century. For example, the already stated examples such as Richard's AIDS and the lesbian relationship between Sally and Clarissa are signs of adapting the characters into the contemporary world. In addition, Richard is also presented as bisexual in *TH*; he has had a relationship with Clarissa, while in *MD* Richard is married to Clarissa. As was stated earlier, character of Richard in *TH* also has quite a lot in common with Septimus Smith from *MD*. In other words, Cunningham has not just settled for taking characters from *MD* and modernizing them to fit the contemporary world, but he has also combined the personalities and characteristics of the figures of *MD*. Actually in Cunningham's Richard there are also some similarities with Peter Walsh, the character in *MD* who is still jealous of Clarissa, although he has lost her long ago to Richard Dalloway. In other words, Richard in *TH* is, roughly speaking, a combination of at least three different characters from Woolf's novel.

Apart from the characters with similar first names, there are also some characters in *TH* that clearly have been modelled on characters in *MD*. There are, for example, the characters of Lady Bruton (*MD*) and Mary Krull (*TH*) who both seem to have a cold and unfriendly attitude towards Clarissa. Mary Krull is the friend of Clarissa Vaughan's daughter, Elizabeth, and Lady Bruton is an upper-class lady who Clarissa

seems to think is infatuated with her husband Richard. The names of the aforementioned characters are very similar to each other in their meanings. The last name Bruton is probably derived from the word 'brute', which means an unfeeling or coarse person and Krull is similar to the word 'cruel'. The manners of both of the characters are also presented as unkind and cold towards Clarissa. However, in *TH*, the character of Mary Krull is described at same time as having some warm feelings towards Clarissa and thus the characters of Mary Krull and Lady Bruton are in a sense also somewhat different from each other. In *MD*, there is also the character of Miss Kilman, who seems to have formed a friendship with Elizabeth, which Clarissa does not approve of because of its lesbian undertones. Thus, considering the similarity between Mary Krull and Lady Bruton, it would seem that Mary Krull is in fact a combination of Krull and Miss Kilman.

There is also something very similar between Clarissa's daughters in both of the novels although they have different first names. In *TH* Clarissa's daughter is called Julia, and, in *MD*, Elizabeth. They are both described in a very similar manner. For instance, one may consider the following passages:

She's a queer-looking girl, he thought, suddenly remembering Elizabeth as she came into the room and stood by her mother. Grown big; quite grown-up, not exactly pretty; handsome rather... (*MD*: 61)

She has always been a grave little girl, smart but peculiar, oversized, full of quirks and tics. --She is so unexpectedly handsome, so altered, that Louis worries the tears will start all over again. (*TH*: 136)

Both of the girls are described, not as beautiful or pretty, but handsome. It is also stated that they are strange and quirky. Additionally, what is worth noting is that both of the descriptions are presented through the eyes of a male character, both of whom seem to be showing contempt for Clarissa's daughter. However, it is most likely that the reasons for their dislike diverge. In *TH*, a character named Louis is the man whose thoughts are presented above; he is an old friend of Richard's who has

come to discuss Richard's health with Clarissa. In *MD* Peter Walsh is thinking the above about Elizabeth. He is a former boyfriend of Clarissa who seems still to have feelings for Clarissa and thus his feelings towards Elizabeth are somewhat understandable. After all, Elizabeth is the result of Clarissa's love with a man that has stolen her from Peter.

In addition, the attitude of one of the male characters towards Clarissa's daughter coincides in both of the novels. In *MD* Peter Walsh perceives the appearance of Elizabeth as an annoying and unpleasant event since he rushes out of the room as she appears: “‘Hullo, Elizabeth!’ cried Peter, stuffing his handkerchief into his pocket, going quickly to her, saying ‘Good-bye Clarissa’ without looking at her, leaving the room quickly, and running downstairs and opening the hall door.” (*MD*: 52) Similarly, Clarissa's friend Louis seems to dislike the fact that Julia appears just after he has been crying: “‘A key turns in the front door. ‘It's Julia,’ Clarissa says. ‘Shit.’ ‘Don't worry. She's seen men cry.’ It's her goddamn daughter.” (*TH*: 136) The similarities between Peter and Louis do not end there. Both of the characters are jealous of Clarissa but in different ways. Peter seems to have feelings for Clarissa, whereas Louis has feelings for Richard. It is described how in their youth, Louis, Clarissa and Richard had been living under the same roof, and that Richard chose Clarissa over Louis. Similarly, in *MD*, Peter Walsh reminisces how he and Clarissa used to be lovers and regrets the fact he has lost her to Richard.

Life and death also play a major part in both of the novels. The characters struggle between life and death on several occasions in the course of both of the novels. For example, Laura Brown struggles between living and dying, but eventually chooses life over death. In the story on Virginia Woolf, death's presence is even stronger. After all, the novel opens with the suicide of Virginia Woolf. Schiff, in fact, states that Woolf's suicide “... hovers ghostlike over the ensuing narrative.” (Schiff 2004: 367) In addition, when Woolf's sister Vanessa and her three children are visiting

Virginia, they find a dead bird for which they arrange a deathbed from flower petals. In *MD* the references to death are not perhaps as direct as is the case with *TH*. However, the climax of both of the works involves a death. In Woolf's novel, the climax of the novel is the death of Septimus Smith, the news of which brings Clarissa's party to a halt. Exactly the same thing occurs in Cunningham's novel as well; only the person who ends up jumping out of an open window is Richard. The two other stories in Cunningham's novel revolve around death as well, but they climax in different ways. In the prologue of *TH*, Virginia Woolf drowns herself, but the story about her struggle to write *MD* does not end as dramatically.

