6. Video-Remediations: From Transmission Medium to Data Landscape Three Phases of Video-Remediations

Agnieszka Jelewska, Michał Krawczak

Humanities /Art/ and Technology Reserch Center
at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland

Abstract: The chapter reflects on the impact of video and video art from the 1960s on contemporary art forms a cultural paradigm of dynamic reality. Originally, the video format was remediating the reality of TV and film production and initiating a democratization of the medium, till the 1990s and further, when video itself got remediated into digital media platforms of YouTube and its clones. Video, we argue, started a revolution that emancipated digital devices after which they themselves became a part of a digital world in which we live in. From then on remediations happen not only within the media, but also on a deeper, interconnected levels of digital reality. If one cannot talk about mediations without remediations, then every mediation is always already remediating the mediated world.

Introduction

Since the 1960s, the video-remediation of cultural processes have progressed in three main phases. The first one concerned the video camera as a medium of recording reality and its directness, availability, and live documentation. This is where artistic experiments were vital – they took into account the registration abilities of the medium itself and the new auto-referential and cognitive perception parameters which stemmed from its transmissive nature. The artists experimenting with the medium usually emphasized the experience of a technologically duplicated image of a human, object, or event; the possibility of the constant repetition of these representations, their rewinding, and stopping. No previous technology offered such features. The works were focused around pictorial analysis and fluid subjectivity; they often used image psychologization strategies as well as perception disturbances, including noise, overvoltage, feedback loop, and visual modulations. Therefore, they were able to discover a new pictorial somaticity (as was the case with many performances, e.g., by Vito Acconci or Bruce Nauman) and indicated a possible new meditative dimension of the relationship between the watching subject and the abstract data recording (the famous project *Zen for TV* by Nam June Paik).

The next phase started with the popularization of video recordings in the late 1970s and the 1980s. The process was influenced by the democratization of technology and economic availability of video cameras for the common user and the establishment of new independent cable networks based mostly on the artistic ideal of democratic videospheres popular in the 1970s[1] which had become common by the 1980s. A phase of minor proj-

ects became a massive branch of the media industry.[2] Unlike in the case of traditional media, in this new system the content was provided by many producers. In fact, one could say this was the time that mass convergence culture started (Jenkins 2008), together with the process of video images spreading. The narratives of the mainstream media (such as major TV stations) began to intertwine with private narratives produced with home video sets. Thus, the camcorder cult was born. It produced a massive number of confessional recordings and launched the first forms of reality TV. Small cameras, wiring, and transmission systems allowed for the recording of reality in its most private dimensions. In many ways, the *Confessing Nation* (Dovey 2000) generation simply reached for the strategies of the first performers experimenting with intimate video narratives, this time spreading on a global scale.

Video-remediations became even more prolific and varied with the emergence of the Internet and social networking sites such as YouTube, which constitute a practically constant and never-ending stream of video images. This was a vital process in the redefinition of the communicative situation which entered its third phase – one often named by media experts as the "post-media phase" (Manovich 2005)[3]. Video-remediations are no longer practised only through the medium itself (its physical presence, aesthetics, and specific pictoriality) but also through the streaming of meta-data filled with much more hidden, fragmented information, which change communicative and cognitive strategies.[4] The process had really started during the second phase in the late 1990s as the Internet became more commonly available. The video became the technological system that enabled various coding and data translation actions between any given input and output. This was, therefore, the moment when the system became incorporated into the field of code, which can be seen as the deepest tissue encompassing all of the cultural phenomena (Manovich 2013) (Kitchin et al. 2011). The system of recording data using various video recorders creates a dynamic *data landscape* (a complicated, acentric database, where data is constantly being transferred, stored, and reproduced in the network), but with the use of proper protocols and procedures it can also be revitalized on the surface of culture through many strategies of interpretation and visualization. It is also in the late 1990s that culture entered a period of post-visuality: any video image recorded by any medium using this technology became a part of a massive database and could be replayed in completely new forms of visuality. This important cultural remediation was started in the 1960s through the first video experiments.

