Intertextuality Revisited: Reflections on Subject in Process, Textual Analysis and Reading/Writing Behavior in Cyberspace

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Often regarded as one crucial concept in the current of poststructrualistic thought, intertextuality is influential with regard to its application in discursive perspective and literary criticism. This paper argues that the notion should also be understood in the theoretical backdrop of how the concept of subject is constructed in the 1960s. Two critics are specifically mentioned in the discussion: Julia Kristeva's psychoanalytic understanding of the subject in process that stresses the transpositions of signs in both textual and contextual meanings complicates the once delimited register of textuality, while Roland Barthes, with his claim of the demise of the author, appeals for a reevaluation of the conventional grasp of the idea of the writer and the reader, and their relations with the text. This paper will conclude with one of the most significant derivations of intertextuality—hypertextuality. Relevant to how modern subjects in the era of digitalization read and write, this latter concept materializes, in cyberspace, the documents of printed media, and substantially demonstrates the liquification of information on the Internet.

Keywords: intertextuality, hypertextuality, reading and writing subject, cyberspace

1. Introduction

Intertextuality is one of the most significant terms in the 20th century French thought and it has been influential in the field of literary criticism since its introduction by Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes in the second half of the 1960s. Members of *Tel Quel*, a journal published in Paris from 1960 to 1982, the two philosophers joined Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Shoshana Felman, Bernard-Henri Lévy, Philippe Sollers, Tzvetan Todorov, and Umberto Eco, among many other great thinkers, in their critical examination of the then conventional values of education, family and sexuality, and the emergent global capitalism that brought forth a new wave of imperialism led mainly by the US. In the early 1970s, the editors/spouse Kristeva and Sollers claimed that searching for a revolution in language is just as significant as carrying out a cultural revolution. As a matter of fact, the two stances are inseparable. From this view, these thoughts developed during the 1960s and 1970s in France are relevant to its sociopolitical circumstances. The intellectual members of *Tel Quel* are thus sometimes called "rebels" because of their commitment to critical thinking that fundamentally reconsiders not only societal issues but also the theories before their time, mainly Russian Formalism and French Structuralism.

This essay seeks not to cover all the important critics and theorists of intertextuality, such as Gérard Genette, Michel Riffaterre, and Antoine Compagnon. Instead, it focuses on Kristeva's and Barthes's exploration

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and development of the term, in which their psychoanalytic understanding and the emphasis of the reader's role come to the fore. Considering the fact that the conception of "intertextuality" appears during the French social revolutionary era and inevitably carries elements of rebellion against any given norm, we need to note the close relation between the linguistic and the social in the two writers' texts. Bracing up for revolutionary force to subvert set rules of ideology and institutionalization, Kristeva and Barthes explore the practical and productive perspectives through their analysis of textuality.[1] Also discussed in the paper is the idea of "hypertextuality," a contemporary development from the conception of intertextuality, and an important issue in the study and critique of the mechanisms of postmodern culture/literature. In this part, the author will discuss hypertextuality as convergence of textual theory and Internet-oriented technology.

2. Kristeva, Intertextuality, and the Process of Subject

Julia Kristeva brings forth the term of "intertextuality" in one of her earliest essays in 1966—"Word, Dialogue and Novel." In this seminal study she discusses Mikhail Bakhtin's "dialogism," which is the most important concept for her theorization of the term. It is of necessity to quote the following paragraph from the article as my point of departure to explicate the term the author is dealing with in this paper:

> [L]iterary structure does not simply *exist* but is generated in relation to *another* structure. What allows a dynamic dimension to structuralism is [Bakhtin's] conception of the "literary word" as an intersection of textual surfaces rather than a point (a fixed meaning), as a dialogue among several writings: that of the writer, the addressee (or the character) and the contemporary or earlier cultural context. (1986, 35-36; emphases in original)

The Russian literary critic's concept of dialogism, as well as its several derivative ideas such as carnivalesque, polyphony, and double-voiced discourse, is introduced by Kristeva to the French academia for the first time. This quotation can be seen as Kristeva's initial declaration of theoretical engagement in the development of Bakhtin's notion. She points out that Bakhtin's employment of dialogic strategy in his reading of the novel seeks to disrupt monologism and authority embedded in the traditional composition of writings such as the epic. The word "authority" refers to the "author," which Bakhtin degrades by claiming that the author's characters "are capable of standing beside their creator, of disagreeing with him, and of even rebelling against him" (1984, 4). This idea influences Kristeva's and Roland Barthes's conceptualization of intertextuality, in which the former puts writing subject (instead of the term "author") and addressee (or the character) at a non-hierarchical axis (discussed right below), while the latter straightly announces "The Death of the Author" and stresses the importance of the reader.