Another theme that seems to be coinciding in both of the novels is the effects of war. In *MD*, the First World War has ended quite recently and the effects of the war are noticeable in a number of characters. In *TH*, Laura Brown is living in California after the Second World War. In the narrative the war is mentioned, but the effects are not as noticeable as they are in *MD*. One of the main characters of *MD*, Septimus Smith, is suffering from shell shock and is tormented by voices and apparitions, and, as mentioned several times before, he finds himself in a situation in which the only way out for him is suicide. In *TH* the war is only mentioned in passing. This being the case, the war is in the background of "Mrs. Brown" nevertheless. In fact, the war provides a background for the relationship of Laura Brown and her husband, Dan:

But this is the new world, the rescued world - there's not much room for idleness. So much has been risked and lost; so many have died. Less than five years ago Dan himself was believed to have died, at Anzio, and when he was revealed two days later to be alive after all (he and some poor boy from Arcadia had had the same name) it seemed he had been resurrected. He seemed to have returned, still sweet-tempered, still smelling like himself, from the realm of the dead... (*TH*: 39)

In Laura Brown's mind, Dan has died once but as he has returned, he has a new life in Laura's mind. The personal feeling is also conjoined with the more universal concept of the rescued world.

MD has a great deal to say about the war as well. Virginia Woolf discusses the effects of war mostly through the aforementioned character of Septimus but she also comments generally on the horrific effects of the war:

The war was over, except for someone like Mrs. Foxcroft at the Embassy last night eating her heart out because that nice boy was killed and now the old Manor House must go to a cousin; or Lady Bexborough who opened a bazaar, they said, with the telegram in her hand, John, her favourite, killed; but it was over; thank Heaven - over. (*MD*: 5)

As one notices, both of the novels discuss the war through similar imagery and connotations. Naturally, both of the passages above bring forth death as a given consequence of war, but they also note that life goes on although the war has affected numerous lives in a terrible way. In the character of Septimus, the war takes a much more concrete form in that it has taken its toll on his mental health. At a point in *MD* Septimus is picturing his friend Evans, who died in the war, rising from a flower bed he is looking at with his wife, Lucrezia. Interestingly enough, James Schiff states that in *TH*, more precisely in “Mrs. Dalloway”, war has been replaced by a different kind of turmoil, namely, AIDS (Schiff 2004: 367). As mentioned on several occasions, Clarissa Vaughns friend, Richard, is in what seem to be the terminal stages of AIDS and also other Clarissa’s acquaintances have been affected by AIDS in one way or another.

The thematic similarities mentioned bring forth an insight as to how the world has been perceived by these individual writers and also how the context affects the way certain issues are dealt with in literature from different eras. The imagery of war is, interestingly enough, somewhat similar between the novels, although Cunningham is a writer whose life has not probably been affected as directly as Woolf’s, as an European, has. Virginia Woolf, for her part, was probably affected by the First World War and one would think that this would also affect the way she writes about war. There is one character in which this closeness of war may have come into play as

Woolf has been creating him, namely, Septimus Smith. Through his character one sees what the war may do to an individual, which is to dramatically disturb his inner world and eventually lead to his demise.

Other recurring theme in both of the novels is sexuality and sexual confusion. In *MD* the sexuality is mostly examined through the character of Clarissa, who has strong emotions towards Sally Seton, who she, as mentioned before, has kissed. In *TH* all the title characters of the three stories experience lesbian emotions in one way or another. The character most comfortable with her sexuality seems to be Clarissa Vaughan. She is living in an openly lesbian relationship with Sally. In addition, in "Mrs. Woolf", Virginia kisses her sister and as it is expressed, the kiss does not feel entirely innocent, at least not to Virginia. Finally, in the story of Laura Brown, she kisses her friend Kitty, seemingly to comfort her, but there is an undertone of sexual confusion present as well:

She can kiss Kitty in the kitchen and love her husband, too. She can anticipate the queasy pleasure of her husband's lips and fingers (is it that she desires his desire?) and still dream of kissing Kitty again someday, in a kitchen or at the beach as children shriek in the surf, in a hallway with their arms full of folded towels, laughing softly, aroused, hopeless, in love with their own recklessness if not each other, saying *Shhhh*, parting quickly, going on.
(*TH*: 143)

Apparently Laura is trying to justify the kiss by thinking that it was completely acceptable, and that it did not mean anything serious. However, she is suspicious of her feelings towards her husband, and finally goes back to fantasize about kissing Kitty again in the future. Clarissa Dalloway has similar feelings in *MD*, as she reminisces upon the kiss she had with Sally Seton in her youth. As Stella McNichol quite rightly states in her introduction to the novel: "In her attic room, Clarissa remembers her girlhood fascination with Sally Seton for whom she felt 'what man felt'" (p.34). With Sally there had been excitement, ecstasy, and a kiss: "the most exquisite moment of her whole life." (*MD*: xxxiv). Consequently, Laura Brown's

character reflects Clarissa Dalloway's thoughts on homoerotic feelings towards another female. Stella McNichol also states that in the novel Clarissa is trying to utilize her own lesbian insights with regard to her daughter, Elizabeth, and to her affection for lesbian Miss Kilman (*MD*: xxxiv). The insinuation of Clarissa's daughter being a lesbian is present also in *TH*. In addition, it is noticeable that Clarissa seems to dislike her daughter's friend in both of the novels.