The Origins of Videocracy

For many artists of the late 1960s and 1970s, it was very important that video enabled direct live transmission between a recorder and a receiver. No detailed knowledge concerning technology or image treatment was necessary to operate it. The effect was readily available through *plug and play*. The specific character of the video-specific narrative stemmed, however, from more than just the possibility of a direct image and optics transfer, which had already been used before in photography and film. As a medium, video presented a nature linked to electronic signal transfer, it was one of the first creative technologies that produced a new understanding of reality and first and foremost enabled the user to control the abstract properties of electromagnetic waves. It allowed the user to manage it by modulating and directing the transmission. The streams of video impulses could be freely modified by a variety of processors and synthesizers and be transmitted simultaneously in visual and aural form. Video was the first truly audiovisual medium. Unlike film technology, it was not an image divided into separate physical units (of a 35 mm film tape moving through the projector at twenty-four frames per second). In this way, it was not material in its representation of reality, unlike, for instance, a single celluloid frame of a film. Moreover, video was able to unite the image and the soundtrack in one recording, in which it completely remediated its cinematic predecessor. It can be said that video was an "abstract" medium in nature, and its primary expression was electromagnetic noise. The light shining through the lens of a video camera was not "set" in photosensitive material but rather transformed into signals recorded on magnetic tape and/or transmitted to the decoding device. Changing and pulsating pictoriality was – naturally – also shaped by such factors as the type of the decoding device or scale and the form of the image reproduced.

The enhanced ability to manipulate the video signal appeared with the creation of video synthesizers, processors, and mobile devices that enabled control over various image parameters. The creator of one of the first such devices was Nam June Paik. His project was executed in cooperation with Shuya Abe, a technician and TV expert, from 1969 to 1971. A synthesizer enabled simultaneous work with seven different video sources, which could be edited and modified in real time. Each of the cameras connected to the device recorded only one colour. The image was then mixed through synthesizer operations. Paik described the possibilities of the creative use of the synthesizer in his manifesto entitled *Versatile Video Synthesizer*, where

he presented a few variations of the techniques of image shaping as a remediation of the painting. The effects of his actions were named after the great painters from art history:

> This will enable us to shape the TV screen canvas
> as precisely as Leonardo
> as freely as Picasso
> as colorfully as Renoir
> as profoundly as Mondrian
> as violently as Pollock and
> as lyrically as Jasper Johns. (Paik 1974, 55)

Video was also one of the first media that separated creativity from haptic control over the artistic material. To a degree, the electronic activity of video was unpredictable, which led to defining the medium as independent and "living". It operated with categories of streaming, modulation, coding, decoding, and interference, leading not only art, but in fact the entirety of culture towards the dawn of new media. From this point of view, video was an extremely advanced medium and technology; despite being analogue, it was responsible for the creation of a paradigm of digital art. In 1966, Nam June Paik, the proud first owner of a Sony Portapak camera in New York, presented a manifesto of cybernetic art:

> Cybernetics, the science of pure relations, or relationship itself, has its origin in karma. Marshall McLuhan's famous phrase "Media is a message" was formulated by Norbert Wiener in 1948 as "The signal, where the message is sent, plays equally important role as the signal, where message is not sent."
> As the Happening is the fusion of various arts, so cybernetics is the exploitation of boundary regions between and across various existing sciences.
> [...]
> The Buddhists also say
> Karma is samsara
> Relationship is metempsychosis
> We are in open circuits. (Paik 1966, 42)

Paik's manifesto was an expression of changes in culture in the late 1960s. Marshall McLuhan's technological determinism gained a new face. A communication model rooted in cybernetics became linked to many phenomena that manifested the ideas of anthropology, sociology, psychology, and even psychoanalysis.[5] A dynamic, transmittable and democratized

(anyone could own a video camera) pictoriality led to a simultaneous deep remediation of such arts as painting, photography, film, and the entirety of audiovisual culture. The video camera became a tool for sublime experiments that aimed at creating new definitions of technological visuality in art. A very special role among these first experimenters in the field was played by Woody and Steina Vasulka. Their works are not only experiments with modern audiovisual forms but also pioneer devices for transforming and modifying visual experience in real time. Such films as *Noisefields* (1974) and *Orbital Obsessions* (1977) were created using original hardware sequencing and composition of image from signal received from multiple sources. This way, visuality was becoming autonomous. It was a result of a technological process and the role of the artist was constricted to the function of a designer and constructor. From this viewpoint, the creation of image becomes synonymous with the process of coding, i.e., a process that is constructive for new media art. Yvonne Spielmann describes the Vasulkas in the following manner:

> Starting with his film experiments in the early seventies, Woody has been interested in exploring and developing machine processing functions into programming. In using the electronic signal as "raw material" from which to build up an electronic language system, he found a parallel in the investigation of digital image processing, where the search for the smallest programmable unit is seen as the "point zero" from which a "syntax of binary images" could emerge. (Spielmann 2004)

The perception of electronic signals as the smallest units that can be generated and organized into code was a foreshadowing of a new definition of programmable reality.

