MEDIALITY AND PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT:

Philosophy of mediality is in effect an attempt to link the gaps between that what comes out of the process of thinking as the thought-content, without considering only the predicates and descriptions of subjects of thinking. It is only by means of mediality that the missing links between the progression of thinking (Denken) and the thought-content (das Gedachte) remain almost invisible and, in fact, there is no possibility to make the function of mediality more transparent. The situation reveres to two approaches: we have to make distinction between thinking and the thought-content, from the point which enables us to see parallel processes: on the one hand, there is the movement which enables the process of thinking of something, based on „self-limitation" of thinking through " of thinking through terms, modes, forms, etc., and on the other hand, there is the movement that refers to the way how and through which different thought contents of the thought-content come into thinking.

KEYWORDS:

Philosophy of megality, Progression of thinking (Denken), thought - content (das Gedachte), states of mediation, configuration of knowledge, conceptual construction - visual construction, The concordant limitations, alternating integration.

"Die moderne Weltansicht stürzt in sich zusammen, wenn sich wirklich hinter dem Subjekt Hintergründe verbergen. "

V. Flusser

Philosophy of mediality represents, in a slightly metaphorical sense, a typically un-performable character in drama: it represents the invisible character of a prompter, who is played more or less by all actors, but who never has his own part in the script.

The actors usually try to create an illusion that they do not need to refer to this person at all, although in fact it is impossible to eliminate completely his/ her role since it is always a part of the play. The problem of mediality reminds of an actor unsure of his part, who is unable to mask his groping and so unintentionally repeatedly adverts to the prompter's activity. It is right at this moment that the spectator gets a chance to notice the hidden character. Moreover, the prompter never plays a visible role, nor is his role defined in the script - the

roles of all other characters are described, but not that of the prompter. So the spectator never sees him directly. The situation refers to a sneaky dissimulation of something that ensures the fluency and certain „purity" of the drama. Mediality can be defined by the same role, since it also enables the apparent fluency and undisturbed flow or progression of thinking, although the contents and forms of thinking of a different nature. It is only by means of mediality that the missing links between the progression of thinking (Denken) and the thought-content (das Gedachte) remain almost invisible and, in fact, there is no possibility to make the function of mediality more transparent.

It reminds the theatre again: the script is usually written by a master playwright, but not by an expert who is perfectly aware of the distinction between writing itself and the content of writing, or between acting and the acted role, or thinker and thinking itself. Philosophy of mediality is in effect an attempt to link the gaps between that what comes out of the process of thinking as the thought-content, without considering only the predicates and descriptions of subjects of thinking. Philosophy of mediality is based on several presumptions, which I am going to outline in the following section. We made the assumption that we base our approach on the fact, that it is just mediality that makes thinking and its operations with data contents possible: and this applies not only to the process of thinking itself, but also to its contents, objects or concepts resulting from the „activity of the thought-content", and not from the process of thinking nor movement of the concept, as Hegel argued. This means that we have to make distinction between thinking and the thought-content, from the point which enables us to see parallel processes: on the one hand, there is the movement which enables the process of thinking of something, based on „self-limitation" of thinking through terms, modes, forms, etc., and on the other hand, there is the movement that refers to the way how and through which different thought contents of the thought-content come into thinking.

In a nutshell, the double movement occurs due to „states of mediation", that is, due to mediality operating between different formats of how the real is being determined, or we might say, poses a limit interface between complexity and the so-called reality. The formats are to be understood as „limitation lines" of certain units that are no longer attacked by thinking and its inner process of self-development and are left as already structured contents, as certain „wholes" that form the thought-content. We speak of formats in the sense of particular „determination levels", always including a latent hierarchization that makes possible the fixation of different subjects of thinking, which therefore become stable, „defined" or shaped, and so give rise to the inevitable duality of movement of thinking: whilst there is the progression referring to the determined units there is also, at the same time the progression inherent with indetermination.

As far as the process of thinking is concerned, we are dealing with a specific paradox: On one hand, there is an endless process of self-articulation of thinking, that is, a kind of gratified persistence of thinking in indefinite territories, where it can „wander around" aimlessly, without any specific „output" or result.

We may call it „fooling around" with data, without thinking being overtly involved. This creates the possibility of constant continuation of the progression of thinking without any conclusion or final point, which causes the tension between thinking and thought-content. Basically, we are dealing with a problem of the potential and the actual, the virtual and the real: that is, with a double activity: opening of the reality of data as well as its successive closing.

We are talking of the use of the progress of thinking within the process of its self-limitation, whereby each thought-content can come out only as a result of the self-limitation of thinking. Self-positioning of thinking cannot rise from any conceptual construction; it is possible only in the case of a gap or disconnection in its progression: that means, an interruption of the thought process in the progression within which thinking has itself in mind in the first instance, and subsequently starts the process of dissociating and differentiating. The self-positioning and thinking of itself ensures the continuity of thinking movement, due to which it establishes and recognizes itself in further development of the other, that is, of its subject.