Some of the issues that are closely connected to hypertextuality are the literary genres of parody and pastiche. According to Genette, parody is a genre that approaches its subject satirically, whereas pastiches in general approach writing in a non-satirical mode (Genette 1997: 24). He also defines the relationship created between the hypotext and the hypertext by these modes of writing. According to the classification, pastiche and caricature have an imitative relation to the hypertext, whereas parody and travesty form a transformational relationship to the hypertext. It seems to be the case that, according to this limited categorization, Cunningham's novel belongs to the category of imitation. Since caricature should be endowed with a satirical quality, *TH* can hardly be considered as one. Thus the only possibility inside this classification is to deem Cunningham's novel as a pastiche. Genette acknowledges that it is perhaps too haphazard to divide texts merely into non-satirical and satirical. He goes on to add an additional category under the non-satirical imitation, namely, forgery. In Genette's classification, a pastiche is a playful attempt at imitating a writer, whereas forgery is a much more serious pursuit (1997: 85). If one looks at Cunningham's interviews, for example, one notices that he talks about *MD* and Virginia Woolf very admiringly and admits that he has attempted to imitate Woolf's style of writing. The analysis of architextual similarities between the novels, presented in section 4.2., also supports this view. Whereas the satirical approaches to a hypertext usually aim to mock or otherwise defame a piece of writing, a pastiche is usually an attempt to pay homage to its hypertext and this is certainly the case with *TH*, as has been shown in the preceding sections.

As mentioned under the section on theoretical framework, an author's reading of a text of which he is making a pastiche also affects the actual writing of the pastiche. In Cunningham's novel the pastiche is limited, in the strict sense of the word, only to the story of Clarissa Vaughan. As the story of Clarissa Vaughan is only about a third of the length of Woolf's novel, it is quite natural that Cunningham has had to cut a great deal of material from the novel. Thus looking at what exactly Cunningham has chosen to include and, conversely, what he has decided to exclude from the story of Clarissa Vaughan, might prove to be revealing on the subject of what Cunningham as a writer and a reader considers worth rendering in his own, arguably admiring, writing of Woolf's novel.

Finally I shall discuss the main characters of the other two stories in Cunningham's novel, Laura Brown and Virginia Woolf. As it was mentioned in section 4.1., Laura Brown's story opens with her reading *MD*. In spite of the fact that this thesis concentrates mainly on how *TH* refers back to *MD*, there are some parallels to be drawn between two famous essays, namely "Character in Fiction" and "Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown" by Virginia Woolf and Cunningham's novel. This is relevant to the actual topic of the thesis, since Virginia Woolf's writing and her views presented in the essay are clearly connected with each other and through this it is also evident in Cunningham's way of writing. Initially it was quite a surprise to find out that Mrs. Brown is a character who Virginia Woolf uses as an example in two of her essays, namely "Character in Fiction" and "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown". As this section deals with the hypertextual relationship between two texts, it is appropriate to discuss this aspect of *TH* here, although those two essays do not fit in the restricted definition of a hypotext. They are, however, texts that Cunningham has probably had in his mind as he has come up with the character called Laura Brown.

In "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" Virginia Woolf talks about 'Edwardians' and

'Georgians'. By 'Edwardian', Woolf refers to those writers who were writing during King Edward VII's time and by 'Georgian' she refers to those who have been writing during the reign of King George V, namely modernists such as James Joyce and T.S. Eliot, for example. In the essay Woolf is responding to criticism brought forth by Arnold Bennett that the Georgians are clinging too much to the details when they should be more concerned with creating believable characters, which in Bennett's opinion is essential in writing a novel. For Woolf, Mrs. Brown seems to be this perfect construction that no-one had been able to devise. In "Character in Fiction", Woolf uses Mrs. Brown as an eponym of an elderly woman she had met in train. This is how Woolf characterizes her in the essay:

There was something pinched about her—a look of suffering, of apprehension, and, in addition, she was extremely small...I felt that she had nobody to support her, that she had to make up her mind for herself; that, having been deserted, or left a widow, years ago, she had led an anxious, harried life, brining up an only son, perhaps, who, as likely as not, was by this time beginning to go bad.
(Woolf 2009: 39 – 40)

Although judging by the above passage it appears that Mrs. Brown does not have that much in common with Laura Brown, one can see some similarities between them. First of all, the look of suffering applies to Laura Brown as well; although she does not show her suffering to her husband, at least the reader gets the impression that she is depressed and troubled. Also the reference to an only son that in Woolf's mind is beginning to go bad applies to the life situation of Laura Brown. After all, the end of Richard's life is all but pleasant.