In all these actions, video was transforming the socially perceptive optical sensitivity. It introduced direct "access" to the events, almost the immediate recording and replaying of images. It enabled the separation of the acts of recording and replaying. Recording as a database could be coded in all possible manners. This way, pictoriality lost the stability of expression, and art came into contact with new definitions of culture seen as a set of data which can be mixed, redefined, and read in many different ways and in multiple technological outputs. This situation visibly shows how strongly culture and technology intertwine, creating a shared circuit since the 1970s. This new hybrid sphere of coexistence will be a place of situations and events with an aesthetic – but also social and political – dimension.

Schizoid Subject

New technological experiences had their impact on the process of remediation of the subject's perceptive parameters. The recorded reality seemed to be dynamic and inconstant; therefore, the subject's cognitive apparatus was distributed together with the images created and received by it.

In her article, *Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism* (1976), Rosalind E. Krauss described video as a "narcissistic" art. To the American researcher, placing a camera lens in front of oneself and looking into it as into a mirror defines what she calls a "video narcissism": a rudimentary aesthetic, formal, and psychological principle of this form of art. Krauss's analysis is based on Acconci's *Centers* (1971), a work in which the artist records himself with his arm outstretched – pointing his finger at the central point of the screen.

> For *Centers* was made by Acconci's using the video monitor as a mirror. As we look at the artist sighting along his outstretched arm and forefinger towards the center of the screen we are watching, what we see is a sustained tautology: a line of sight that begins at Acconci's plane of vision and ends at the eyes of his projected double. In that image of self-regard is configured a narcissism so endemic to works of video that I find myself wanting to generalize it as *the* condition of the entire genre. Yet, what would it mean to say, "The medium of video is narcissism?" (Krauss 1976, 50)

Krauss easily understood the technological nature of video, defining it as a separate and independent medium. At the same time, she saw its psychological character and nature, as opposed to painting and film, which she called "physical" due to their material pictoriality (paint, photosensitive film tape). Therefore, video remediated the visuality of painting, film, and photography and at the same time redefined the cohesive, fixed identity of the viewing subject, whose pictoriality could only be realized in an act of transmission – an act of communication. This communicativity had at least two dimensions – internal (autoreflexive) and external (reflexive). Referencing the concepts from Freud's and Lacan's psychoanalysis, Krauss wrote:

> [...] autoreflection and reflexiveness refer to the same thing – that both are cases of consciousness doubling back upon itself in order to perform and portray

> a separation between forms of art and their contents, between the procedures of thought and their objects. (Ibid., 55–56)

The principle defined by the researcher not only provided means to characterize the aesthetics of video art – based on a dematerialized and duplicated image of the person who is looking – but also uncovered elements of the ontology of the medium itself. She suggested the existence of an internal, hidden mechanism determining the perception of a subject. An intuitive link between this mechanism and psychoanalytical discourse was an indication to place it within the field of the subconscious, which did not present itself directly but only in an act of communication and technological duplication of a subject.

> Mirror-reflection [...] implies the vanquishing of separateness. Its inherent movement is toward fusion. The self and its reflected image are of course literally separate. But the agency of reflection is a mode of appropriation, of illusionistically erasing the difference between subject and object. Facing mirrors on opposite walls squeeze out the real space between them. When we look at *Centers* we see Acconci sighting along his arm to the center of the screen we are watching. But latent in this set-up is the monitor that he is, himself, looking at. There is no way for us to see *Centers* without reading that sustained connection between the artist and his double. So for us as for Acconci, video is a process which allows these two terms to fuse. (Ibid., 56–57)

Therefore, it is clear that for Krauss, the most important characteristic of video is its processuality. It is a medium that constantly dematerializes and materializes an image using autonomous pictoriality; at the same time, it invades the relationship between the artist and his representation, between a cognitive subject and reality.

