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## Post Media: Towards a User Interface Architecture

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**Abstract.** The issue of the so-called "lived reality" of the contemporary world is largely dependent on the mediation process of "presence", especially on the technology of rapid data transport, covering a space of media reality such as an image of every day's living space. To explain the relationship between the reality of the mass media and conventional reality of everyday life it is needed to restore confidence to the present moment. The framework for understanding this relationship is through a certain revision of immediacy, *i.e.*, the way we report about the subject on a new spatial law in the media reality. Only then we get closer to the possibility of presenting the construction of a world in which man will be in control of forms in which the "presence" takes place.

Keywords: image, mediality, transparency, art, imaging, instrumentality

### 1 Introduction

The issue of the so-called "lived reality" of the contemporary world is largely dependent on the mediation process of "presence", especially on the technology of rapid data transport, covering a space of media reality such as an image of every day's living space. To explain the relationship between the reality of the mass media and conventional reality of everyday life it is needed to restore confidence to the present moment. The framework for understanding this relationship is through a certain revision of immediacy, *i.e.*, the way we report about the subject on a new spatial law in the media reality. Only then we get closer to the possibility of presenting the construction of a world in which man will be in control of forms in which the "presence" takes place.

"... A combination of strategies: memorability being achieved by mixing effects of bizarre. So is developing the postmodern world of mestizos, where there is not searched for new, but for recombinations of the known. Ongoing bastardization of

man, machine and sign. The new space law requires a new poetics of mixing." [9][page 53]

"The detachment of the subject from itself, its subservience to heteronomy, lies directly in the subject's essence." [6][page 217]

The provisional result of the use of modern computational systems in processes of transformation of contemporary society lies in a sudden and distinct change in perspective: changes in habitat on which a long-term pattern of traditional spatial and temporal law has been built. This law is gradually changing the technologically produced objects of "seeing": not only that they do not provide a sufficient difference between thinking and knowing, but they lead to "overlapping" the difference between the current display and its subsequent simulation, mainly by redirecting perspectives. In other words, rationality is too abstract and not very reflective, text and words become too differentiating, rather than unifying. In principle, the familiar "here" and "now" is replaced by "there" and "again". For more or less randomly appearing objects of the standard reality are overlapped by the production of mass media world and place before us their own finished images as previously identified objects, essentially as forwarded claims.

And from there it is just a short step to perceive visual electronic imaging complexes as a kind of facticity.

New spatial laws of imaging techniques combine the opinions that were previously necessary to process in the lived world, and only after share those opinions in an environment. On the contrary, understanding the coordinates of the objects in their processed world is almost impossible, and their acceptance does not require any active self-reference of the viewing subject, let alone a shared environment.

The game lies only in the pre-programmed calculations of the displayed points. Recent developments in IT quite subtly draw our attention to an effort to rearrange the model of cognition and knowledge that would be more appropriate and truer; it is, however, not the model of traditional reality, but of a "multiverse" reality. However, the far from ending desire for rewriting modernity is more or less the defining feature of the present time, say a special epoch, which fully utilizes practices that somehow in principle go beyond the boundaries of its own limitations.

Though we still linger in the wings of the world that we have created relatively hard and especially constructed socially, yet such a world is not quite a complete, concise and sufficiently domesticated area of our lives. We accept as a part of this world the apparatuses, techno-images, technologies or systems of mediation, whose influence is not only evident, but also changeable. With the gradual use of technology we use a different way of thinking, not so that we have changed the possibilities of our own dispositions, but we change fundamentally the strategies of their use. Some strategies are deliberate, some rather forced: anyway, the forms of our thinking take other appearances, as well as the ways in which the forms of thinking can be communicated. It seems that it is now the time to return to the unification and not to other forms of disintegration. For a start, we should recall what we find by using what we usually call "dispose of."

## 2 The dispositive and reflexive mediality

„Society includes interaction. The difference between them is not a distinction between kinds of actions, societal versus interactional. Instead, it structures the undifferentiated domain of elemental operations, adding a capacity for abstraction that could not develop through interaction alone.” [5][page 442]

„The autotransparency, to which the media lead us together with social sciences, is proving itself to be a mere revelation of plurality, and the mechanisms and the inner armature of our culture.“ [11]

If we look at current developments in philosophy of the media, one cannot but note that the almost uncritical reflection period is over, and it is necessary to make something like defragmentation of the empty contents and unintended consequences, which significantly reduced the capacity for critical reflection of complex called the media. In this paper we shall focus on two basic concepts, which challenge and certainly relativize the current extinct world of the media.