As mentioned earlier, according to Virginia Woolf Mr. Bennett opined that the Georgian writers are unable to create characters that are "real, true and convincing." (Woolf 2009: 37) In her essay "Character in Fiction", Virginia Woolf opposes this and claims that, for example, Bennett as a writer concentrates too much on the outer characteristics of his characters. Woolf is not saying that one should not write one's novels that way but that her generation of writers, the Georgians, consider it as

anathema if they should be writing their novels in the same way as the Edwardians had been doing in the past. According to Woolf, the Georgians are more interested in the lives of their characters and their inner worlds, rather than in stating the concrete conditions of their characters. Cunningham reflects this thought in a quite straight-forward manner at the beginning of “Mrs. Brown”:

Laura Brown is trying to lose herself. No, that’s not it exactly—she is trying to keep herself by gaining entry into a parallel world. She lays the book face down on her chest. Already her bedroom (no, their bedroom) feels more densely inhabited, more actual, because a character named Mrs. Dalloway is on her way to buy flowers.
(s: 37)

As one can see, Cunningham does not begin the story by, for example, describing Laura’s wardrobe or surroundings by piling up myriad details that have nothing to do with her emotions or life as such. Instead he dives straight into the core of the character of Laura Brown and begins unveiling the state of her troubled mind. As Woolf points out in her essay about the Edwardian way of writing, using Mr. Bennett as an example: “With all his powers of observation, which are marvellous, with all his sympathy and humanity, which are great, Mr. Bennett has never once looked at Mrs. Brown in her corner.” (Woolf 2009: 47) By this statement she is referring to how Bennett is concentrating on describing the accommodation and surroundings of his character, but does not seem to have any interest in telling anything essential about his character.

As Woolf describes, when she is left alone with Mrs. Brown, she imagines her in a number of situations. For example, she imagines Mrs. Brown all by herself in her house staring into nothingness. As one reads “Mrs. Brown” in *TH*, one may certainly end up with similar images of Laura Brown trotting around her house and staring absent-mindedly at her surroundings. Although Laura has not been widowed or deserted, she still feels that way since she stays at home all day with her son and does not seem to have that much to do around the house. In fact it seems that Cunningham

has taken the character that Woolf has met on a train and given her a life story. Perhaps he has imagined himself meeting a similar character in a New York subway. However the case might be it should be clear that Cunningham has intentionally named the character Mrs. Brown, since his novel is in a way, retelling the stories that are, in one way or another, connected with the life and/or writings of Virginia Woolf.

The similarities between Laura Brown and Woolf's Mrs. Brown do not end there. Woolf also states that she imagines that Mrs. Brown has been involved with Mr. Smith, a man who was conversing with Mrs. Brown in the train before getting off the train on a station. She imagines that Brown has been standing in the station, ready to escape from Mr. Smith. In the story of Laura Brown, as mentioned, Laura is thinking of taking Richard to a nanny and then escaping from her life in California, leaving Richard and her husband behind. In the end she does not do it, but this also is an interesting way to link Laura with Woolf's Mrs. Brown. Again, it is hard to imagine this being a coincidence, given the nature of Cunningham's novel. It should also be noted that in *TH*, Virginia Woolf wanders off to the train station ready to leave her life, her husband and their house in the countryside, but her husband finds her before she has time to do this. This could also be a reference to Woolf's two essays that have been discussed above. Of course, one should not let one's imagination run too far ahead and create linkages that do not exist, but it should be obvious that there in fact is a link between these characters, lives of which have been imagined by two authors.

Although the similarities between the two characters that have been dealt with above are somewhat striking, one must also consider what Woolf says later in her essay. She opines that the ways in which the character of Mrs. Brown may be dealt with are infinite. After all, Mrs. Brown is dealt with as a mere example of how a character may be created. Held against this statement, it is arguable how much Cunningham's choice to name his character Laura Brown can be considered as a reference to the

essay by Virginia Woolf. It is left for the individual reader to decide how important this notion actually is in terms of the transtextual features of Cunningham's novel. However, in this case one can only rely on his personal judgment, and thus I have decided to include this aspect of *TH* in this thesis.

5. THE EFFECT OF TRANSTEXTUALITY ON THE READING OF *MRS. DALLOWAY*

The extensiveness with which Michael Cunningham's novel refers back to *MD* definitely also affects the way Virginia Woolf's novel is read. The transformations that have been discussed earlier in this thesis quite possibly also transform aspects of *MD*, at least in the mind of the reader, and the purpose of this section is to try and simulate that process, which I shall be referring to as regressive transformation. Regressive, since the transformation examined will be that which has occurred backwards, meaning that the focus is on how *TH* might affect the reading of *MD*. Julia Kristeva's theories on the dialogical nature of the novel in general in her book *Desire in Language* provide a part of the theoretical background for this section, albeit tweaked a little to fit the purposes of this particular way of thinking about the intertextual relationship between the two novels. In Kristeva's mindset the novel's textual world in itself is an intertextual sphere.

