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Primerjalna književnost

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TEMATSKI SKLOP

Markku Eskelinen: **Štirje vogali sveta e-literature: besedilni inštrumenti, operacijska logika, študije wetwara in kibertekstna poetika**

Giovanna di Rosario: **Analiziranje elektronske poezije. Trije primeri tekstualnosti v digitalnih medijih**

Philippe Bootz: **Programirana digitalna poezija: medijska poezija?**

Aleš Vaupotič: **Med literaturo in novomedijsko umetnostjo: sonetoidni spletni projekti Vuka Ćosića in Tea Spillerja**

Narvika Bovcon: **Literarni vidiki novomedijskih del Jake Železnikarja in Sreča Dragana**

Janez Strehovec: **Elektronska literatura in nove družbene paradigme**

RAZPRAVE

Boris A. Novak: ***»La mère, la mère, toujours recommencée«:* materno poreklo Paula Valéryja iz Kopra in Trsta**

Katia Pizzi: **Tržaška književnost med Slovenijo in Italijo: primer zamujenega transkulturalizma?**

Sofija M. Košničar: **Naravni jezik in kulturna dediščina v distopičnem semiosfernem jedru**

Barbara Jurša: **Presečišča med ekokritiko in postkolonialnimi študijami**

Anja Mrak: **Obravnava postopkov magičnega realizma na primeru feministične proze: groteskno telo in tehnika literalizacije v romanu Angele Carter *Nights at the Circus* (1984)**

Natalia Kaloh Vid:: **Intertekstualnost apokaliptičnega v romanu M. A. Bulgakova *Bela Garda***

Tomaž Onič: **Vikanje in tikanje v slovenskih prevodih Albeejeve drame *Kdo se boji Virginije Woolf?***

Varja Balžalorsky Antić: **Elementi Benvenistove lingvistike izjavljanja in Meschonnicove poetike diskurza in njihov pomen za rekonceptualizacijo lirskega subjekta**

KRITIKE

POROČILA

TEMATSKI SKLOP

1 Janez Strehovec: **Elektronska literatura in novomedijska umetnost. Uvod v tematski sklop**

13 Markku Eskelinen: **The Four Corners of the E-lit World: Textual Instruments, Operational Logics, Wetware Studies, and Cybertext Poetics**

25 Giovanna di Rosario: **Analyzing Electronic Poetry. Three Examples of Textualities in Digital Media**

41 Philippe Bootz: **Programmed Digital Poetry: A Media Art?**

61 Aleš Vaupotič: **Med literaturo in novomedijsko umetnostjo: sonetoidni spletni projekti Vuka Ćosića in Tea Spillerja**

81 Narvika Bovcon: **Literarni vidiki novomedijskih del Jake Železnikarja in Sreča Dragana**

103 Janez Strehovec: **Elektronska literatura in nove družbene paradigme**

RAZPRAVE

123 Boris A. Novak: ***»La mère, la mère, toujours recommencée«:*** **materno poreklo Paula Valéryja iz Kopra in Trsta**

145 Katia Pizzi: **Triestine Literature between Slovenia and Italy: A Case of Missed Transculturalism?**

157 Sofija M. Košničar: **Naravni jezik in kulturna dediščina v distopičnem semiosfernem jedru**

179 Barbara Jurša: **Presečišča med ekokritiko in postkolonialnimi študijami**

199 Anja Mrak: **Obravnava postopkov magičnega realizma na primeru feministične proze: groteskno telo in tehnika literalizacije v romanu Angele Carter *Nights at the Circus* (1984)**

217 Natalia Kaloh Vid: **Intertekstualnost apokaliptičnega v romanu M. A. Bulgakova *Bela Garda***

233 Tomaž Onič: **Vikanje in tikanje v slovenskih prevodih Albeejeve drame *Kdo se boji Virginije Woolf?***

253 Varja Balžalorsky Antić: **Elementi Benvenistove lingvistike izjavljanja in Meschonnicove poetike diskurza in njihov pomen za rekonceptualizacijo lirskega subjekta**