To further explain her thought provoked by Bakhtin's, Kristeva tries to put "word," described by Bakhtin as a minimal structural unit, within her so-called "space of texts." By theorizing a three-dimensional coordinate,[2] she renders systematical her concept of intertextuality: Horizontally, "the word in the text belongs to both writing subject and addressee;" while vertically, it is related with "anterior and synchronic literary corpus" (1986, 36). That is to say, the horizontal surface (Kristeva uses "axis" instead of "surface"[3]) refers to the dynamic relationship between the (writing) subject and the addressee; the vertical surface deals with the interwoven and interpenetrating texts and contexts. These minimal units of spatialized words then consist of texts. To put it specifically in her words: "any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another" (1986, 37).

Kristeva draws heavily upon the agency of writing/speaking subject in the course of her discussion of intertextuality. This can be seen in her reconsideration of the usage of the term in her *Revolution in Poetic*

Revolution published in 1974. Aware of the sometimes misunderstanding "intertextuality" may lead to, Kristeva employs another term of "transposition" to supplement and modify it. In the book, Kristeva explains that since intertextuality "has often been understood in the banal sense of 'study of sources,' we prefer the term *transposition* because it specifies that the passage from one signifying system to another demands a new articulation of the thetic—of enunciative and denotative positionality" (1986, 60; emphasis in original). It is less important focusing on which term Kristeva chooses—intertextuality or transposition—than realizing what lies in the attempt. Being a reinforcement of the previous term, this alternative term, on the one hand, stresses that one or more sign system(s) transpose into another sign system(s); on the other, it connotes the positioning of the speaking subject therein. Trying to avoid the implication of "intertextuality" as mere textual study of sources, Kristeva places her textual analysis in the psychic dimension of a speaking subject, a gesture that renders dynamic of signs, in contrast with the relatively static structuralistic methodology.

To further understand Kristeva's use of transposition, we have to associate Kristeva's psychoanalysis on the subject with her concept of intertextuality on the ground of the similitude she regards of them. The last word from the above quotation—"positionality"—points not only to the text but also to the subject. The subject in split is (de)formed in the tug war of what Jacques Lacan terms *the Imaginary* and *the Symbolic*. In the field of *the Symbolic*, the subject in language is situated safely and stably, and abides by, or at least acquiesces in, the social law and ideology. Instead of taking *the Imaginary* as the contrast of *the Symbolic*, Kristeva chooses to explore *the semiotic*, an idea she refers to the pivotal pre-linguistic status. *The semiotic* has strong association with the *chora*, the receptacle of mother's body. This maternal space acts as a counterposition to that of the paternal, stirring up disordering forces against the orderly norm of patriarchal society where we are conscripted into our social identities. Kristeva holds that the subject, though cast into *the Symbolic* world, retains the traces of *the semiotic*: the indescribable drive, rhythmic movements, and bodily desires. For Kristeva, these are forces breaking *the Symbolic* shackles of constraint in social world, and standing in defiance of the patriarchal society that registers in orderly authoritativeness. In short, Kristeva's concept of *the semiotic* is correlative to her illumination of the transpositional fluidity between the textual and the psychic that is inevitably concerned with the social and historical dimensions in which the enunciative subject, or the subject in utterance, finds his/her place.

Kristeva's sign-psychology study finds its potential instances in the texts produced by certain modernist writers such as James Joyce and Stéphane Mallarmé, whose heterogeneous languages disturb the conventional set of writings. Kristeva and her contemporary poststructuralists make their renunciation of (and believe the writers of avant-garde do the same) the idea of a unique or organic subject in favor of polyvalence, multi-linguistics, and indeterminacy. Forsaking a self-standing and autonomous text devoid of trans-positions from "one signifying system to another," Kristeva's concept of textual process (the process of intertextuality, or transposition) seeks combination with the subject in process. In other words, the trans-positioning dynamics of intertextuality emphasizes not just the interrelation of texts among other texts, but also speaking/signifying subjects embedded in a larger non-literary and non-linguistic sign system (1984, 59). It means that the subject's transpositions, the same as the inter-texts theory constantly transposing from one or more sign system(s) to another sign system(s) between *the Symbolic* and *the semiotic*, will never be stabilized and settled down. Once the subject is constructed and structured, she/he will sooner or later deconstruct and restructure another subject. This will always be in the process, owing to the fact that the subject, on the one hand, has the impulsive desire to break through *the Symbolic order* of language via *the semiotic forces*; on the other, the subject has to go back