Rien T. Segers book about reception theory titled *Kirja ja lukija* [The *Book and Its Reader*] (1985) begins with a summary of the theories of Hans Jauss, The most renowned reception theorists are probably Hans Jauss and Wolfgang Iser. Jauss argues that the reader has a certain set of expectations as he starts reading a text. First of all, he has expectations brought forward by the genre the text belongs to. Second, the reader has expectations caused by the literature he has read from the same period of literary history. Finally, the expectations of the reader are affected by the opposition between fiction and reality. In other words, the reader perceives a text in

the light of his or her own life experience on one hand, and on the other hand, in the light of their expectations of a literary text. With the help of these expectations it is possible to reconstruct a reader's reception of a particular novel (Source). Another dichotomy essential to reception studies is the division between the "real reader" and the "ideal reader". The latter is a construction by literary critics that dismisses all the aspects of reading that are largely unpredictable. Such aspects are for instance all the flaws and mistakes and the lack of knowledge on literature in general. Obviously, in this case one has to simulate the ideal reader in order to be able to answer satisfactorily the following question: "How is the reader affected by the reading of *TH* in terms of the reception of *MD*?"

On textual level, there exist two types of ideal reader, the implicit and the explicit reader. In the older literature, the reader was explicit in that the reader was addressed in the text, whereas in the modern literature speaking to the reader is usually absent. Since both the novels belong to the latter category, the reaction simulated will quite naturally be that of the implicit reader. There are not any authorial intrusions in the sense that the narrator does not directly address the reader in any way, and this simplifies the categorization as well. Wolfgang Iser discusses this concept in his book "The Implied Reader" (1978) and examines the ways in which this type of reader has had to position their reading during different literary periods.

In a chapter entitled "Word, dialogue, and novel" Julia Kristeva discusses Mikhail Bakhtin's theories on dialogism in the novel. According to Kristeva, in Bakhtin's thinking, the writer perceives the texts in the context of history and society, which are first read by the authors and then rewritten by them. Although this part of Kristeva's book is about larger constituents than merely one or two novels, one can apply its theories to the case of *TH* and *MD* as well. Certainly Cunningham may be said to have read *MD* in connection with the history and society of Woolf's time on one hand, and in the context of his own time and culture on the other. In his rewriting

of *MD*, Cunningham has reinterpreted Woolf's narrative to fit the context of his own time and the mindset of his readers. This way Cunningham has proved the validity of Bakhtin's theories. In her article, Kristeva also introduces Bakhtin's notion that, in fact, *any* text is compiled of quotations and transformed from other texts. However, this thought must be disregarded for now, since under scrutiny are two novels that have a direct relationship with one another. Kristeva also introduces a Bakhtinian term "ambivalence" in her book. The notion refers to the two-fold function between a text and the society. It "implies the insertion of history (society) into a text and of this text into history; for the writer they are one and the same." (Kristeva 1977: 68-69) As we have seen earlier in this thesis, the context in which a novel has been written has an impact on the way certain themes are dealt with, and this validates the notion of ambivalence.

As Gerard Genette states in *Palimpsests*, it is practically impossible to not alter the meaning of a hypertext in its hypotext. In my opinion and as it has already been shown, this also applies to *TH*. Although Genette alludes to unintentional change in the meaning of the hypertext, it may of course be done on purpose as well. Changing the names of the characters is also a symptom of wanting to not simply draw the material from *MD*, but also to originate something completely new by transforming some aspect of Woolf's novel.

Cunningham's novel also adds two additional layers to the interpretation of *MD* by providing the reader with a glimpse into Virginia Woolf's life at the time of writing her novel. In fact, Schiff notes in his article, that *TH* is essentially a novel about reading and writing (2004: 367). Imagining the state(s) of mind in which Woolf has been writing her novel might also reflect on the interpretation of *MD*. For example, the fact that Cunningham has depicted the moment in which Woolf is pondering whether she should kill her protagonist or not could force the reader to imagine how it would affect the events in *MD* if it was Clarissa who committed suicide instead of

Septimus Smith. The possibility of both of them dying might also cross one's mind

As stated, the horizon of expectations of the reader has, at least according to Jauss, an impact on the way a piece of literature is perceived. Reading *TH* might impose some expectations of *MD* in the reader's mind. For example, it will become clear to the reader at some point of reading Woolf's novel that the similarities with the characters that are presented in *TH* do not necessarily coincide in the characters with similar names. The fact that Richard's character in *TH* is a combination of several characters might confuse those who have read Cunningham's novel before *MD*.

There are also a number of changes in the character's relationships that might induce some consternation among the readers. Clarissa's living together with Sally, who is partly the source of regret in *MD* for her, since she is imagining what her life might have been had she begun a relationship with Sally. However, as mentioned earlier in the thesis, also Cunningham's Clarissa has similar regrets; in this case they are only directed towards her relationship with Richard.