> Self-encapsulation – the body or psyche as its own surround – is everywhere to be found in the corpus of video art. Acconci's *Centers* is one instance, another is his *Air Time* of 1973. In *Air Time* Acconci sits between the video camera and a large mirror which he faces. For thirty-five minutes he addresses his own reflection with a monologue in which the terms "I" and "you" – although they are presumed to be referring to himself and an absent lover – are markers of the autonomous inter-course between Acconci and his own image. Both *Centers* and *Air Time* construct a situation of spatial closure, promoting a condition of self-reflection. The response of the performer is to a continually renewed image of himself. (Ibid., 53–54)

According to Krauss, video at the same time can be a sender, a receiver, and a transmitter; it becomes an unrevealed structure that duplicates and separates the layers of "self". By becoming more sensitive to a looped image of himself, the subject of Acconci's experiments becomes an element of eternally duplicated technological structure. One could say that with his senses he touches the loops of perception, regulated through the frequency of refreshing the video image; he nests in the interlaces of this image, which cannot be grasped. In this sense, from the cultural perspective, the mediatized subject exists in split between the willingness to stop the perceptive system, in which his own image is given, subordinate, and fully achievable to him in an act of looking, and the dynamics of an influx of photons of the inconstant video projection.

The technological duality defined and executed in art resulted in concepts of duplication and the purposefully modelled schizoid subject, which gradually stopped being used as a stable benchmark for scientific considerations of philosophical and cultural theories. Its quickly spreading images further deepened the impression of its relativity to a situation, context, and ultimately abstract data. In the framework of the schizoanalytic metamodelling of reality, proposed – among others – by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987), subjectivity was becoming dynamic, changeable, and always ready to be distributed in culture, society, and politics. This gave the artists a chance to stop being part of fixed schemes determined in advance and instead to dynamically record fragments and scraps of auto-narrative. While entering the field of emergence of thought, awareness, and deteriorated subjectivity, the French philosophers indicated in the 1970s that in the situation of self-cognition, the importance lay not only in models but also in spaces between them, places that are undetermined and ambiguous. Thus, the technological nature of video became one of the important systems of transmitting and experiencing a schizoid autoanalysis of the distributed poststructuralist subject for many artists and cultural theorists. Although Deleuze and Guattari saw the schizoid strategies dynamizing the subject as a source of power to oppose the systemizing forces of politics and commercialism, this strategy that employed (among other things) video technology quickly became a part of a global economy of transmitted images and, therefore, distributed parts of autobiographies and personal narratives.

At the end of the 1980s, video, together with all its electronic pictoriality, became a part of mainstream media narratives. Bad (non-TV) picture quality became a sign of recordings made by amateurs, making them seem "authentic", without any intention to manipulate the facts. Amateur record-

ings began to constitute new documentary forms, focused not on providing a complete image of reality, but on subjective, private impressions. What used to be seen as a guarantee of authenticity of experimental activities of such artists as Acconci became a new commercial format; the video clip itself was seen as a fetish of realism. Together with this process, a fundament of new methods of spreading media messages was established. It transformed the traditional roles played by producers and viewers; what remained gave start to a new paradigm: user-generated content. Amateur videos, made by everyone who wanted to connect to this new transmedial world, have not only remediated the reality of film and TV production, but – first and foremost – became a cornerstone of such services as YouTube a decade later.

Therefore, video, which in the 1960s and 1970s was a medium defining a new culture of democratized communication based on a two-way exchange of content (as was the case, for example, with the Californian artistic avant-garde and the group Ant Farm) and which served as a tool for scientific and artistic cognition, expanded in the 1990s using strategies that allowed it to be spread across various forms of personalized affects, autonarratives, and biographic creations. Methods of data distribution established by the video users, reaching the viewers directly – in a way by hiding the media frame separating the maker and the recipient – have created what Jon Dovey calls "confessional narratives" (2000). The concealment of the formatting frame, which in reality meant entering the narrative model of first-person media, was a visible sign of the fact that video is becoming less of a medium; it gradually integrates itself with technological and communicational reality on multiple deep levels.