KRITIKE

277 Blaž Zabel: **Začetki ekspresionizma v kratki pripovedni prozi**

284 Denis Škofič: **Med literarno teorijo in književno prakso**

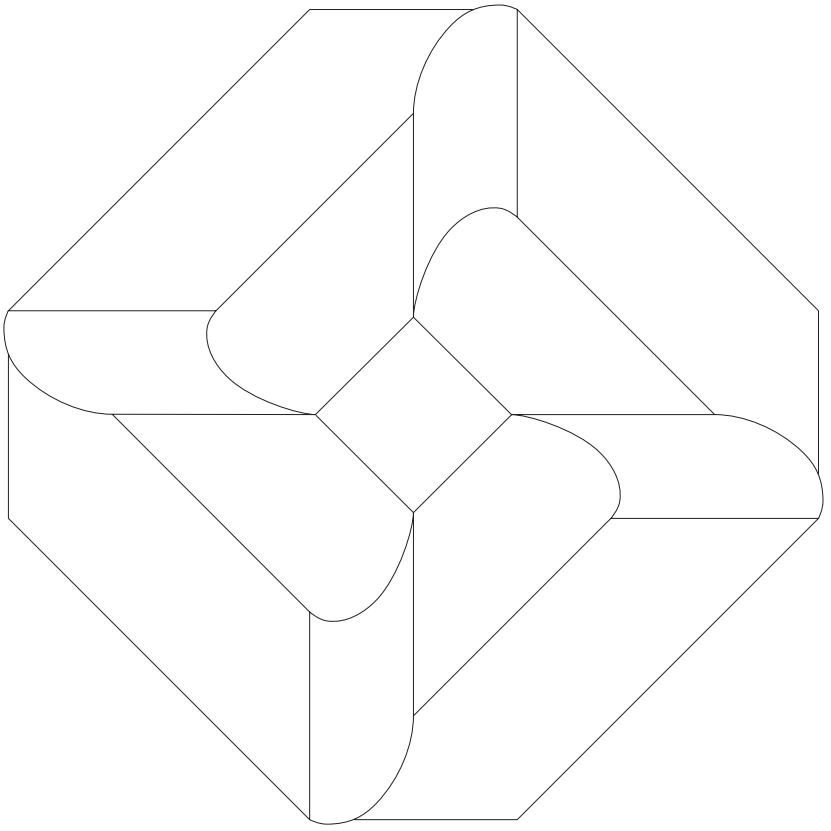
291 Vita Žerjal Pavlin: **Slovenska in italijanska pesniška podoba Trsta**

POROČILA

297 Nina Beguš: **128. srečanje MLA z vidika svetovne književnosti**

303 Andraž Jež: **Slovenski in češki narodni prerod (1780–1848)**

Primerjalna književnost



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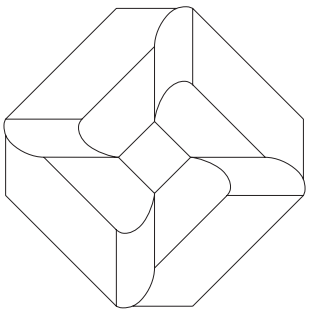

Elektronska literatura in novomedijska umetnost. Uvod v tematski sklop

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Elektronska literatura je področje pisanja in programiranja, ki uporablja novomedijske podlage (predvsem programsko opremo) za oblikovanje elektronskih besedil, ki se umeščajo na presečišče eksperimentalnega pisanja z literarnimi ambicijami, literarnih avantgard in novomedijske umetnosti. Najbolj odmevna usmeritev v njej je hipertekstna fikcija, katere ključna dela (na primer "Afternoon, a Story" Michela Joycea) so nastala v 80. in 90. letih 20. stoletja, medtem ko se v začetku 21. stoletja srečujemo z vrsto drugih usmeritev, pri katerih se hipertekstne povezave besedilnih enot umikajo postopkom, ki so utemeljeni na novi generaciji programske opreme, in so vraščeni v sedanjo algoritemsko, softversko, mobilno, lokativno, didžejsko in vidžejsko kulturo, kar pomeni, da tudi v prakso e-literature (podobno kot novomedijske umetnosti) stopajo različne programske aplikacije, remiksi in *mash-ups*. Rezultat teh prizadevanj so projekti, ki sodijo na področje razširjene besedilnosti, ki temelji na soobstoju verbalnih in ne-verbalnih označevalcev. Tekst verbalnih enot je statičen ali kinetičen (recimo v zvrsti animirane e-poezije), vanj so vključeni znaki naravnih ali pa programskih in skriptnih jezikov (primer umetelnega jezika *mezangelle*, ki ga je oblikovala avstralska avtorica Mez), ob njem pa se srečujemo tudi s (statičnimi ali gibljivimi) podobami, zvoki in celo z aromami (»aromatična poezija« Eduarda Kaca, se pravi poezija, ki se jo »bere z nosom«).

Pisanje v elektronskem mediju postavlja v ospredje paradigmatičen (in ne sintagmatičen) pristop k verbalnim označevalnem, kar pomeni, da se jezik analizira, izolira njegove enote, jih potuji, primerja in kontrastira z odsotnimi označevalci, klasificira in igrivo povezuje v nove celote. V ospredju je v Manovichem *Jeziku novih medijev* obravnavana podatkovna zbirka kot nova simbolna oblika, sestavljena iz med seboj enakovrednih elementov, v katero se decentralizirano posega. Podatkovna zbirka ni organizirana glede na vzročno verigo, nima začetka, sredine in konca, po Manovichu je zato organizirana izrazito drugače, kot je strukturirana tradicionalna, linearno členjena pripoved.