to *the Symbolic* and live in a societal, rational, and communicative world. It is, like what Kristeva says in an interview with Margaret Waller, "a dynamics involving a destruction of the creative identity and reconstitution of a new plurality" (1996, 190). The process of subjectivity is thus defined by the porosities between the two. Kristeva's subject is always on the move, and is always already suffering a status of "loss" since the subject's identity is kept drifting and split. The identity is challenged and even one sees "its reduction to zero, the moment of crisis, of emptiness, and the reconstitution of a new, plural identity" (1996, 190).

Kristeva's interchangeable and cross-referential qualities of intertextuality and psychoanalysis, which itself is "a discourse that is not closed" (1996, 198), are the bases upon which she keeps up exploring in her following works with regard to third-world women, abjection, and strangers.[4] Her psychoanalytic reading of intertextuality activates "the signifying practices perceptible in certain kinds of literature and other liminal discourses [...]" (Becker-Leckrone 2005, 7), and at the same time brings these signifying practices into social-politico praxes. The coming section is a discussion of another contributor to the theory of intertextuality—Roland Barthes. Like Kristeva, Barthes also employs psychoanalytic perspectivity to understand the trait (e.g., instability) and practice (e.g., transposition) of the text. Yet, his study is directed towards the more problematic author/reader pair that lies in the long tradition of literary development.

3. Barthes, Reader, and Textual Analysis

In *Pleasure of the Text*, Roland Barthes differentiate between the text of pleasure and the text of bliss: The former "contents, fills, grants euphoria" and it "comes from culture and does not break with it." The latter "imposes a state of loss," and "discomforts [...], unsettles the reader's historical, cultural, psychological assumptions" (1975, 14). Barthes, nonetheless, brings to attention the ineluctable coexistence of the features of pleasure and bliss in the subject:

> Now the subject who keeps the two texts in his field and in his hands the reins of pleasure and bliss is an anachronic subject, for he simultaneously and contradictorily participates in the profound hedonism of all culture [...] and in the destruction of that culture: he enjoys the consistency of his selfhood (that is his pleasure) and seeks its loss (that is his bliss). He is a subject split twice over, doubly perverse. (1975, 14)

Barthes's separation and combination of the pair brings us back to Kristeva's two kinds of "space"—*the Symbolic* and *the semiotic*. Both the theorists refer to the split of the subject, both of them talk about the release of contingent textual and contextual significations from the rule-ridden culture, and both of them mention the destruction and construction of the self. Most important of all, they consider the text, or, to be more precise, the productive process of the text, as "always a threat to one's self, one's settled pattern of subjectivity" (Moriarty 1991, 148). Barthes goes further to link the text to the subject's potential linkage to *jouissance* because both the text and the subject in *jouissance* share the feature of indescribability and inarticulation. *Jouissance* is different from pleasure in that the latter involves representable experience of certain joyous satisfaction, whereas the former refers to unrepresentable sufferance from ecstatic pain of loss, a contradictory feeling of bliss. It is directed towards the forfeiture of a sense of stability for one's subject identity. Barthes has made this clear by claiming that "[T]his subject is never anything but a 'living contradiction:' a split subject, who simultaneously enjoys, through the text, the consistency of his selfhood and its collapse, its fall" (1975, 21).

Resonating with Kristeva's ideas, Barthes associates linguistic structure with psychical status. They both emphasize that the subject in language is always sustaining a split jubilant loss—the co-existential feelings of the anxiety of being uncertain about one's locations and positionalities, and of the unrestraint of identity, for

which he or she finds plural and "erotic" (with reference to the concept of *jouissance*) relationships with texts. The (reading and writing) subject experiences the dissolution of the ego while the text undergoes all sorts of perverse metamorphosis through transposition among sign system(s). This duel—subject and text— are thereby closely bonded.

