

Intermedialised Mind

Literature, media, and philosophy in the age of digitalised selves

(*A scholar's manifesto*)¹

I.

We live not in a world of things but of relations. These relations are mediated through the pictorial, the sonic, the code, and memory. It seems that to think clearly nowadays, we must think intermedially. Or rather, embrace intermediality as a foundational concept of the arts, both traditional and emerging.

The age of mass printing has not been replaced by the age of the screen, be it dominated by cinematography or a personal multimedia device. The two co-exist: literature and newer media form new mediascapes that merge media, places, and the bodies inhabiting them.

Myths did not dissolve into history. Hellenic and modernist mythopoeia have evolved into newer forms and modes, but the mythological archetypes remain embedded into our common cultural memory. We still experience neophobia and panikos, being afraid of the new or deeply familiar.

The body, too, was never just biological. What we call “the self” is a palimpsest of cultural echoes, media, different languages, and history. It is affected by and constructed through its environments, i.e., sites of mediation.

II.

Whether recognised or not, the thought, be it literary, philosophical, or critical thinking, has always been intermedial. Not only inter-medial in the sense of navigation between various mediascapes but intermedial in the sense of being deeper and more complex than the multi-medial. There always has been and always will be the connection between media and medial products – books, paintings, operas, films, etc. – and the overlay of the relations, links, references, allusions, and the fragments they build is deeper than a simple constatation that we live in a multi-medial environment.

To think intermedially is not to reject multi-mediality or inter-textuality, but to shift from a mono-medial worldview to a pluri-medial complexity and entanglement. Can we call such a view pleximedial?² The plexus of media that shapes our lives, artistic expression, and perception by beholders is a metaphoric Gordian Knot. It has always been there yet intensified in the twentieth century and continues to build its complexities.

¹ This manifesto draws upon ongoing research in four intersecting areas: the re-mediated subjectivity, ternary thinking, synthetic futures, and decolonising intermediality. These areas are studied at the cross-roads of media theory, literary studies, and intermedial aesthetics.

² Pleximediality refers to interweaving rather than layering of media; it generates affective, epistemic, poetic density, a media-knot (media-plexus) rather than a media-chain (or media-thread).

Now, we can describe this knot, embrace it, trace it, and feel it, just like some artists and philosophers had done before Alexander cut it. We can observe the movement in between, the folds, the third meaning, Derrida's difference, tracking temporal, sensory, and epistemological tensions.

III.

We should reject the comfort of binary oppositions. Word/image, word/music, myth/reality have all been criticised and extended to ternary, tripartite models a long time ago by the Romanticists. The newer binaries of human/machine, self/alien can fit the same logic: an informed beholder, a curious human would notice that there is always something more to a classical cultural binary or an opposition of archetypes from a primary myth.

I propose a mode of ternary thinking or even a more complex perception of our reality and the self. Ternary thinking is a mode of thought that opens up space: a third term, a fold, a resonance elude categorisation and defy dichotomy. It is not about synthesis or compromise, but rather, a complex composition. It is a structure of difference that does not demand hierarchy or reconciliation and invites us to see not only complexity but possibility.

We may speak of subjectivity as body/voice/machine, of aesthetics rooted in myth/memory/media ternary, of the unity of place/time/movement, or of perception through image/word/sound. Such ternary structures are many, and they are not analytical tools of perception anymore but living epistemologies and formants of poetics and politics. As ways of sensing, they help us see the world, "read" it, and create it.

IV.

The modern self is not a stable unit but a site of mediation, a palimpsest of culture, media, and technologies. Evolving along the route from the introduction of an advanced printing press to a modern algorithm, the self is shaped and re-mediated by these tools. It may be seen as inter-technological: our interface of communication with the world, cultural memory, and perception.

The re-mediated self is not a metaphor but a structure of being, as our identities emerge not before but through mediation and response to media, arts, contexts, and discourses.

We no longer simply speak about media, as it starts lacking sense: instead of reading *about* media, we can start seeing everything *as* media. Literature, as a form of encountering the world as a plexus of media, is a powerful medium with (the) strong(est) documenting functions and the most responsive features: other media *are* literary, as they all can be written down, expressed verbally, textually, narrated, shaped, and read.

Media history is not merely a background to be traced and understood; it should be re-composed and seen as a subjective history, a story of the re-mediated selves that has its affective archaeology.

V.

The future must be non-binary, non-exclusive, and non-rigid.

Disciplinary borders between literature studies, media theory, intermedial aesthetics, and philosophy must be erased.

Hermeneutic aesthetics, creolised (non-conventional) and hybrid forms and artefacts should be celebrated and studied with the same care we give to Joyce, Woolf, or Freud.

Synthesis of new forms and digital reality must not be seen as a lesser mimesis – it is not a false re-presentation but a new mode of world-, art-, and media-making.

Research across the arts, media, and theories must erase the rigidness of an academic discourse. Standard academic styles must be replaced with original voices, forms, studies instead of a “traditional” dry speech structured in a conventional “abstract–introduction–methodology–findings–interpretation–conclusion” form: it is a useful tool, yet it should not be a tool of thought limitation. Peer reviews must be constructive and helpful, not punitive or limiting.

Ultimately, scholarship must become responsive to the world it inhabits: not by policing it but by thinking *with* it.

VI.

To sum up: intermediality is not a new method or a new trend but a long-standing condition of thought and expression that has always been in arts and aesthetics and history; it stimulates us to read differently, write differently, theorise differently; stabilisation of a meaning is less urgent than moving along the way where the concept unfolds or forms itself; re-making of the world is about an active way, not its passive representation. Ultimately, intermediality is not merely an object of study; it is a poetics, a form of engaging with the world.

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P.S. This manifesto is a personal reminder, my way forward, a projection of an intellectual path formed by fifteen years of thinking with and through intermediality. I hope to return to it a decade from now and find that some of what it envisions has become more widely lived and shared.