Briefly, we talk about the concept of the **dispositive**, from which it is essential to move towards **reflective mediality**, and to examine how it is possible to newly constitute the subject particularly in terms of a *pre-format of the very thought*. It is necessary to know with what "viscera", what "inner self", or technique of "laying", inserting, or founding the thinking in itself features. First we shall discuss this on a general level.

This is actually a more precise definition of the concept of difference, as it is understood and used not as an opening to a greater extent to the general, but on the contrary, i.e., as an internal and precise elaboration of internal links. The difference must allow an understanding of the difference between the term "medium" as an implicit difference between separate and autonomous in relation to the general, understood as a greater whole: allowing to develop individual differences and newer concepts of the concept of media, i.e. as a purely translational means. In this case, we it is some form of autoreference self-wrapped in a circle, from which it cannot set foot. The fundamental problem is the following:

There is a basic contradiction of things that cannot be compatible, especially without a negation in the simple unity of their media, i.e., where and in which way they appear, or become things. From the very contradictory principle of our world things cannot share the same medium, cannot satisfy the condition of agreement in the medium, because every form of 'thinghood' in Hegel's terms is disposed in an own medium for themselves: hence the contradiction between the concept of *medium* and *media* as a transferable format to approximately the same, which can then communicate, even as mass-media. From the perspective of the thing it is also clear that the thing is constituted by its own contradiction; the recognition lies precisely in the understanding and acceptance of their own negation, i.e., in the possibility of denial. The things can be themselves only, when their own correlation with their differences is understood as an implicit unity, therefore, taken as a kind of game of opposites.

This is, however, exactly what the newer concept of media does not articulate, does not presuppose, and intentionally eliminate. "Yet; as thus opposed to one another they

cannot be together in the simple unity of their medium, which is just as essential to them as negation; the differentiation of the properties, in so far as it is not an indifferent differentiation but is exclusive, each property negating the others, thus falls outside of this simple medium; and the medium, therefore; is not merely an Also, an indifferent unity, but a *One* as well, a unity which *excludes* an other. The One is the *moment of negation*; it is itself quite simply a relation of self to self and it excludes an other; and it is that by which 'thinghood' is determined as a Thing." [4][page 69]<sup>1</sup>

It is now crucial to remind the wider socio-cultural and historic context:

"In light of this theological genealogy the Foucauldian apparatuses acquire an even more pregnant and decisive significance, since they intersect not only with the context of what the young Hegel called "positivity," but also with what the later Heidegger called *Gestell* (which is similar from an etymological point of view to *dis-positio*, *disponere*, just as the German *stellen* corresponds to the Latin *ponere*). When Heidegger, in *Die Technik und die Kehre* (The Question Concerning Technology), writes that *Ge-stell* means in ordinary usage an apparatus (*Gerät*), but that he intends by this term "the gathering together of the (in)stallation [*Stellen*] that (in)stalls man, this is to say, challenges him to expose the real in the mode of ordering [*Bestellen*]," the proximity of this term to the theological *dispositio*, as well as to Foucault's apparatuses, is evident. What is common to all the terms is that they refer back to this *oikonomia*, that is, to a set of practices, bodies of knowledge, measures, and institutions that aim to manage, govern, control, and orient – in a way that purports to be useful – the behaviors, gestures, and thoughts of human beings." [2][page 12]

The dispositive is very closely related to what we know already from the time of Coser: namely the conflict theory, in response to Parsonian functionalism assuming a general consensus, both at the level of rationality and power and particularly its layout. According to Coser, is it on the contrary a conflict, a disagreement, which is latently present, and which introduces some dynamics into the social, and power relations, and accelerates the necessary solutions. Conflict, therefore, allows a better understanding of the concept of dispositive, because it is based on differential dynamic - static, followed by sensory and aesthetic configuration, followed by the ideal in the power tools of the subjectification processes. If we look at the general, common, thus to some positive elements of the different actors of the social relation, say the general consensus, we must also have in mind (Hegel), how one copes with the pressure that is created purely on her due to a indecision to unite the opposites. These opposites, however, cannot be otherwise than from the nature of its foundation different; it means that not united otherness, that is in a certain form kind of demonstrative, and according to Hegel, is the output of the impurity of the sense together with the sense's opposition to the purely abstract.

If this impurity of reason is to be somehow reconciled with positive elements, i.e. those that embody a particular richness of life, especially with the Platonic conception of the idea of goodness and beauty, it is essential that the latent disagreement is ap-

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<sup>1</sup> „... interlocutors do not make what they discuss in argument real. Existence is not concluded. The ontological argument is false. Nothing can be said about reality that does not presuppose it.“ (Lyotard, 1988: 32)

appropriately argued in favor of the general, whole, and not only in favor of idiosyncrasies, and separate parts. Here comes into play not only the concept of discussion, but also the notion of communication. For it is still true, that in any discussion in society, where there really is something we can discuss about, contains the structure of a latent conflict and misunderstanding, looking now away from the fact, that such a conflict can be deliberate and purposeful. In this respect, the assumptions themselves are in danger: the object and the subject of discussion is not something obvious, but rather a dispute, and must be established first.