Barthes's concepts of "The Death of the Author" and psychoanalytically intertextual *jouissance* find resonance throughout his discussion of the reader's emancipation from its passive image. It is from his analysis of the hybridity of the otherwise respective meanings of author and reader that Barthes substantially explains the notion of intertextuality. The term "intertextuality" expresses concerns not for the paternal forces of the author, but for the text itself. The traditional "filiation" of author-father generating text-son, to Barthes, is untenable. Besides clarifying the misuse of the term as Kristeva does in her bringing up the concept of "transposition," Barthes eschews the term of filiation in the following announcement appearing in his "From Work to Text:"

> The intertextual in which every text is held, it itself being the text-between of another text, is not to be confused with some origin of the text: to try to find the "sources," the "influences" of a work, is to fall in with the myth of filiation; the citations which go to make up a text are anonymous, untraceable, and yet *already read*: they are quotations without inverted commas. (1971, 1473)

Barthes's mentioning of anonymity as one feature of texts hinges on the fact that they are constituted by immensely differential signifiers, rather than signifiers looking for stabilized signifieds, or signifieds that entertain determinate signifiers with finite meanings. They are untraceable since they cannot be associated with particular authors, who are dispossessed of theological authority of claiming the text as their own. By abandoning the official power of the author, Barthes raises up the reader, who is "the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost" (1977, 148). It reenacts that if the texts will find a place to fit in (surely they will because texts and inter-texts produce meanings in the reader's reading, even meaninglessness being a kind of "meaning"), it will be the body of the reader. Barthes's reader "is simply that *someone* who holds together in a single field all the traces by which the written text is constituted" (1968, 1469; emphasis in original).

In his study of Balzac's *Sarrasine* in *S/Z*, Barthes puts his concept into practice. He first associates readerly (*lisible*) texts with the 19th-century realism, writerly (*scriptable*) texts with the 20th-century modernist and avant-garde writing. The passive role of the reader in the former is predicated upon the fact that a literary work is at the mercy of a single person who leads his/her readers along the road of his/her account or de-mystification of the stories in a single-coded manner. On the other hand, writerly texts are rendered polysemic and multivalent, in which there is no authoritative guiding thread for any readings. Yet, Barthes doesn't intend to establish a dichotomic schema in literary criticism. He stresses that texts produced in the 19th century, or any classic prior to it, are not delimited in their one-way interpretation by the authors. Barthes opens them up to variegated meanings and sets them free from the traditionally satisfactory realist writing. The meanings of texts, for Barthes, are no longer decided by the author. They are created through the reader's process of reading. Far from installing another Reader-God in his textual practice, Barthes is actually bringing in readerly engagement in search for an ideal dynamic textuality that he considers crucial when it comes to the growing anticipation of paradigmatic shift of ideologies in his own era.

Following this conception, Barthes, to insert his analysis on textuality into the theoretical network of intertextuality, reminds us that the etymology of the word "text" is "a tissue, a woven fabric" (1971, 1472). An added explanation that might be advanced is that the nature of the text is always shifting, getting across, and interconnecting with other texts. In this regard, there is no self-sustained text. Take modernist writings as instances, which both Kristeva and Barthes favor, these texts seem to be capable of being re-written by the reader that is one peculiar field of the received traces of the texts. Though similar to the reader-response criticism, Barthes focuses more on the signifying process. The reader is not only a human being with psychological depth; to Barthes, the "reader" is also a textual entity. Unless we consider the concept of the "reader" as going beyond the notion of biological mankind, we would find it difficult to comprehend how the reader, a floating textual entity, can assume so many different and conflicting roles at the same time. To be specific, each reader is like a medium to which inter-texts are situated and plural (con)textual meanings are born. Among these meanings, it should be noted, no one can be regarded as complete. Inexhaustible plurality is one of the pivotal features of intertextuality. Readers might find one or more tentative meanings in the text, but never could they find an eternal one. Or, we should use the word "produce" instead of the word "find," given that meanings are not "there" to be located. And the agential verb of "produce," different from the usage of "create" that Barthes denounces as being fatherly, connotes that meanings come into being not through the begetting of a particular author, but through the interplay of both textual signs and signs in the rich patina of culture and history.

As a matter of fact, it is impossible to give intertextuality its definition, even Kristeva's and Barthes's theorization being only efforts to describe the features of it. What we can do is to at best delineate its process and production as an incessant meaning-searching, disruption and dissemination of texts and inter-texts. Text, as Rylance comments, "is an action in language, not an act of intended meaning" (1994, 80). This action refers to the transpositional aspects of sign systems, within which all the texts are scattered around, as a corollary to Barthes's claim that the author is dead. Barthes's "Author" implies that it does not merely indicate that the author (in lower case) is, in traditional sense, the producer of a certain work, but that it (in capital) also intently and intensively points out the godly patriarchal conception of the controllability of signs and meanings in the text. Barthes's ideas strike the loudest chord in the late 1960s onwards and echo in thoughts that hold as their core principle that any essentialist underpinnings claiming unchangeable value systems should go under critical scrutiny.