The absence of Septimus in Cunningham's novel might also be a source of confusion when one is reading *MD*. After all, Septimus is, apart from Clarissa of course, the main character of Woolf's novel. However, Cunningham has decided to include the climax of Woolf's novel in "Mrs. Dalloway", which in the reader's mind might compensate for the fact that Septimus is not present in the novel. As the reader comes across the scene in which a central character jumps out of an open window, they will certainly at least faintly notice something very similar between the novels. These types of "echoes", if you will, link the novels intricately together whether the reader realizes it or not. However, it is impossible to know what exactly the reader will think about these transformational echoes that occur between the novels, but one may make some well-informed guesses based on personal experiences of reading the novels. I mentioned earlier that I was not familiar with *MD* the first time I came across Cunningham's novel. Thus, personally, I feel that I am able, at least to some

extent, to credibly simulate how reading *TH* might affect the reading of *MD*.

If one reads a hypotext, the reading of it is bound to affect the reading of the hypertext as well. As one reads *TH*, one remarkable change is that the characters that have the same exact names are seen through the hypotext's characterisation. One of the most obvious cases is the relationship between Clarissa and Sally. In *MD*, as mentioned, she has kissed Sally Seton in her youth and it is hinted at that Clarissa still has some feelings towards her. In *TH*, Clarissa is living with Sally and they have seemingly quite a fulfilling relationship. As one reads *TH*, one might start wondering how different the novel might have been if the same would have been true in *MD*. Cunningham also makes the same allusion to lesbianism in two other stories in his novel. In a way he is interweaving all of the main characters of the three stories as the same person. With the character of Richard the effect of his character in *TH* to that in *MD* is somewhat different than that of Sally's character. As mentioned, in *TH* Richard is a bisexual ravaged by AIDS and also by mental illness. Septimus Smith in *MD* is in many ways similar to Richard as he is also mentally ill and self-destructive. As mentioned Septimus and Richard seem to be basically the same character with a few alterations and this may cause confusion amongst the readers that have read *TH* before *MD*.

A fact worth noting here is that in Cunningham's novel a reader's reaction to *MD* is depicted in great detail. The story on Mrs. Brown is a simulation of how a particular kind of reader might react to reading *MD*. In this way Cunningham offers his readers the possibility to perhaps reflect on their own reactions and emotions evoked by Woolf's novel against Laura Brown's reactions to it. This is a feature of Cunningham's novel that certainly might affect the reading of *MD* in the minds of his readers. After all, at many points during "Mrs Brown", Cunningham lets the reader know how a certain passage of *MD* makes Laura Brown feel and what thoughts the passages evoke in her. It was mentioned that James Schiff views *TH* as a novel about reading and writing and the way Laura Brown is depicted certainly supports this view

in many ways. Brown reads and feels the world that Virginia Woolf is creating and this all happens inside one single novel.

On the whole, when one reads *TH*, or more precisely the part entitled “Mrs. Dalloway”, the reader also probably ponders upon the differences between the storylines that depict a day in the lives of Clarissa and her friends. This has also to do with the expectations of the reader. If one takes, for example, the scene at the florist’s, there is a noticeable change in the scene between the two novels. In *MD*, the loud bang that is heard by Clarissa and the florist is caused by a car and in *TH* the same sound has been made by a film crew. This might startle a reader who is expecting the scene to be depicted in the same way in both of the novels. In Iser’s thinking, this might not necessarily be an insurmountable obstacle in enjoying a novel. In fact, he states that “For whenever his expectations are not fulfilled, the reader’s mental faculties are at once directed toward an attempt to comprehend the new situation with which he is confronted.” (Iser 1978: 58) The probable way of reacting to the alterations in the narrative is to think about the contexts in which the novels in question have been written, and thus the reader has successfully adapted to a situation in which their expectations have not been thoroughly met. Although the storylines of both “Mrs. Dalloway” and *MD* mostly coincide there are also some differences that may be explained by the historical context, which has been referred to several times already in the course of this thesis. The example presented above also has much to do with the context of both of the novels. Although cinema was there in Woolf’s time as well, it was not as popular an art form as it arguably was in the time of the publication of Cunningham’s novel.

Earlier in the thesis, I dealt with the transformations of the characters of *MD* that Cunningham has transferred into the world of his novel. When one looks at the character of Richard, for example, the presentation of his character differs quite remarkably between the two novels. Whereas in Cunningham’s novel Richard is Clarissa’s fragile and terminally ill homosexual friend, in *MD* he is Clarissa’s husband and in many ways quite different from Cunningham’s version of him. When

one considers how Cunningham's depiction of Richard might affect a reader's perception of Richard in Woolf's novel, one has to take the context of both novels into account. Perhaps one might not go as far as thinking Richard as a latent homosexual in Woolf's novel but it is a thought that probably crosses one's mind as he thinks of the character. Homosexuality is also present in Woolf's novel, but in a more covert way. This way Bakhtin's theories come into play in Cunningham's rewriting of *MD*. Whereas in the context of her culture and society, Woolf has probably had to express homosexuality in her novel in a subtler way, Cunningham has had more freedom in doing so in his novel. After all, it was published circa 70 years after *MD*. When the reader is aware of this in reading *TH*, he will probably expect that the homosexuality might not be dealt with as openly in Woolf's novel. Thus he probably is not surprised by the presentation of homosexuality in *MD*. In addition, of course in today's world homo- and bisexuality are more widely accepted than in Woolf's time and thus one could argue that it is only natural that Cunningham discusses this aspect of human experience more openly.