It is a movement conducted through acts of self-positioning, since thinking has no other means for affirmation of its activity. By way of extending the paths of its progression and by simultaneously establishing its discreteness, it is founding interruptions as forms of self-enfolding, whereas the path of extension remains empty and as such available for the thought-content to enter the play of thinking. The dual progression of thinking ena-

bles the appearance of something that does not come out of thinking at the beginning, but only as the moment of „suspension" or disconnection, as a parallel and complementary act.

The thought-content does not evolve only in connection with establishing certain units, in which thinking has stopped the progression of its own development, but also evolves by setting the discontinuity thresholds. The thought-content does not rise automatically from the situation after thinking has suspended the progression within its own path, but only when thinking allows the existence of other paths that run parallel with its self-progression. And when the concurrence of both paths – thinking and closing lines – is established, only then can the thought-content arise. Parallel running of both paths occurs by virtue of the principle of mediality, which comprises the hierarchy of transmissions between different paths. Mediality, indeed, is a general format for conveying the state of difference or otherness. For thought-content to find available data there needs to be the progression of thinking. Let me point out that this is may not be as obvious as it might seem.
Mediality and its hierarchization of transmission patterns is an inevitable part of the process, because otherwise the movement of thinking would result only in mere self-extension or endless repeating, without any apparent result.

The data transmission level between both paths can be established only by means of mediality. In fact, the thought-content makes use of the mediality's potential, due to which extensions of thinking - into data contents - can be transposed into linear sequences. Then the thought-content can work with units or configurations which have been already arranged by mediality, according to the hierarchy of transmissions. The thought-content appears in case when particular „objective" format has been transposed into the format of linear sequences: that is, into partially determined totality which represents the connection between both paths and has been established on a particular level of transmission.

The totality, indeed, is an actual limitation, a connection in which data and extension of thinking combine to produce a finality of the concept. The process is possible due to mediality including differentiated states of mediation and thus releasing different levels of interface data and a conversion into a set of facts. But we must bear in mind that examining the different, produced from within thinking always has to indulge in self-limitation, by taking on a form of suspended extension, of determination of the line spreading into wider and wider realms, into indeterminateness, because only then the thought-content can come out in a final shape.

Thinking has to allow the final shape by the act of self-limitation, lets it pass to finality of delimited totality. The process of self-limitation of thinking is based on the acceptance of data as something that can be adopted by thinking. In this case, thinking does not transcend the data frame anymore and adapts its own development to the data progression, that is, to the logic inherent to data.

"Wenn alle Ordnungen durchsichtig wären und nicht nur das Chaos, sondern auch alle anderen Ordnungen durchscheinen ließen, könnten wir von keiner Hierarchie sprechen."

V. Flusser

Thinking changes the path of its own movement by accepting data as its own content: thinking must accept the logic of data composition, without which data could not be linked, and so thinking changes its yet unlimited flow into the structured data state, in other words, it proceeds into the realm of thought-content.

In this already directed progression thinking finds the path into the realm of new „shape" of this activity: it aims to general integration, to the concept connecting inner logic of thinking with the logic of data flow.
The Concept is thus composed of two basic parts:
• The first one is an implicit advancing of thinking towards opening of extension lines within its own progression, which is an endless process of self-extension, within which thinking exerts constant pressure to spread the realm of its activity.

- Second component of the concept is the progression in lines of delimitation, the discontinuous movement that gives rise to „gaps" or blank spaces in the flow of thinking, enabling the integration of data into particular paths of thinking. The second part is also an expression of particular acceptance rate regarding the „other".

However, connections among data contents cannot be loosen in any way, data can only be linked, and so thinking has to „seize" the path of their flow to get them under „control". In this case the movement of thinking is limited not only by disconnections in the movement at outer paths, that is, spread and extension paths, but also by mediality interface, which provides access to data by the set-up of mediation interface. In brief, it is a problem of mediality interface and the way it is „leaned" towards the discrete path of thinking. The movement of thinking „through" data is mediated and based primarily on transmission hierarchies, not on thinking itself. It is due to mediality that thinking can enter a realm that is not completely external, but structured by different hierarchies. It is defined by relation of virtual and the real which otherwise would not be accessible for thinking.