Elektronska literatura ni nadaljevanje literature-kot-jo-poznamo z drugimi, se pravi elektronskimi sredstvi (niti kaka njena višja ali posodobljena stopnja), ampak področje elektronske besedilnosti-v-nastajanju, na katerega bistveno vplivajo novi mediji in je vraščeno v izrazito tehnokulturne prakse (klubska, softverska kultura in kultura igranja video iger). V določenem pogledu so sicer s hipertekstom opredeljeni projekti blizu tistim usmeritvam v poznani, na tisk oprti literaturi, ki jih zaznamujejo kombinatorični teksti in teksti labirinti (recimo Calvinov roman *Neke zimske noči popotnik*, Pavićev *Hazarski besednjak* in Borgesova kratka zgodba *Vrt s potmi, ki se cepijo*), prav tako pa elektronska poezija stopnjuje in radikalizira nekatere tendence vizualne in konkretne poezije 60. in 70. let 20. stoletja (ko gre za organiziranost besedilnih enot glede na prostorsko sintakso) in jih širi še na področje gibanja in s tem tudi časovne (in filmske) sintakse. Čeprav se dela e-literature tudi umeščajo v prostore, ki niso blizu tradicionalni literarni kulturi (tovrstni projekti so nadzorovani s programsko opremo in prikazani na zaslonih pametnih naprav, od računalnikov do mobilnih telefonov), pa je spremljanje dogajanja na tem področju smiselno tudi za literarne teoretike in praktike. Dela e-literature namreč odgovarjajo na vprašanje, kaj se dogaja s črko, besedo in tekstom v novomedijskem okolju računalniške kulture (in družbenih omrežij), in tudi na vprašanja, ki zadevajo usodo pismenosti v okviru novih medijev.

Za osnovno razumevanje e-literature je bistven pogled na njeno materialnost – v smislu, da je besedilo sedaj razprostrto v »globini« (računalniškega) zaslona, kjer je uporabniku/bralcu na razpolago v veliko bolj interaktivnem dispozitivu kot ob branju tiskanih besedil, kajti bralec lahko v živo z miško, drsnikom in podobnimi napravami manipulira tekst, je celo v taktilnem odnosu do njega. Prav tako je pomembno, da je shranjeno v pametnih pomnilnih enotah (iz katerih se ga lahko kadarkoli prikliče) in nadzorovano s softverom. Vsekakor sodi tudi v algoritemsko kulturo, ki od uporabnika-bralca zahteva netrivialen napor pri prebijanju skozenj, kajti pogosto ne gre samo za branje, ampak za navigacijsko dejavnost, osredotočeno na vrsto ciljev, kar spominja na igranje video iger, katerih teorija je tudi v pomoč, ko gre za razumevanje kompleksnejših del e-literature (recimo zasnovanih kot besedilni inštrumenti). Ob algoritmih sta za relevantna dela na tem področju bistvena tudi podatkovna zbirka (z verbalnimi in neverbalnimi označevalci) in vmesnik (ta je lahko tudi kar se da nenavaden, recimo statično kolo, roka ali podatkovna rokavica).

Za produkcijo, reprodukcijo in diseminacijo e-literarnih praks so bistveni festivali in konference, na katerih se predstavljajo tovrstni projekti. Danes so to predvsem konference Electronic Literature Organisation in E-Poetry festival, v preteklosti pa je k popularizaciji tovrstne kreativnosti

precej pripomogla tudi serija konferenc Digital Arts and Culture, katerih začetek sega v norveški Bergen, 1998. leta (njihov iniciator je Espen Aarseth, avtor knjige o kibertekstu). Področje e-literature se institucionalizira tudi z objavami; ko gre za revije naj, predvsem v zvezi z objavljanjem teorije, omenimo *Alire, Electronic book review, ALT-X*, letopis *Cybertext* in *Dichtung Digital*, medtem ko je knjige s tega področja začela izdajati knjižna zbirka Computing Literature pri ameriški WVU založbi. Povezovalno vlogo med evropskimi raziskovalci in ustanovami s tega področja ima tudi mreža digitalne literature DDDL, predseduje ji Philippe Bootz, ki je s tega področja organiziral tudi Erazmove intenzivne programe (leta 2013 na madridski univerzi Complutense, kamor je avtor tega članka kot predavatelj na tem seminarju povabil tudi nekaj slovenskih študentov).

Kje najti dela s tega področja? Ker gre za elektronske projekte, je svetovni splet odlično mesto za hranjenje in distribuiranje tovrstne prakse. V tej zvezi naj omenimo predvsem obe spletni zbirki elektronske literature v produkciji ELO, in sicer E-Literature Collection, 1 (2006) in 2 (2011), dopolnjuje pa ju tudi Elmcip antologija evropske e-literature. Vrsto osnovnih informacij s tega področja pa hrani tudi Elmcip knowledge base.