Another aspect that might arise when a reader is comparing the two novels is the fact that although both of the novels are clearly products of their time, Woolf's novel has stood the test of time considerably well. Woolf deals with issues that are relatively similar to the contemporary issues that concern the people of the present as well. Cunningham's novel deals with war, death, different sexual orientations and their complexities in a similar manner to Woolf's novel. Of course this can be explained by the fact that Cunningham himself has admitted, as we have seen from the interviews that have been dealt with earlier, that he admires Woolf's novel and that his novel owes remarkably much to *MD*. In other words, reading Cunningham's novel will probably affect the reader's response to Woolf's novel in that one realizes why *MD* has been so acclaimed ever since from its publication to this day.

6. CONCLUSION

If one looks at how the different aspects of transtextuality present themselves in Michael Cunningham's novel, it becomes clear that all of the types of transtextuality with which he refers to *MD* by Virginia Woolf have been used in a varied and diverse way. For example, the events that are similar to the ones in *MD* are almost wholly present in the story of Clarissa Vaughan but Cunningham has still managed to create his own universe and story, by altering some of the events and adapting them to fit his own mindset and, by doing it, he is also reinterpreting *MD* and giving it new meanings. In addition, by naming his book according to the working title of Woolf's novel, Cunningham has made it clear to which novel he is paying homage. Although the emphasis has been on one of the three stories, for the already stated reasons, also in the two other stories there were visible transtextual references to *MD*.

The fact that the emphasis on the amount of transtextual references to *MD* naturally lean towards the story of Clarissa Vaughn shows that although Cunningham has drawn a remarkable amount of influences and also the basic storyline from Virginia Woolf's novel, it also stands on its own with the help of two other stories that are not structured as a mere transformation of Virginia Woolf's novel, but still manage to refer to *MD*. If one compares the transtextual references in the three stories, it becomes clear quite swiftly, that, whereas most of the references to *MD* in the story of Clarissa Vaughn are indirect, i.e. there are very few direct quotations from *MD* and the quotations that are present are not acknowledged as such, in the two other stories the quotations and allusions are clearly marked and also work in a slightly different manner.

The architextual features of the novels coincide in many different ways. This is only natural as Cunningham himself has openly admitted that he is paying homage to *MD* with his novel. Although this is the case, Cunningham is not satisfied with merely

copying the style of Virginia Woolf. The style Cunningham has adopted for the novel, as has been demonstrated, certainly has a number of similarities with Woolf's writing, but on the whole he also deviates from it to the extent that his style becomes something more than a mere pastiche. However, it is noticeable in *TH* how architextual references may be harnessed in order to pay homage to another work of literature.

The paratextual references to *MD* also have their place in *TH*, although there is not that much to say about them when compared with the other transtextual features. The paratextual referencing limits itself almost wholly to the title of the novel and the interviews in which Cunningham talks about the influence *MD* has had on his writing. Those interviews in which he is discussing his influences, he most commonly talks about how *MD* was a turning point on him and made him enthusiastic about reading and eventually also led him to become a writer himself. The briefness of section on paratextuality is mostly due to the fact that there was not much analysis to be made since the whole concept of paratextuality deals with aspects of which there is not that much to be said in the case of Cunningham's novel. However, looking at the paratextual features offered some insights into how Cunningham himself perceives his relationship with Virginia Woolf's work and especially with *MD*. It also revealed something about Cunningham's intentions and how he sees his novels with relation to matters of originality and writing in general.

Another finding of some importance was that the context of a particular novel definitely impacts the process of turning a hypotext into a hypertext. Naturally, some transformations can be deemed to be caused by the simple fact that the hypertext has been written by a different individual than its hypotext. Despite of this, it is safe to say that I was able to demonstrate how the context affects the transformation of a text. Finally, the analysis of the transtextual features brought me to the question that needed an answer. Namely, how do the ways of transtextual referencing transform

the reading experience of *MD*? Although answering this question in a satisfactory manner without resorting to mere guessing is arguably a challenging task, it had to be done nevertheless. Thinking about the differences in contextual and historical circumstances the novels were written and published in, and resorting to the theories of literary critics such as Julia Kristeva, Mikhail Bakhtin and Hans Jauss certainly allowed me to go a bit deeper in considering the transformation of a reader's perception than just relying on my personal views and prejudices in the matter.

Whether *TH* may be considered a pastiche or not has relevance as regards transtextuality in connection with the critique of contemporary literature. It confronts the issue of whether a work of literature that has been largely derived from another piece of literature can be considered as a valuable piece of art in its own right. Nowadays, usually the term 'pastiche' carries somewhat negative connotations. It is usually used in a derogatory sense, to comment on a piece of art that is held to be merely derivative by its audience or an individual critic.

As has been shown, Cunningham has also made references to other texts by Virginia Woolf in his novel. The character of Laura Brown somewhat resembles the woman Woolf describes in her essay "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" and Cunningham also seems to comment another essay by Woolf, "Character in Fiction", through the character of Mrs. Brown. The emphasis of the novel is of course on Woolf's novel, but the resemblance between Laura Brown and Woolf's prototype, if you will, of a literary character in modern fiction adds to the versatile transtextuality present in Cunningham's novel

On the whole, preparing this thesis has proved to be revealing in the sense that the varied ways of alluding to *MD* through different types of transtextuality partly explain the prestigious status Cunningham's novel has achieved after its publication.