4. Hypertextuality, Intertextuality, and Reader

This final section demonstrates hypertextuality as one of the contemporary embodiments of intertextuality, and how theory and technology can possibly cross-refer each other, to borrow from the subtitle of George Landow's influential book on the hypertext—*Hypertext: the Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology*. Hypertextuality helps make intertextuality more understandable and practical in the sense that it materializes, albeit in cyberspace, the interaction among reader, text, and author. My focus here is on the role of the reader in the dialogue between the poststructuralist textual theory (intertextuality) and Internet-oriented technology (hypertextuality), as a continuation of Barthes's textual analysis and Kristeva's conception of intertextuality being put into practice.

When poststructuralist critics like Kristeva and Barthes aim to subvert the work's stabilization and self-containment, the idea of hypertextuality seems to act as a realization of the two critics' celebration for the

text's openness and polysemy, based on the fact that "critical theory promises to theorize hypertext and hypertext promises to embody and thereby test aspects of theory" (Landow 1992, 3). Through technologically computing system, teachers, students, and common readers can get access to any linkage which she/he thinks is related to the searched information. And this very system demands the active role of the reader. Via a click of the mouse one can go from his or her "main" source to another, which could go on endlessly. A scenario might be as follows: If a student, with the help of the World Wide Web, is to find materials related to his final paper on Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895), he might activate the links to pages regarding the socio-economic background of the Victorian Age, homosexuality issues, and even juridical process.[5] Any one node can become the note of the rest of the nodes in cyberspace. At last, there is no center in this hypertextual movement. Or, to put it in another words, centers are temporary and subject to interchangeability: "This hypertextual dissolution of centrality, which makes the medium such a potentially democratic one, also makes it a model of a society of conversations in which no one conversation, no one discipline or ideology, dominates or founds the others" (Landow 1992, 70).

We can say that the false consciousness of hierarchy arranging the order of the primary and secondary materials is dismantled, while a "secondary" material could become a "primary" text to which one might redirect his or her attention. According to Edward Jennings, hypertext "can be imagined as an endless electronic nesting of 'footnotes,' each one enriching all the others, none of them secondary even though one had to be encountered first" (Paragraph 8). It is proper here to briefly return to Kristeva's idea of intertextuality demonstrated in the 3-D coordinate diagram, in which any border of the horizontal and vertical surfaces doesn't exist. The focus of the abovementioned Internet-induced reading behavior is related to the vertical surface where the interrelation between "text" and "context" is considered. For Kristeva, both text and context are free of hierarchical constraint of order and their positioning is always yet decided. The openness of intertextuality finds cadence in the realization of the hypertextual computing texts we are witnessing today.

The reading behavior that is characterized as non-lineal, nonetheless, is not the sole product of today. Landow points out that the phenomena of the hypertext have already existed decades of years ago. It appears when it comes to magazines, newspaper, or other theoretical and commentary books. When we "use" theory books, we usually put the idea of intertextuality into practice: The indices in the last few pages are checked before we go to the text itself. After reading some pages, we might, through the quotations, go to the bibliography and find more books in the library. The only difference is that hypertextuality is related to Internet-induced texts, which we can get access to via our index finger, while inter-textual praxes amongst books require much sweat going back and forth between indices, appendices, bibliography, and the "main" texts. Apart from that, going through the hypertexts which we encounter on the website is at times similar to the enactment of intertextuality in our past or present reading experiences.

In spite of the convenient information circulation we benefit from this new paradigm of reading in cyberspace, reflections upon its problematic ensue. David S. Herrstrom and David G. Massey in the beginning of their "Hypertext in Context" have stated the general conflicting stances towards the notion of hypertext: "The hypertext enthusiast focuses on its power to present users with myriad nodes of information from which to choose according to their desire for information. The skeptic, on the other hand, emphasizes the 'confusing web of alternatives' that hides relevant information from the user […]" (1989, 45).

This is not unlike Jean Baudrillard's well-known idea with regard to the paradoxical nature of modern media images: While we might see these images as "sites of the production of meaning and representation,"

they are at the same time "sites of the *disappearance* of meaning and representation" (1987, 28; emphasis in original). Disorientation in the webs of network technology seems to leave an indelible imprint on the modern subject. Jakob Nielsen also mentions the problem of potential disorientation experienced by hypertextual users. Their active role as an editor in online database might result in what he calls the "perverted" condition of certain links. As far as education is concerned, the instability and the "effects of nonsequentiality" (1995, 347) of hyperlinked resources provided might be sometimes elusive and cause misunderstanding between instructors and students. Along might come the problem of the grading system on the part of the teachers (348-9). Even though Nielsen does not belong to the group that sees only the passive part of the technology, he indeed poses some pivotal problems we cannot say solved even more than two decades later.