Številni projekti e-literature se v sedanjosti umeščajo na presečišče eksperimentalnega pisanja v novih medijih in novomedijske umetnosti; prostori slednje (recimo galerije, klubi in, razumljivo, spletne lokacije, od on-line podatkovnih zbirk do galerij v Drugem življenju) so pogosto tudi prostori e-literature. Tudi vrsta temeljnih konceptov, ki so na delu v novomedijski umetnosti, je uporabna pri razumevanju e-literature, katere dela pa, na drugi strani, širijo tudi meje novomedijske umetnosti, in nikakor niso njen derivat ali podaljšek. To dejstvo je spodbudilo avtorja tega zapisa, da je v Ljubljani, 22. in 23. septembra 2012 organiziral mednarodni seminar *E-literatura in novi mediji*, in sicer v okviru evropskega raziskovalnega projekta Elmcip, vključenega v program HERA, ki je namenjen podpiranju raziskovalnih projektov s področja humanistike. Pisec tega prispevka in urednik tematskega sklopa je eden izmed odgovornih nosilcev pri tem projektu. Projekt poteka od sredine 2010 do sredine 2013 in vključuje sedem partnerskih univerz (iz Norveške, Finske, Švedske, Velike Britanije, Nizozemske in Slovenije), z vodilno vlogo Univerze Bergen v smislu raziskovalne organizacije (vodja projekta je Scott Rettberg). V okviru svojih nalog so nosilci raziskovalnih projektov pripravili seminarje, namenjene različnim temam, sklepna konferenca pa je bila v škotskem Edinburghu, skupaj z razstavo del s tega področja (naslovljena z *Remediating the Social*), ki je bila pripravljena na podlagi odprtega razpisa in na kateri so sodelovali tudi neevropski teoretiki in avtorji.

Poleg seminarjev z objavami prispevkov, temeljnega raziskovalnega dela v projekt vključenih raziskovalcev in izobraževanja (predvsem dok-

torskih in podoktorskih kandidatov) lahko kot pomemben dosežek projekta navedemo oblikovanje *Elmcip Knowledge Base* (spletnega podatkovnega arhiva s področja elektronske literature, ki bo nadaljeval z aktivnostmi tudi po koncu projekta), knjižno izdajo (katalog) *Remediating the Social*, ki je nastala na podlagi sklepne Elmcip konference (s prispevki teoretikov, ki so sodelovali na simpoziju, in umetnikov, vključenih v razstavo), antologijo evropske e-literature v spletni in USB različici in sklepno knjigo poročil in drugih prispevkov, ki opisujejo bistvene aktivnosti tega projekta.

Na ljubljanskem seminarju, pripravljenem kot manjša konferenca, temelječa na odprtem pozivu (cfp), je bilo predstavljenih 17 referatov teoretikov in praktikov iz 11 držav, sklepno dejanje pa je bilo branje in performansi sedmih udeležencev. Nastopili so John Cayley, Scott Rettberg, Philippe Bootz, Alexandra Saemmer, Simon Biggs, Talan Memmott in Jaka Železnikar. Predstavljeni referati, ki so šli skozi izbor najmanj dveh ocenjevalcev, so bili naslednji:Alexandra Saemmer: *Reflections on the iconicity of digital texts,* Roberto Simanowski: *Code, Interpretation, Avant-garde,* Saskia Korsten: *Reversed Remediation. A Critical Display of the Workings of Media in Art*, Giovanna di Rosario: *Poetry confronting Digital Media*, Dubravka Đurić: *Acoustic and Visual Imagination in poetry from Neo-Avantgarde to New Media Poetry in Yugoslav and Post-Yugoslav Poetry*, Janez Strehovec: *E-literature and the New Social Paradigms*, Maria Mencia: *New Media ArtPoetry: A Textural Surface*, Beat Suter: *»Big Brother really is watching you.« Literature in mobile dataspace*, Patricia Gouveia: *Why digital games and networks can help us to change reality and generate concrete changes in social environments?,* Aleš Vaupotič: *Do the Domains of Literature and New Media Art Intersect? The Cases of Sonnetoid web projects by Vuk Ćosić and Teo Spiller*, Narvika Bovcon: *Literary Aspects of the New Media Art Works by Jaka Železnikar and Srečo Dragan*, Teo Spiller: *New Media Textuality and Semiotics*, John Cayley: *Is there a Message in this Medium? The Materiality of Language in the (Sound and) Light of New Media*, Markku Eskelinen: *The Four Corners of the E-Lit world. Textual Instruments, Operational Logics, Wetware Studies and Cybertext Poetics*, Maja Murnik: *The Extensions of the Body in New Media Art*, Philippe Bootz: *Programmed digital poetry: a poetry of the apparatus; media art?*, Bojan Anđelković: *(Techno)dispositifes in Contemporary Art Practice: Fifty-year Theatre Performance Noordung 1995-2045: by Dragan Živadinov.*

Že bežen pogled na predstavljene referate pokaže, da so bili v seminar vključeni tudi prispevki, ki se neposredno ne osredotočajo na e-literaturo, vendar pa s seganjem na področje tehno-dispozitiva v novomedijski umetnosti, k video igram in telesu (v umetnosti performansa) spodbujajo širši razmislek o interakcijah e-literature z novomedijsko in sodobno umetnostjo. Omenimo naj še, da je bil ljubljanski seminar tudi prvo srečanje, ki je združilo slovenske avtorje in teoretike s področja e-literature, bodisi

kot predavatelje z referati (ko gre za teorijo novomedijske umetnosti, sta sicer sodelovala tudi Murnikova in Anđelković, ki se zaenkrat ne ukvarjata z e-literaturo), bodisi kot avtorje branj (Jaka Železnikar), bodisi kot diskutante (Vuk Čosić, Srečo Dragan, Peter Purg).