In fact, we are dealing with particular interpretation and articulation of a new state of thinking within the system of an interactive dialog between extension and limitation. Accordingly, we are discussing the proceeding of thinking within the lines of extended territory, it is, within the data flow „transcribed" by mediality, their mutual interaction and separation in transmission system, which enables thinking to follow its own progression as well as the specific realm of data flow. Since thinking itself, from the moment of entering the territory of virtual interface „occurs" as a process of continuous multi-configuration by order of complexity, which transcends the construction of the real. Thinking operates with data that were not generated by thinking itself, but mediated and translated by thinking into a state which corresponds to a configuration system inherent with the real. The real first comes to thinking „knowledge" only vicariously, thanks to data translated by mediality into „pure state of thinking". We can conclude that the hidden hierarchies of complexity and their mediation states, that is, the formats of data arrangement prevent thinking from dispersing only into its own paths and direct thinking towards unification with data, due to which thinking repeatedly enters the interface of the real.

The mode of this unification is embodied in the concept. The concept as an area of contiguity of virtual and the real, thinking and data, where both are connected during mediation due to the concordance of interfaces. In fact, concept is a counter-interface sui generis: It integrates opposite or contradictory orders, and not only by their mergence or mere suppression of differences, but by creating hidden pairs: Opposites are treated as reverse sides and, on the contrary, concordant sides are turned inwards, and so outwardly run as parallel, analogical versions of the same.

Though in the real data are not accessible as regards their content, which they convey and which comes from the realm of complexity, they are accessible only through thinking as a transcribed system. Data contents are generated by thinking according to versions of matching. In every translation into the real there is only articulated the concordant side of correspondence between data and thinking. In the concept the duality of the state remains present but is expressed as a general form of alternating integration, as a compensation for hidden analogies. Data thereby convey meanings which are adopted by thinking only in case they were translated by mediality and made accessible for pairing: due to the hidden hierarchy, which connects concordant elements and transcribes what could not be linked together in any other way. Reverse sides can live their own lives and provoke thinking to search for a „pass key".

The search for a key should be of course focused on finding something from the reverse side that could possibly be translated into the system of matching, it is, that could be made concordant component in transmission and thus would make the realm of „real" more complex. Nevertheless, this is the realm that thinking has to gain from mediality. The reverse sides cannot become an object of thinking; they can only be attacked by thinking through a mere insinuation, since the difference between orders has not yet been translated by mediality. If they are not mediated, they remain unavailable for thinking.

„...die Befreiung von einer Einschränkung ist ein Übel"

<div align="right">*V. Flusser*</div>

The above mentioned problem is much clearer as regards the concept: The concept provides access to „transported" versions of connections between data and thinking, in order to eliminate different ones which so far have not gained backing in the matching mode. The concept represents a top position of data, where they reached the expression of their own internal logic of arrangement, due to „folding" of thinking. In the concept, thinking focuses in one centre, in a way that what results from the centre can diverge in paths of self-limited thinking, following the logic inherent with data. Extension of thinking passes to the territory of the thought-content in form of coherent concepts and data lines. It is apparently an intention of a special kind that the logic of data linkage matches the progression of thinking which generates the real. It is in the real that thinking recognizes itself in the same form as in its own territory and where it finds a respond, in form of functioning elements which correspond to something that subsequently becomes the object of thinking.

An interesting thing about the second level is that something not only corresponds to thinking, but it corresponds to to it in a way in which it will be discovered by thinking as a question, a question which possibly has not been asked yet. The concept as a synthesizing interface makes possible the progression of thinking, its self-extension to borders that could not be reached without the possibility of taking on the data configuration logic. The concept basically integrates openness of thinking with finality of data and thereby maintains the fragile balance of different states. At least until the persistence of thinking in its self-limitation is broken by another data paths and thinking is compelled to revision of its arrangement, that is, to creation of new version of folding, in order to search for new centre for synthesizing peripheries of the virtual and the real order. With this rises a new concept, a new level of integration. Nevertheless, we are dealing with integration that is always limited and, moreover, largely susceptible to instability since it balances on the border of a gap: between virtual and the real, between complexity and the construction of reality. It is a suspenseful and fragile balance, since every output from thinking, when outside its original territory, is too limited by narrow and rarely opened passageways between expression and self-articulation.

It is a process due to which thinking does not adopt the thought-content as an expression of its openness to the other and expansion into whatever that does not provide it with certainty of self-articulation: in fact, it is the opposite, thinking here enfolds the progression in its own paths and the „blank" space is left open for the construction of the concept in terms of the subject of the thought-content: and thus opens the indefinites, limits self-expression and searches for a match in the thought-content, that would fill in the empty space. The concept can thus imply also something that could not yet been thought by thinking in terms of its mere self-articulation. / If it was the other way, everything different would not be then just an expression of a progression, a pre-implied content of the concept resulting from self-articulation of thinking./

However, mainly these states of possible balance are transmitted by mediality, at the level where thinking and data can ever occur together. We might say that the concept is not an instrument of thinking, but of the thought-content. Concepts in thought fix the movement of self-limitation of thinking. They determine the limits of interruptions. If thinking did not limit itself by this means, it would produce only pure extensions of its own movement. And conversely, if concepts were part of the constitutive disposition of thinking, there could be no thought-content, since the movement of thinking itself would be similar to the movement of the concept, as described by Hegel. The givenness of „subject" or content before thinking /even though in ideal form/ would correspond to the giveness of the output after the thinking process took place. Moreover, thinking could not have to think, it would manage with accepting the givenness.