Postvisuality and the Data Landscape

Video has become a system that, unseen, has merged with the media reality of everyday life. It made its structures inherent to multiple other areas of life. In the last few decades, it has directly remediated – among other things – telecommunication systems (videophones, videoconferences, various Internet video communicators, and video chats), popular music (a music video is seen as a whole, with no separation between the musical and visual part), and home entertainment (video games). Video co-founds virtual, satellite, and physical networks. Today's closed-circuit

television (CCTV) systems, which were supposed to have a form of closed input-output transmission network, are merged with open telecommunication systems (and many are connected to local Internet networks). Ultimately, we can see a single Internet circuit that covers both virtual and material reality within its range. While we are still at the planning stage of the Internet of Things, the video networks have been long present in this reality. All these systems not only closely entangle and co-create the space of our everyday lives but also shape modern identity processes, in which a performative subject undergoes constant changes through – among other things – a growing number of different videospheres that he encounters every day. While in the 1970s every replaying of a recorded image was intentional and still linear (the length of every analogue video loop was restricted by the length of the magnetic tape inside a video cassette), the life of contemporary videospheres is regulated by logic and an economy of constant, independent repetition. Economic models of all digital social networks based on video distribution depend on the number of views. There is no place for linearity here, no place for a beginning or an end; videos intentionally recorded by the users become independent from them and start a life of their own. They are virally spread, transformed, copied, and embedded into the structure of the acentric web on the code level, using the "embed" command. The transmission is never over – each video links to another one and is structurally connected to other transmissions. Single videos create spheres, and groups of videos create "foam" (Sloterdijk 2011) that keeps spreading, entwining all communication systems on the code level. Archived audiovisual data form new digital structures (landscape data). This landscape is no longer a horizon spreading in front of a person, but – as defined by Bruno Latour – it has a structure built by translation and data mediation networks. In the analyses of this situation, both human and non-human factors (e.g., data, software, and devices) create systems of interactions, shaping a modern relational bloodstream of technoculture.

The awareness of this fact repositions the focus of culture studies: from images themselves towards the process of their creation, modulation, and translation as well as revival through visualization strategies. Postvisuality, which – as mentioned above – became one of the important consequences of spreading video technology, enables practically endless data manipulation. At the same time, it redefines the most important cultural categories, including the understanding of subjectivity, which from the perspective of technoscience seems dynamic, constantly redistributed, and unfinished. It is simply a relational hybrid, whose multiple definitions depend on its digi-

tal world interactions with various technologies, media situations, and the languages of the code that co-creates its images, creations, and identities.

Therefore, the remediation that has been in process since the second half of the twentieth century through the video camera has some very significant and far-reaching consequences; not only for the digital aesthetics spreading between the possibilities of data translation itself but also for a new understanding of visuality, perception, and the relationship between what is human and what is non-human in shaping culture. This process has embedded itself so deeply into the structures of cultural production that we have moved away from the schizoid subject (who sees and experiences the consequences of split perception; who watches his technologically generated image and at the same time breaks away from it) through a system of spreading, multiplying, and changing images to a situation where video and audio data shape a global, dynamic data landscape, combining a large number of different, interconnected spheres. In the twenty-first century, video as a medium is definitely becoming less influential in culture reprogramming than was the case in the second half of the twentieth century; much more importance is gained by the data transfer system, which was once started by this technology. As Brian Massumi writes in *Semblance and Event*, in the digital world the problem of the medium disappears, since digitalism cannot be linked to just one medium. Digital technology is rather a developing network of connections and possible fusions: any given input can be chosen, in every sense of modality, and translated or transduced, transformed into something completely different (Massumi 2013).

The contemporary paradigm of dynamic reality recontextualizes levels of understanding of many classic definitions and terms; with this process, people face the necessity to grasp the dynamic and virtually endless procedures of the constitution of the cognitive subject as a resultant trajectory of various phenomena present within the sphere of technoculture's databases. These bases are constantly updated, broadened, tagged, and reconfigured. The act of cognition proceeds, therefore, in a network system, whose activity is much higher than that of a traditional catalogue. Cognition can also have the form of a mass data transfer; the data reconfigures the shape of the whole base. Thus, the system is based on constant creation and finding new connections in the network, which continuously broadens the sphere of perception. According to Brian Massumi's strong thesis, which is very relevant to new cultural studies, contemporary existence techniques are truly techniques of perceptive relativity (Ibid., 103), and therefore the functions of ontology and epistemology within the research paradigm of technoculture must be combined (Latour 1999). An analysis of the transfor-

mations caused by video indicates that this relativity uncovers the increasing autonomy and situational agency of the technology itself in its non-material (data transfer) and material (hardware) dimensions. One could even say that, in a sense, video has started a revolution that emancipated technological devices as generators, transmitters, and communication modulators. We are facing another new field of research in which remediations do not only happen within the media themselves but concern much deeper levels; they are connected with a complex technological system that co-creates the digital reality. Therefore, this is not a case of observing the technological coatings of video-images; it is a case of coexisting with the whole network of their constant distribution.[6]