Kot organizator konference sem izbral šest avtorjev, ki so pripravili razprave za objavo v *Primerjalni književnosti*; srečujemo se z besedili, ki izhajajo iz zelo različnih pristopov in prav s tem demonstrirajo širino obravnavanega področja, torej e-literarno teorijo. Problematičnost e-literature kot besedilne prakse-v-nastajanju tematizira v svojem prispevku **Markku Eskelinen,** urednik letopisa *Kibertekst* (skupaj z Rainejem Koskimaa) in avtor *Kibertekstne poetike* (2012), ki to področje obravnava glede na besedilne inštrumente, operacijsko logiko, kibertekstno poetiko in študije o »wetwaru«. Ta perspektiva nam razkrije meje in nevarnosti e-literature, ki so opredeljene z novomedijsko umetnostjo, (družbenimi) znanostmi, igrami in tudi lastno stagnacijo. Eskelinen poudarja kibernetsko naravo e-literarne tekstovnosti in kibertekstnega mišljenja v smislu, da smo na tem področju priče povratnih zank (ang. *feedback loops*) ne le med besedilom in uporabnikom, ampak tudi med različnimi sestavinami in fazami besedila, med dvema ali več uporabniki in med dvema ali več besedili.

Negotovost bralca, izzvanega z nepredvidljivimi nalogami, ki mu jih postavlja elektronska poezija, temelječa na podobah in zvokih, besedah v gibanju, časovnosti in interakciji, je spodbudila **Giovanno di Rosario,** da je svoje besedilo o elektronski poeziji razčlenila na tri »natančna branja« (*close readings*) e-pesniških del. Pri srečanju z generativnimi *Poemas no meio do caminho* Ruia Torresa je avtorica opozorila na veliko vlogo bralca, ki jo ima pri preoblikovanju nepredvidljivega teksta, v katerem je veliko besed spremenljivk, vključenih v nove povezave, ki jih na podlagi bralčevega izbora generira stroj. Avtor s tem izgublja nadzor nad besedilom, njegova vloga je le v oblikovanju prostora za pesniško kombinatoriko, pri kateri sodelujeta bralec in pesniški strojni generator.

Philippe Bootz, eden od pionirjev elektronske poezije in njen teoretik, posega v svojem prispevku k biopoeziji Eduarda Kaca, in sicer k projektu *Genesis 2* (1999), ki temelji na biologiji, optiki in internetski aplikaciji v smislu, da se stavek iz *Stvarjenja* prekodira v Morsejevo kodo in od tam v DNK. Pri analizi tega projekta je uporabil svojo semiotično teorijo bralnega dogodka z zanjo specifičnimi koncepti, ki jih navajamo kar v francoščini – *transitoire observable*, *texte-à-voir* in *texte-autheur*. Za to teorijo je značilno, da sta tako program kot njegova izvedba integralni sestavini e-literarnega projekta, programiranje je razumljeno celo v smislu estetske komponente dela. Pri tem je kritično ugotavljal, da gre pri Kacovem projektu za tehnopoezijo in ne medijsko poezijo, kajti srečujemo se s tehnotekstom, pri katerem je

pesniško derivat tehnološkega. Ob koncu besedila pa vpelje Bootz še eno razliko, in sicer med t. i. branjem v ožjem smislu in meta-branjem kot aktivnostjo, ki sega k samemu programu, torej k formalnemu strojnemu jeziku.

»Spletna, delno avtomatizirana 'literatura' prestopa univerzum tiskanih knjig kot nov medij, ki zahteva nove kohezivne energije. Nekaj drugačnega od Shakespearovega 'veličastnega duha, ki je ustvaril celoto', o katerem piše Coleridge in ki začenja obdobje romana,« ugotavlja ob sklepu svojega eseja **Aleš Vaupotič.** Pozornost je namenil projektom Vuka Čosića (*Deep ASCII* in *Nacija-Kultura*) in Tea Spiellerja (*Spam-* in *Novičarski soneti*), pri čemer pojave kiberbesedilnosti obravnava kot velik izziv sodobni komparativistiki. Dela slovenskih avtorjev, in sicer Jake Železnikarja in Sreča Dragana, analizira v svojem prispevku **Narvika Bovcon**, ki se usmerja tudi k njihovi novomedijski specifiki, recimo napakam in nefukcioniranju visokih tehnologij pri Železnikarjevih projektih *Aberration* in *Spreminjevalec*. Pri obravnavi Draganovega opusa, za katerega je značilno, da besedilnost povezuje tudi z njegovimi konceptualnimi deli in videom, pa še posebej opozori na *Mobilnega e-knjižnega flankerja* kot projekt, ki povezuje prostorsko razpostavitev literature v realnem urbanem okolju Ljubljane z branjem literature na omreženih mobilnih zaslonskih napravah in uprostorjenjem besed na virtualnem zemljevidu.

