

Polymathy as an Anatomic Vision

Human Naveed, Independent Researcher

Abstract

In the multi-layered age of the 21st century, imbued with multiplicity and collective access to platforms such as Artificial Intelligence, smart technology, and virtual reality, the concept of expertise, expert skills or knowledge in a particular field, exists as a well-fabricated lie across the design and research disciplines while the collective polymathy is a valuable byproduct of the same. The notion of expertise has broadened to embrace a multiplicity of perspectives, evolving into a transdisciplinary approach that transcends traditional boundaries. Multiplicity and simultaneity are at the core of the current cultural reproduction. A polymath is a real-time manifestation of the concept of multiplicity as a transdisciplinary exercise in design thinking and practice. The hyper-specialization seen in academia can lead to the fragmentation of knowledge, with each subfield developing its jargon, methodologies, and epistemologies. The result is a lack of dialogue between disciplines and the perpetuation of isolated chunks of interdisciplinary practices. The research and design practices of the twenty-first century are a manifestation of cultural hybrids that co-exist within a framework of three crucial lenses: Semantics (Cultural, Social, Ecological), Timeline (chronological events), and Technology (mediums, analog and digital). These three lenses manifest themselves as primary tools of cultural reproduction and reflect the intangible thought processes of our current times. Polymathy integrates the concept of cultural hybridization, where it not only blends the collective as well as personal practices of a designer and thinker, but also aids in forming unique cross-pollinated dialogues as a byproduct of synthesis between the two. Polymathy is not merely an intellectual pursuit; it is a creative imperative, a way of thinking that recognizes the richness of multiple perspectives and the power of synthesis. The future of design does not lie in specialization but in its expansion, in the embrace of collective polymathy; an approach that transcends disciplines, bringing together knowledge from diverse fields to solve the most pressing challenges from climate change to societal inequality, which are independent of the disciplinary boundaries.

Key Words: Transdisciplinarity, Polymathy, Semantics, Hybridization, Synthesis, Future, Dialogue.