

Zsuzsanna KONDOR

Converging Theories: The Age of Secondary Literacy

Secondary literacy can best be characterized by the fact that although rational reasoning is dominant in scientific and even everyday thinking, communication technology is capable of mediating experiences as if they were direct, i.e. without mediation. Accordingly, the pressure to formulate experiences verbally is decreasing; the birth of a new rationality is imminent. In the age of literacy where alphabetical writing is the dominant medium (in expressing and preserving knowledge and ideas), there is, due to the special character of language and that of writing itself, a certain detectable convergence with regard to methodology and the thought process that is tailored in accordance with the ruling principles of mathematics and logic. However, this convergence is accompanied by opposing traditions and unsolvable paradoxes. In the age of secondary literacy, traditionally opposed schools of philosophy, as well as new demands implied by recent scientific and philosophical inquiry, have at some points been converging. New mobile devices that condense all the previous inventions of communication technology play an important role in this process because they are capable of becoming the primary mediator of experience. This capability opens a path towards developing a mutual conceptual background that can help theories converge. To prove my hypothesis, I will first outline the main characteristics of the literate mind; then I will attempt to show converging tendencies, focusing on philosophy and some explicit scientific demands. Before the reaching the conclusion, I will try, briefly, to recapitulate the importance of perceptual experiences with regard to abstract reasoning.

Zsuzsanna KONDOR, PhD, is Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Philosophical Research of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Some recent publications: "The Iconic Turn in Metaphysics", in Kristóf Nyíri (ed.), *A Sense of Place: The Global and the Local in Mobile Communication*, Vienna: Passagen Verlag, 2005; "Social Make-up and Solitary Reason", in S. Laczkó and A. Dékány (eds.), *Lábjegyzetek Platónhoz 4: A barátság*, Szeged: Pro Philosophia Szegedi Alapítvány / Librarius, 2005; "Being Mobile: Cognitive Multiplicity", in Kristóf Nyíri (ed.), *Mobile Understanding: The Epistemology of Ubiquitous Communication*, Vienna: Passagen Verlag, 2006. Research interests: history of philosophy, philosophy of communications, the cognitive difference of pictorial and verbal representations and its impact on human thinking. E-mail: kondor@webmail.phil-inst.hu.