Janez Strehovec, urednik tematskega sklopa in pisec uvoda vanj, v svojem eseju »Elektronska literatura in nove družbene paradigme« obravnava e-literaturo v njenih interakcijah in medsebojnih vplivanjih z novomedijsko umetnostjo, obe področji pa umesti tudi v poindustrijsko družbo, v kateri narašča pomen storitev, dogodkov in performansov. Pri tem uvede koncept e-literarne storitve, s katerim opiše premik od zaključenega e-literarnega dela k algoritemski in performativni, k cilju naravnani dejavnosti, členjeni na ekonomično izbrane korake. Prav tako pa obravnava e-literaturo v širšem kontekstu algoritemske kulture, ki se bistveno loči od kulture literarnih intelektualcev, za katero je značilno, da predstavlja poglavitni tok v slovenski humanistiki in na številnih umetniških področjih.

Electronic Literature and the New Media Art: Introduction to the Thematic Section

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Electronic literature covers writing and programming that deploy new media bases (especially software) for forming electronic texts that are positioned at the intersection of experimental writing with literary features, literary avant-gardes, and the new media art. Its most talked-about branch is hypertext fiction, whose key works (e.g., "Afternoon, A Story" by Michael Joyce) were created in the 1980s and 1990s. However, the beginning of the twenty-first century is characterized by a number of other directions, in which hypertextual links between individual nodes of text give way to procedures that are based on new-generation software and are embedded in today's algorithmic, software, mobile, locative, DJ, and VJ cultures; this means that various software applications, remixes, and mash-ups are also entering e-literature practice (just like the practice of new media arts). These efforts result in projects that are part of extended textuality, which is based on the coexistence of verbal and nonverbal signifiers. Verbal textual units are static or kinetic (e.g., in the genre of animated e-poetry) and include the signs of natural languages or programming and scripting languages (e.g., the poetic-artistic language *mezangelle* developed by Australian Internet artist Mez Breeze). In addition, one also comes across (static or movable) images, sounds, and even aromas (e.g., Eduardo Kac's "aroma-poetry"; a type of poetry that is "read with the nose").

Writing in electronic media places a paradigmatic (rather than syntagmatic) approach to verbal signifiers at the fore; this means the language is analyzed and its units are isolated, alienated, compared to and contrasted with absent signifiers, classified, and playfully combined into new wholes. In this regard, the focus is on the database discussed in Lev Manovich's *The Language of New Media* as a new symbolic form composed of equal elements altered by entering such a database in a random fashion.. The database is not organized according to a causal chain, and has no beginning, middle, and end; according to Manovich, it is therefore structured completely differently than the traditional linear narrative.

Electronic literature is not a continuation of literature-as-we-know-it by other (i.e., electronic) means (nor its higher or modernized stage), but an area of emerging electronic textuality that is significantly influenced by the new media and rooted in distinctly techno-cultural practices (e.g., the club and software culture, and the culture of playing videogames). In a way, projects defined with hypertexts are close to the directions in the familiar print-based literature that are characterized by combinatory texts and text labyrinths (e.g., Italo Calvino's novel *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*, Milorad Pavić's *Dictionary of the Khazars*, and Jorge Luis Borges' *The Garden of Forking Paths*), whereas electronic poetry also enhances and radicalizes certain tendencies of the visual and concrete poetry of the 1960s and 70s (in terms of the organization of textual units according to spatial syntax) and spreads them to the area of motion and thus also temporal and cinematic) syntax. Even though e-literature pieces are placed into spaces that are not close to traditional literary culture (these types of projects are controlled by software and presented on the screens of various smart devices, ranging from computers to mobile phones), it also makes sense for literary theoreticians and practitioners to follow the developments in this. E-literature works namely provide an answer to the question of what happens with letters, words, and texts in the new-media condition of the computer culture (and social networks), and to questions regarding the fate of literacy within the context of the new media.

In order to gain a basic understanding of e-literature, it is important to consider its materiality in the sense that the text is now spread out in the "depths" of a (computer) screen, where it is available to the reader in a significantly more interactive way than when reading printed texts; readers can thus manipulate the text using their mouse, scrollbar, and similar devices and can even be in a tactile relationship with the text. In addition, it is also important that the text be saved in smart memory units (from where it can be retrieved at any time) and controlled by software. Of course, it also belongs to the algorithmic culture, which demands non-trivial efforts from the user (reader) in getting through the text; it often involves not only reading, but also navigation focused on a series of goals, which is reminiscent of playing videogames, whose theory can also be of great help when seeking to understand more complex e-literature works (e.g., formed as textual instruments). In addition to algorithms, databases (with verbal and nonverbal signifiers) and interfaces (which can also be very unusual, such as a wheel, hand, or dataglove) are significant elements of the most relevant pieces in this area.