Works Cited:

Apprich, Clemens, Slater, Josephine, Illes, Anthony and Schultz, Oliver (eds.). 2013. *Provocative Alloys: A Post-Media Anthology*. Mute, London.

Deleuze, Gilles – Félix Guattari. 1987. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by Brian Massumi. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Dovey, Jon. 2000. *Freakshow: First Person Media and Factual Television*. Pluto Press, London.

Jelewska, Agnieszka. 2013. *Ekotopie. Ekspansja technokultury* (*Ecotopias. The Expansion of Technoculture*). Adam Mickiewicz University Press, Poznan.

Jenkins, Henry. 2008. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York University Press, New York, London.

Kitchin, Rob, and Martin Dodge. 2011. *Code/Space: Software and Everyday Life*. The MIT Press.

Krauss, Rosalinde E. *Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism*, "October" No. 1/1976.

Latour, Bruno. 1999. *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Manovich, Lev. 2005. *Post-media Aesthetics*. Online: www.alice.id.tue.nl/references/manovich-2005.pdf [10.03.2014].

—. 2013. *Software Takes Command*, Bloomsbury Academic.

—. 2002. *The Language of New Media*, the MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Massumi, Brian. 2013. *Semblance and Event: Activist Philosophy and the Occurrent Arts*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Paik, Nam June. 1974. *Videa 'n' Videology 1959–1973*, Everson Museum of Art, New York.

—. 1966. *Cybernated Art*. In: Randall Packer, Ken Jordan (eds.), *Multimedia from Wagner to Virtual Reality*, New York 2002.

Scott, Felicity D. 2008. *Ant Farm: Living Archive 7*. Actar, Columbia GSAPP.

Sloterdijk, Peter. 2011. *Bubbles: Spheres Volume I: Microspherology*, translated by Wieland Hoban, Semiotext(e).

Spielmann, Yvonne. 2004. *Video and Computer*, http://www.fondation-langlois.org/html/e/page.php?NumPage=467 [10.02.2014]

—. 2010. *Video: The Reflexive Medium*, the MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Notes

1 One of the examples of realizing the artistic ideals of democratic videospheres was the work by the American group Ant Farm in the 1970s. The members of this media collective used cameras to create independent networks of visual information exchange. The most important element of the whole cultural system designed by the group was the possibility to share the experience by long-distance image transmission. This is how performative values typical for live arts became a strategy of the media arts as well. (Scott 2008) (Jelewska 2013).

2 A clear example of this is the history of MTV, which from the position of a niche broadcaster in the 1980s became a media mogul in less than a decade.

3 In this article, Manovich indicates the equivalence of the digital nature of new media, which exceeds the sole definition of a medium towards convergence of digital reality. In the book *Provocative Alloys: A Post-Media Anthology*, (Apprich et al. 2013) the authors give another possible definition of post-mediality, elaborating on a concept by Félix Guattari of a reality in which the digital, cultural, and social are assembled together.

4 Metadata can provide various kinds of information, e.g., concerning such things as exact location, equipment and software used, compression, and changes made. In the end, all these elements are a separate cultural and technological narrative about the user and his communication system.

5 The video camera has also become a great research device for social studies. It allowed the researchers to record, re-analyse and compare the material. To a large degree, the camera became a microscope for psychological, behavioural and social phenomena in the second half of the twentieth century. Not only did it introduce new methods of observation, it also changed the status of the observer himself, who, by abandoning anthropological definitions, moved towards being an involved object, therefore becoming more of an equipment operator than a direct witness.

6 This text is the result of research conducted under the auspices of a grant from the Polish National Science Centre, entitled: Art as the Laboratory of New Society. The cultural consequences of post-technological turn (no: UMO- 2014/13/B/HS2/00508).