Partly, the acclaim may be credited to the fact that *MD* is highly appreciated, especially amongst contemporary critics. However, this does not take away the unquestionable merits the novel has in its subtle rewriting and allusions to the work of Virginia Woolf. What is more, it was revealed that the references to *MD* are used as means of linkage and transition and also explaining the feelings of the characters and thus made use of for several different functions.

As stated early on in the thesis, the categorization presented by Gérard Genette had to be slightly adjusted to make it more clear-cut and diminish the amount of overlapping between the different types of transtextuality. However, one should keep in mind that the concept of transtextuality is by no means a simple or one-sided concept. One only has to compare the theorists that each has had their own take on the phenomena of textual relationships. In addition, the categories of metatextuality and hypertextuality seemed to be overlapping at times but perhaps the categorization was not meant for doing analysis on one single novel, or not at least the way this particular thesis deals with transtextuality. However, for other parts the typology seemed to serve its purpose quite well and it certainly helped in researching the topic.

Despite the mentioned points of possible improvement, it seemed that there were also a number of relevant findings that reveal something of Michael Cunningham's usage of transtextual references as a major part of his novel. By alluding to Virginia Woolf's tour de force, *MD*, he has created a significant piece of contemporary literature that might well, in the near future, be dealt with as a part of literary studies in different universities. Studying the topic in hand also gave an insight into one example of how transtextuality generally works in contemporary literature.

Finally, thinking about how reading Cunningham's novel might affect the reading of the novel it is constantly referring to, was enlightening in that through this it became clear that the polyphony between novels is a two-way process in that the reading of a

novel published circa hundred years before it can (and will) be affected by the novel that has been published some ninety years after it. The ways in which a reader perceives a certain novel will also be affected by its historical context; the reader will have to take into consideration the world in which a novel is originally published on one hand, but also how the world has changed since then. Reader might also take into consideration how a literary work might be received in the future. To conclude, the way in which Michael Cunningham constructs the world that is largely based on the works of Virginia Woolf is something that has certainly been noticed in the literary world, and hopefully this thesis is able to partly explain the status Cunningham's novel has gained. The fact that Cunningham alludes not just to *MD*, but also to the writing process of Woolf's novel and also to Woolf's essays certainly adds to the complexity of Cunningham's novel, which shows that one can create prestigious art the value of which stems from a varied and extensive alluding to an already canonized piece of writing.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources:

Cunningham, Michael. 1998. *The Hours*. New York: Picador USA

Woolf, Virginia. 1992. *Mrs. Dalloway*. St. Ives: Penguin Books

Secondary sources:

Allen, Graham. 2000. *Intertextuality*. London: Routledge.

Barnes and Noble. Fall 2002. *Meet the Writers – Michael Cunningham*

<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/writers/writerdetails.asp?cid=1015986>

Online: 11th April 2013

Barthes, Roland. 1986. “The Death of the Author” from *The Rustle of Language*. Trans. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. New York: Hill and Wang

Farnsworth, Elizabeth. April 20, 1999. *The Pulitzer for Fiction*.

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/entertainment/jan-june99/pulitzer_4-13.html

Online: 28th March, 2012

Frantz, Sarah S.G.; Rennhak, Katharina (ed.). 2010 *Women Constructing Men*. Lanham: Lexington Books.

Genette, Gerard. 1997. *Palimpsests*. Trans. Newman, Channa; Dubinsky, Claude. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press

Hutcheon, Linda. 1989. Historiographic Metafiction. In O'Donnell, P; Davis, R.C. (eds.) *Intertextuality and contemporary American fiction*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Kokkonen, Eerika. 2008. Queering the Familiar — Family, Gender and Sexuality in Michael Cunningham's *The Hours*. University of Tampere. <http://tutkielmat.uta.fi/pdf/gradu02809.pdf> Online: February 28 2013.

Kristeva, Julia. 1980. *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Leech, Geoffrey; Short, Mick. 2007. *Style in Fiction - A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.

McNichol, Stella 1992. "Introduction" in *Mrs. Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf. St. Ives: Penguin Books.

Schiff, James: "Rewriting Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*: Homage, Sexual Identity, and the Single-Day Novel by Cunningham, Lippincott and Lanchester. *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*. 45 (2004), 363-82. <http://www.paolacarbone.com/vo/rewriting%20woolf.pdf> Online: May 6 2013.

Segers, Rien T. 1985. *Kirja ja lukija*. Juva: Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden seura.

Spring, Justin. 1999. *Michael Cunningham*

<http://bombsite.com/issues/66/articles/2208>

Online: 12th April, 2012

Viikari, Auli. 1991. *Intertekstuaalisuus – suuntia ja sovelluksia.*

Tampere: Tammer-Paino Oy,

Woolf, Virginia. 1966. *Collected Essays: Volume two.* London: The Hogarth Press.

Woolf, Virginia. 2009. *Selected Essays.* Oxford: Oxford Press.