Yet, critics such as Ray McAleese reminds us that, instead of using a hypertext system randomly, users would find it instrumental if they are in accordance with the system as "vectored or directed activity" (1989, 22). McAleese's notion of cyberspace experience as being "vectored" is a stark contrast with it as being disoriented. The idea of the active on the part of the user in the system is stressed in McAleese's essay beginning with the metaphor of journeying and with its link to the website user's freedom. To him, cyberspace, rather than full of "confusing web of alternatives," is rich with "existing learning strategies," "certain types of information," and "known concepts triggering new ideas" (22). In other words, the explosive amounts of information we get access to today do not necessarily leave the users perplexed. The sorting ability that is embedded in human gene can still handle the vast quantity of information that is sometimes not unknown to human knowledge.

With the Internet gaining popularity around the world, our habit of reading and writing has been gradually changed. Barthes announces "The Death of the Author" and elevates the reader to a higher layer, while the hypertextual conception speaks of the dissolution of the demarcation between the author and the reader: "Hypertext gives permission to readers to insert themselves into the meaning construction process and 'write' a text in a way that is often different from what the author foresaw. Hypertext makes us conscious of the blurring of the reader/author role" (Patterson, 76).

Actually, they share the same aim: taking away authorship from author(ity). The role of the reader in terms of hypertextuality is similar to Barthes's emphasis of the active role of the reader, but even more radical. Within the hypertext space, the reader can involve themselves in a direct interaction with the constructor of the website. Wikipedia, a free online encyclopedia anyone can edit, stands as one of the most conspicuous instances. Another famous example is website-story-continuation, in which different episodes are created by different readers/writers. It means that every time one tries to read the website story, she/he is expected to encounter different plots and endings. The signs of the words have no certain positions on the reticular space of the Internet. This puts what the poststructuralists has theorized—the initiative of the reader and the off-stage of the author—into viable activity.

Critics of intertextuality have substantially raised the status of the reader by pointing out that any text in fact contains the trace of the reader's signature and the conventional notions of reader and author become complementary to each other. This revolutionary gesture is further extended by the idea of hypertextuality in which hypermedia-related materials like images, maps, diagrams, music, and videos constitute the bedrock of how people of digitalization approach all forms of texts nowadays. No matter it is Kristeva's and Barthes's challenge of the monopolistic signature of the author and their bolstering up the status of the reader on the one hand, or their psychoanalytic explication of intertextuality on the other hand, these theoretical thoughts are

achieved and fulfilled by hypertextuality. The demarcation between the reader and the writer will never be clear-cut again, as we witness the convergence of textual theory and Internet-oriented technology, and how this convergence deeply influences the modern subject on a daily basis.

Note

1. The conception of text in *Tel Quel*, especially in those of Kristeva and Derrida, is more than the "text" in a narrow sense (for example, New Criticism's focus on a self-contained text). It includes social-economic, ideological, and all sort of cultural aspects. Derrida particularly holds that there is nothing outside the text.

2. This diagram can be used to better understand Kristeva's account of the 3-D coordinate in "Word, Dialogue and Novel."
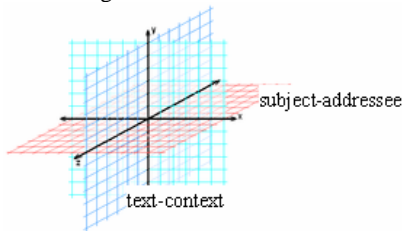
3. The reason the author uses the word "surface" instead of "axis" is that the former denotes a specific sense of space in which there is no boundary and center. To me, this is closer to Kristeva's idea about the interrelationship among texts.

4. A chronological reference to her *About Chinese Women* (1974), *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (1980), and *Strangers to Ourselves* (1991).

5. Proposing a meticulous way of reading "literature" in our hypertextual era, Stuart Moulthrop gives us another example of on-line reading experience. His case study is John McDaid's *Funhouse*, a "hypertextual labyrinth" (1991, 68). Following the delineation of the multiple segments of *Funhouse*, we might feel that McDaid, far from being one conventional author, is more like a designer of a blueprint ready to be employed by anyone.

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