Festivals and conferences at which these types of projects are presented are essential for the production, reproduction, and dissemination of e-literary practices. The best-known events of this type today are the Electronic Literature Organization conference and E-Poetry festival, whereas a series

of Digital Arts and Culture conferences greatly contributed to the popularization of e-literary creativity in the past; these conferences originated in Bergen, Norway, in 1998 and were initiated by Espen Aarseth, the author of the *Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature*. E-literature is also institutionalized with various publications. Among the journals that first and foremost publish theory, *Electronic Book Review*, *ALT-X*, the *Cybertext* yearbook, and *Dichtung Digital* should be mentioned. Books of this genre started being published by WVU Press as part of the *Computing Literature* collection. The European Network of Digital Literature *DDDL* brings together European researchers and institutions in this area. It is chaired by Philippe Bootz, who has also organized intensive Erasmus programs in this area (e.g., the one in 2013 at the Complutense University of Madrid, where the author of this article delivered lectures and also invited several Slovenian students to join him).

Where we can find e-literature works? Because these are electronic projects, the Internet is an excellent place for saving and distributing this type of practice. In this regard, one should mention both electronic literature online databases published by the ELO—the *E-Literature Collection 1* (2006) and *2* (2011)—and the Elmcip Anthology of European Electronic Literature. A series of basic information on electronic literature is also kept by the Elmcip Knowledge Base.

Numerous e-literature projects are now being placed at the intersection of experimental writing in new media and the new media art; the spaces of the new media art such as galleries, clubs, and online locations (from online databases to Second Life galleries) are also often spaces of e-literature. In addition, a variety of basic concepts related to the new media art are also useful for understanding e-literature, whose works, on the other hand, also expand the boundaries of the new media art and are by no means its derivatives or extensions. This fact motivated the author of this paper to organize the international conference *E-Literature and New Media* in Ljubljana on 22 and 23 September 2012 as part of the Elmcip European research project included in the HERA network, which supports research projects in the humanities. The writer of this paper and the editor of this thematic section is one of the principal investigators of this project, which is taking place from mid-2010 to mid-2013 and includes seven partner universities (from Norway, Finland, Sweden, the UK, the Netherlands, and Slovenia), with the University of Bergen as the leading research organization (Scott Rettberg is the project leader). As part of their tasks, the principal investigators prepared seminars on various topics and the final conference was held in Edinburgh together with an exhibition of electronic works titled *Remediating the Social*. This exhibition was prepared through a call for entries that shaped the show; at both the exhibition and conference, non-European theoreticians and authors also took part.

Along with the conferences and the published papers, the research done by the investigators involved in the project, and training (of doctoral and post-doctoral students), important outcomes of this project also include the formation of the *Elmcip Knowledge Base* (an online e-literature archive that will continue functioning after the project is concluded), the publication (catalog) *Remediating the Social*, which was based on the outcomes of the final Elmcip conference (with contributions from the theoreticians that participated at the symposium, and artists included in the exhibition), the anthology of European e-literature in an online and USB version, and the book of reports and other contributions describing the most important activities taking place as part of this project.

The Ljubljana conference was organized as a minor symposium based on an open call for papers and featured seventeen papers by theoreticians and practitioners from eleven countries. Its final event was the public reading and performance by John Cayley, Scott Rettberg, Philippe Bootz, Alexandra Saemmer, Simon Biggs, Talan Memmott, and Jaka Železnikar. The presented papers, which were peer-reviewed by at least two reviewers, included the following: "Reflections on the Iconicity of Digital Texts" by Alexandra Saemmer, "Code, Interpretation, Avant-Garde" by Roberto Simanowski, "Reversed Remediation. A Critical Display of the Workings of Media in Art" by Saskia Korsten, "Poetry Confronting Digital Media" by Giovanna di Rosario, "Acoustic and Visual Imagination in Poetry from Neo_Avantgarde to New Media Poetry in Yugoslav and Post-Yugoslav Poetry" by Dubravka Đurić, "E-Literature and the New Social Paradigms" by Janez Strehovec, "New Media ArtPoetry: A Textural Surface" by Maria Mencia, "'Big Brother Really Is Watching You.' Literature in Mobile Dataspace" by Beat Suter, "Why Digital Games and Networks Can Help Us to Change Reality and Generate Concrete Changes in Social Environments?" by Patricia Gouveia, "Do the Domains of Literature and New Media Art Intersect? The Cases of Sonnetoid Web Projects by Vuk Ćosić and Teo Spiller" by Aleš Vaupotič, "Literary Aspects of the New Media Art Works by Jaka Železnikar and Srečo Dragan" by Narvika Bovcon, "New Media Textuality and Semiotics" by Teo Spiller, "Is There a Message in This Medium? The Materiality of Language in the (Sound and) Light of New Media" by John Cayley, "The Four Corners of the E-Lit World. Textual Instruments, Operational Logics, Wetware Studies and Cybertext Poetics" by Markku Eskelinen, "The Extensions of the Body in New Media Art" by Maja Murnik, "Programmed Digital Poetry: A Poetry of the Apparatus; Media Art?" by Philippe Bootz, and "(Techno) dispositifes in Contemporary Art Practice: Fifty-Year Theatre Performance Noordung 1995–2045: by Dragan Živadinov" by Bojan Anđelković.