„A dissensus is not a conflict of interests, opinions or values; it is a division inserted in ‚common sense‘: a dispute over what is given and about the frame within which we see something as given.“ [8][page 69]

The word is still somehow true, has always efficiency, and continues to serve its goal: i.e., understanding. The “word” in itself not only performs some work, expresses what it wants to say, and this is not just a work of the concept in the strict sense, but rather a very distinct but decisive “exclusivity of the word”. In this sense we speak of exclusivity of the word as the process of spreading or expanding the territory of knowledge, the re-configuration of what can be said, and what is concealed by what is said. Nevertheless, or precisely because of it, it is an execution of the word as is the laying (Stellung), and the trajectory of the process of reconciliation of opposites, or the widespread irrationality of rationality (Weber).

„The words mean however what they [say], and the trajectory of the words actually indicates the processes that they can.“ [3][page 146]<sup>2</sup>

Before we recall the concept of communication procedures, that does not solve the problem, but rather complicate it, let's add to the listed so far the aesthetic dimension of this concept. Aesthetics is more resistant to the referred simplification and elimination of subtle differences, because it takes into communication separate modes of expression. Aesthetics is actually a division of the sensory and the discourse about sense. The actual difference of *vision through vision* and *vision through thinking* is closely related. As Kant indicated, the singularity of aesthetic sharing and the requirement of universality, that is connected, leaves the "governor mentality" in quiet repose. In fact, the governor mentality corresponds to the concept of self-reference closure.

The singularity constantly undermines and contradicts this mentality, just by what Virilio has described as a clear disproportion: *given is just information, but not sensation*; this is apatheia. This inertia prevents political power to take any initiative in the process of subjectification, and gives rise to the initiative of phenomenon.

„Dissensus does not refer to a conflict of interests, opinions or values, but to the juxtaposition of two forms of the sensory implementation of collective intelligence.

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<sup>2</sup> „... the aesthetic phrase is the phrase par excellence of the faculty of presentation, but that it has no concept for which to present its sensible or imaginative intuition, it cannot therefore determine a realm, but only a field. Moreover, that field is only determined to a second degree, reflectively, so to speak: not by the commensurability between the capacity for presenting and the capacity for conceptualizing. This commensurability is itself an Idea, its object is not directly presentable.“ (Lyotard, 1988: 168)

Politics frames a sensory world of its own, a world in which a generic intelligence is implemented.“ [8][page 80]

If the force field of power, especially political power, which is based on configuration of interests in decision-making processes, as the logic of redistribution of highly valued goods, preferences of parts to the whole, and their mutual re-configuration, then it is quite clear that aesthetics is not moving in this field, and has more the character of the above-mentioned reference aesthetics. Recall the basic definition, as for the mentioned above the reference aesthetics has a basic internal link to the relationship of dispositive and reflexive mediality. For aesthetics is bringing together in one unit the above basic components, which stand at the very beginning of the whole chain: thus the *laying, articulation, singularity* and eventually the *techné of mediation - reflexive mediality*, which constitutes the **modes of thinking**. Then the true *reality of display* in the artwork can be seen first and foremost as an expression of a balanced relationship between the individual and the universal. Therefore, it is not so much that one or the other were given prominence in the expression of their own content, but rather to ensure that the display itself *expressed balance* of both principles. That applies to, e.g., seeing and the seen, thought and imaginary, or in other words, to see through vision and the vision through thinking. Mastering this technique is then thought to enter the difference territory itself, logics of strategies and models of thinking and versions of the general and the particular, to the world of singularities and contingency, with which the subject compensates as much as possible and able.

We refer to the definition of the concept of media in G.W.F. Hegel, who suggests, which assumptions we work with, when we understand the problem of mediation too immediately, or in some simple naming of things. And that is always associated with understanding the negative (non-simple unity) in connection with the unity of the general, which make it at all possible at the moment of disengagement from its opposite.

“Negation is inherent in a property as a *determinateness* which is immediately one with the immediacy of being, an immediacy which, through this unity with negation, is universality. As a One, however, the determinateness is set free from this unity with its opposite, and exists in and for itself.” [4][page 69]

Reflexive mediality therefore responds to the dual interpretation of the concept of the media, to the difference in negativity, the difference of simple distinction and the difference of exclusivity, i.e., distinguish the distinction primarily in a way, that the negative, the negation of its own otherness loses the priority, and as crucial becomes the difference distinguishing the otherness in the whole of unity: in what things they have in common in terms of objectivity, yet so subtly different in their own specification. If this media cannot mediate, it becomes a mere operator of a false unification. Therefore, it is not the objective of media philosophy to search forms of the identifying unification, but on the contrary, to search for non-identifying unity, that lets the things talk in itself and for itself.