But the problem is in fact a bit different:

„Irgendwann und irgendwo hat die Elite begonnen, ihre Geheimnisse preiszugeben, und aus diesem Verrat ist die Medienkultur entstanden."

<div align="right">*V. Flusser*</div>

Concepts are, above all, part of the thinking process, their accuracy or adequacy in relation to what they represent /not only to what they express, denote or define/ does not derive from the degree of their approximation to an abstract idea - this would repeat again the closeness of the universe of thinking – but from their ability to capture the changes in states of mediation, which can be fixed in the thought-content as finalities of thinking in a given data transmission or transcription. It is thus due to mediality that it is possible to extend and make more precise the levels of fixation of the difference between movement of thinking and its result that is important for the format of thinking. The inner differentiation within changes proceeds of course at different levels and only some of these levels are available for thinking, because of the matching transmission format: mediality. The other ones remain out of reach of thinking and thus cannot be made thinkable. However, thinking generates itself by means of self-articulation through the difference in the thought-content and cannot thus rely on the presumption that its movement is possible only due to the activity of concepts. Because then it would have to be made clear with what kind of mediation hierarchies the movement of concepts works and what kind of relation is there between the differences and thinking: that is, how .... we can read them. To put it in another way, the question is how these differences can become the thought-content and become part of the thinking process, in a way that the result of thinking would match the hierarchies and not some hidden desires.

At the level of the thought-content concepts render the movement of that which thinking wants to think in terms of its self-development, but as well of something that contains productive difference only due to limitation and suspension: we may call it the folding of thinking, which enables the rise of synthesizing interface between different orders: complexity and the real. In this way thinking gets into the position from which it can register certain analogical limitations of both orders, which are generated by mediality. Nevertheless, it is just this type of limitations correspondence that enables the rise of the concordance within the thought-content that results in form of the concept. The concordant limitations not only grant the concepts´ contents but also a goal for thinking and format of mediation, that is, a means through which something can become the thought-content and at the same time be considered as a „expression" of something different from thinking itself. If we want to deal with the philosophy of mediality, we have to consider the fact which refers to the double movement within thinking.

To think the contents of thinking and to think „itself" through these contents is possible in case hen there is a dual format of thinking and not only a self-centred or one-way oriented position of thinking itself. That means we have to follow two paths within the movement of thinking:
-   the inner progression: the movement of thinking within itself, its extensions and self-articulations.
-   the outer progression: a version of limitations and suspensions enabling the movement of thinking through contents and the rise of different paths of thinking.

Contents of thinking, the way they are gained, from where they can be drawn and how can be activated particular paths of reference for their integration into the system of the thought-content are other relevant questions that we should ask from the beginning. Since thinking obviously has to comply with its own requirements and must be in continuity with itself so that it would be able to ever respond to demands of the other, of that which originally is not consistent with thinking.

We can conclude that thinking follows the movement in which constantly renews and establishes itself, in order to be able to think the other: let us say the subjects of the thought-content, that are simultaneously defined by the data movement. It is only since this moment that thinking can differentiate without disconnecting itself from the duplication game by thinking the other. Because by thinking through objects or through data contents, thinking constantly generates the feedback path to its own territory of self-articulation and thereby doubles the movement of the thought-content.

Thinking thus maintains the course of the thought-content as well as its reflection. The essential difference between the thought-content that can be thought of and the self-movement of thinking establishes the „thinking machine", that is, the continuous balancing of the difference between thinking itself and its contents. Philosophy of mediality is an analysis and explication of different versions of transmission between states of mediation, due to which thinking recognizes itself in the thought-content as self-articulation in the different, in case of the inner mediality paths, that is, of the non-identity, as well as the movement through itself, if we consider the

outer paths of its progression. Within the outer paths there comes about the drama of the data disclosure, and with this the transgression of what can both be thought and also become a subject of the thought-content. Every new movement at outer paths of mediation is a progression towards new difference on the interface of one type of order and thereby towards a new format of reality. When thinking becomes capable of thinking the other, then itself becomes a new object for its own movement and the process of enfolding the spiral of its self-articulation starts anew. Through its own extension, due to a tension between its inner domain and outer paths of observation, thinking can reach into the „other", made it an interactive other and search for the appropriate format in which it could be thought.

Thinking thereby transcends and extends the scope of its own activity, as it creates new objects within its contents and finds for them modes of expression as well as the scope of the thinkable. Thinking generates within itself a new, higher level of complexity.

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