Even by taking a brief look at the papers presented, one can see that the conference also included contributions that do not focus directly on e-literature but, by extending to the areas of *techno-dispositifs* in new media art, videogames, and the body (in performance art), stimulate a broader discussion on the interactions of e-literature with the new media and contemporary art. In addition, it should be noted that the Ljubljana symposium was also the first meeting of this type that brought together Slovenian e-literature writers and theoreticians, who presented papers, performed live reading (Jaka Železnikar), or participated in discussions (Vuk Čosić, Srečo Dragan, and Peter Purg).

As the conference organizer, I selected six authors that prepared papers for publication in the journal *Primerjalna književnost*. The articles use a variety of approaches and thus demonstrate the complexity of the area explored: e-literary theory. The issue of e-literature as an emerging textual practice is discussed by **Markku Eskelinen,** the coeditor of the *Cybertext* yearbook (in addition to Raine Koskimaa) and author of *Cybertext Poetics* (2012). He examines this area from the perspective of textual instruments, operational logics, cybertext poetics, and a "wetware" study. This perspective reveals the boundaries and dangers of e-literature that are defined through the new-media art, (social) sciences, games, and one's own stagnation. Eskelinen emphasizes the cybernetic nature of e-literary textuality and cybernetic thinking in the sense that in this area one can witness feedback loops not only between the text and its user, but also between various components and stages of the text, between two or more users, and between two or more texts.

The insecurity of the reader that is challenged by unpredictable tasks posed by electronic literature, which is based on images, sounds, and words in motion, temporal dimension, and interaction, encouraged **Giovanna di Rosario** to direct her paper on electronic poetry into three close readings of e-poetry works. With Rui Torres' generative *Poemas no meio do caminho* (Poems in the Middle of the Road), the author drew upon the important role of the reader in transforming the unpredictable text, in which many words are variables included in new links that are machine-generated by means of the reader's selection. In this way, the authors lose control over their texts, and their roles are limited to shaping the environment for poetry combinatorics, in which the reader and the text generator are involved.

As one of the pioneers of electronic poetry and its theoretician, **Philippe Bootz** deals with Eduardo Kac's biopoetry; specifically, his project *Genesis 2* (1999), which is based on biology, optics, and Internet application in the sense that a sentence from the *Genesis* is transcribed into Morse code and thence into DNA. In analyzing this project, he uses his own semiotic theory

of the reading event with its specific concepts: the transient observable state (*transitoire observable*), text as seen (*texte-à-voir*), and authorial text (*texte-auteur*). This theory is characterized by the fact that both the program and its implementation are integral parts of an e-literary project; the programming is even understood in the sense of an aesthetic work component. In this regard, Bootz critically establishes that Kac's project involves technopoetry rather than media poetry because one deals with a texhnotext, in which poetic elements are derivatives of technological elements. He concludes his paper by introducing another difference between reading in the narrow sense and meta-reading as an activity that extends to the program itself—that is, formal machine language.

"The online, partially automated 'literature' reaches beyond the sphere of printed books as a new medium that demands new cohesive energies. Something other than Shakespeare's 'mighty mind that produced the whole' that was described by Coleridge and began the period of the novel" is the conclusion **Aleš Vaupotič** reaches in his essay. Vaupotič dedicates his attention to the projects by Vuk Čosić (*Deep ASCII* and *Nacija-Kultura* [Nation-Culture]) and Teo Spieller (*Spam-* and *Novičarski soneti* [News Sonnets]), in which he considers examples of cybertextuality as a great challenge for modern comparative studies. **Narvika Bovcon** analyzes works by Slovenian writers Jaka Železnikar and Srečo Dragan and also focuses on their new-media–specific features such as the errors and malfunctioning of advanced technologies in Železnikar's projects *Aberration* and *Spreminjevalec* (Changer). In discussing the works by Srečo Dragan, who is known to connect textuality with his conceptual works and video, she draws special attention to *Mobilni e-knjižni flanker* (E-literary Flaneur) as a project that connects the spatial arrangement of literature in the real urban environment of Ljubljana with reading literature on wired mobile devices and positioning words on a virtual map.

In his essay "Elektronska literatura in nove družbene paradigme" (Electronic Literature and New Social Paradigms), **Janez Strehovec**, the editor of this thematic section, discusses e-literature in its interactions and mutual effects with the new media art, and also contextualizes both areas within postindustrial society, in which the importance of services, events, and performances is increasing. In this regard, he introduces the concept of e-literary service, which he uses to describe the shift from a completed e-literary work to algorithmic and performative goal-oriented activity broken down into economically selected steps. In addition, he also discusses e-literature within the wider context of algorithm culture, which differs significantly from the culture of literary intellectuals, which represents the predominant stream in the Slovenian humanities and the arts.