Basically, this means that medium must be self-differing; otherwise it is not a medium whatsoever, but merely a transporting means. This has, however, in relation to the aesthetic the following consequences.

As already mentioned above, the *aesthetic* is in its own territory if it is only a "guarantor" of a definite and universal validity of a clear relationship of beauty and truth, difference of vision and visibility, or of display and image, and thus more or less free of the illusion of redundant displays and unnecessary reliefs of the real: as the *dispositive* behind images notes *unification*, not dissent, conflict and the artificial expansion thereof. Inventing controversial versions of the world, including aesthetic versions, does not mean inventing languages capable to formulate problems, of which the existing languages can hardly speak; it is rather the ability to create communication strategies that do not allow penetration through lines of discourse, and that frequently use and misuse the discourse. And how aptly observes N. Luhmann, mediating in itself still does not constitute communication. For we must always remember the internal difference of the "Word" itself: there is a considerable difference between the word *communicated* (a mere articulation of content) and *shared* (implicit understanding). Remember the classical formulation of Wittgenstein:

"Most of the propositional and questions to be found in philosophical works and not false but nonsensical. Consequently we cannot give any answer to questions of this kind, but can only point out that they are nonsensical. Most of the propositions and questions of philosophers arise from our failure to understand the logic of our language." 4.003 [12][page 19]

However, understanding the logic of our language, or rather the structure of its formation is one important condition, but there is another: What leads our understanding of the language, so that we know what the language actually says? That propositions and concepts correspond somehow to what they describe? They correspond, but with the exception of convention. Here still remains in the game the term of medium, the differentiating factor of mediation that leaves the contradiction in details of the thing and its reification in a mutual distance and distinctive self-articulation.

This is only possible in a society retaining the specific differences, something like a dialect of its own, and not the leveling of a media society, where media are understood as mass media interaction.

".. in the media society an ideal of emancipation is promoted, instead of emancipatory ideals built upon the entirely explainable self-confidence, on a perfect awareness of who knows how things are (whether it is Hegel's Absolute Spirit, or a person who is no longer in Marx's sense a slave of ideology). Such an ideal of emancipation is built upon an oscillation, a pluralism, and results in an erosion of that principle of reality.... Today's people can finally realize, that perfect freedom is not that of Spinoza, that the perfect freedom is not ... knowing the necessary structure of the real and the adaptation to the real." [11]

In principle, we can say that the central distinction is still the concept of Hegel: medium within the meaning of implied emancipation from false unification, neglect of conflict, which is own to each thing, and is forcing to self-developing differences. Conversely, the current understanding of the concept of media is actually rather the opposite: the unification at the cost of leveling, the suppression of internal differentiation, and at the same time the pressure on a general support of sharing of the more or less similar, if not the same in its mediation.

This is similar to the identity of expression and identity of character, specifically with their relations in the bilateral transcript, flipping one to the other, to which pointed already Wittgenstein:

"Identity of object I express by identity of sign, and not by using a sing of identity. Difference of object I express by difference of sign" 5.53 [12][page 52]

Self-confidence is the recognition of determination of diversity and mutual relatedness with different and also with the internally contradictory: the same principle of contradiction, that non-simple non-unity, with which each self-consciousness becomes a differentiating self-determination, and in this regard the **media** as a factor of a mutual motion to itself and to its own conflict, whether such a movement is correct, valid and participating in the general, is not a replaceable concept of media. And it cannot be valid. These are two different principles dealing with the real and the simulacrum of the real.

From this perspective, it is clear that it will be more or less necessary to return to the concept of a resolution that outlined G.W.F. Hegel: to understand the concept of **medium** in its differentiating essence, in its relative relatedness to the general as a whole of possible further relations. On the contrary, the concept of *media* as it is now widely accepted, will be left.

Obviously, the time is not far, when we shall start to talk about the era of **post-media**. And to ensure, that the era of explicit description of the media world of simulations looked like a period of compliance with the reality, which, however, by saying what it says, conceals what cannot be told. In terms of art we can add:

„... art requires philosophy, which interprets it in order to say what it is unable to say, whereas art is only able to say it by not saying it.“ [1][page 96]

The medium in its essence allows communicating even, what can be translated into other forms. And by doing this, it fulfills exactly its destination.

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