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Pape, T.

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Toni Pape

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#Cycles: On circularity and recursivity in media culture



Toni Pape

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Abstract

This introduction provides three brief conceptual frames for the special section #Cycles: matter, history, and control. A first section on ‘cycles of matter’ problematises recycling discourse and its implications. The second section on ‘cycles of history’ revisits cyclical concepts of history and their contemporary re-evaluation to think about cyclical modes of (over)production. Finally, the section on ‘cycles of control’ briefly discusses cybernetic theories of feedback loops. It addresses how systemic processes of corrective feedback loops can lead to so-called cybernetic subjectivities. Each section highlights the contributions that speak to the respective conceptual frame. All contributions to the special section and audiovisual essay section are briefly introduced in the final two sections.

Keywords

cycle, circle, circularity, recursion, recycling, history, feedback loop, cybernetic subjectivity

Under the theme #Cycles, this special section brings together contributions that analyse how media culture engages with notions of cyclicity, circularity, and recursivity. This special theme is in part a response to a large number of cultural productions that pick up the figure of the loop as a narrative or aesthetic motif. In films like *Edge of Tomorrow* and *Palm Springs*, series like *Russian Doll* and *Dark*, and video games like *Deathloop* or *Hades*, the loop figures prominently to convey the protagonist’s entrapment against their will. The sheer frequency of the motif raises the question regarding its cultural relevance. What broader cultural concerns are expressed through circular and recursive imagery? How are cyclical figures being re-evaluated, transvaluated perhaps, in this recent deluge of cyclical imaginaries? The contributions to this special section and the audiovisual essay section take aesthetic and technical cycles as entry points for thinking about cultural and political significance of the loop in contemporary media as well as media history.

Before giving an overview of the answers provided by the contributions to this special section, this introduction will provide some theoretical pointers for the cultural figure of the cycle. The following three sections – on matter, history, and control – introduce some key problems of thinking with cycles and briefly indicate which of our contributions address these problems. This also allows for some cross-referencing between our special section and the audiovisual essays section which is also dedicated to the topic of cycles. More structured and detailed descriptions of all contributions follow at the end of this introduction.

Cycles of matter

Our research into cycles has been informed by previous investigations of roundness, spheres, and circulation.[1] While all of these concepts are closely related, in this special section we focus more specifically on the notion of the cycle. A cycle is a continuous process composed of a sequence of stages, with the ultimate stage reconnecting to the initial stage. In these general terms, this holds as much for a planet's revolution around its star as for a GIF that continuously repeats the same sequence of frames.[2] To establish more specific meanings of particular cycles, a helpful analytical question is to ask how the ending of one cycle feeds into its next iteration. Does the beginning of a new cycle cancel out what came to create a loop of sameness? Or do the occurrences of each cycle feed into the next, forming a spiral that moves into the future? As an example, consider how recycling is collectively imagined through circular imagery.



Fig. 1: The recycling logo.

Discourses of recycling suggest that the waste products of economic activity can become the raw material for further cycles of production. Indeed, waste is imagined to be eliminated in an ideal instantiation of the circular economy. All 'we' need to do is 'close the cycle' of production and consumption. Research in ecological sciences and the material humanities

has shown that, while this may work in idealised theory, it is impossible in practice. The architect and ecological designer Lydia Kallipoliti, whom we interviewed for this special section, has demonstrated this in her work on 20th century attempts to create ‘closed worlds’ like Biosphere 2, whose success depends on the maintenance of closed feedback loops within an artificial ecosystem. All of these projects failed, oftentimes because of unpredicted waste or byproducts. In our interview, Kallipoliti elaborates on these and other challenges of ecological design. In a recent issue of *Zeitschrift für Medienwissenschaft* on the topic ‘circulation’, Heike Weber argues that discourses of recycling operate as ‘promises of salvation’ that cannot be delivered on.[3] That is also because the ideal image of the cycle covers up important aspects of concrete recycling practices: recycling is most commonly ‘downcycling’ which means that the recycled matter is usually of smaller quantity and lower quality than the original raw materials. Furthermore, recycling requires vast infrastructures, high amounts of energy, and human labour. Structurally, then, recycling means more production and consumption. This first example is not meant to suggest that we should give up on recycling. As Kallipoliti points out in our interview, it is imperative that we become better at re-using waste matter and other processed materials. But it is not an exhaustive solution to problems of pollution, environmental deterioration, and resource depletion (and no recycling advocate would claim such a thing). Rather, this example is meant to clarify the need for a critical engagement with images of circularity. Circular motifs and figures of thought – in the audiovisual and performance arts, in music and in architecture – are deeply invested with cultural ideas of ‘unity and wholeness’, ‘infinity and perpetuity’, ‘simplicity and perfection’, to name a few general themes unearthed by Manuel Lima.[4] The contributions in this issue tease out the cultural work of the cycle in a variety of concrete media contexts.

Closed or broken cycles frequently appear in science communication. In 2023, the *New Scientist* reported that ‘we broke the water cycle’.[5] Graham Lawton writes:

The hydrological cycle is a complex, interconnected system that circulates freshwater between rivers, lakes, wetlands, groundwater, ice, water vapour in the atmosphere, clouds and precipitation. It has been extremely stable during the Holocene, or the past 11,700 years, during which temperate climatic conditions have allowed humans to thrive.[6]

This cycle – here explicitly associated with the idea of stability – is now under threat due to the overconsumption of water to meet the needs of agriculture, industry, and private homes. A few months earlier the same magazine reported that ‘we are trapped in a junk food cycle that is making us sick’, using the figure of the cycle in a different manner.[7] Journalists Jemima Lewis and Henry Dumbleby write:

In systems terms, we are stuck in a reinforcing feedback loop. Let’s call it the Junk Food Cycle. We have a predilection for calorie-dense foods, which means food companies invest more in making and marketing these foods, which makes us eat more of them and expands the market. The food companies are trapped too. If they stop selling unhealthy foods, their shareholders will be angry.[8]

Here the cycle refers to the interlocking and reinforcing necessities of a system that prevent the realisation of better alternatives. These examples allow us to make further analytical distinctions: it seems that when humans 'break' a cycle, the cycle in question is usually a larger non-human system. What gets broken is that system's inherent ability for adaptation and regeneration, its resilience. Such observations are occasionally accompanied by an astonishment at the transformative power of nonconscious, collective human activity. By contrast, being 'trapped' or 'caught' in a cycle most commonly relates to self-perpetuating systems created by humans themselves, such as social, technological, or economic infrastructures. The inertia and lock-in effects of such systems make it harder to behave in divergent manners, individually as well as collectively. The figure of the loop or cycle as prison expresses human individuals' and collectives' impotence to produce change.

These two examples – the water cycle and the fast food cycle – also raise the question whether and how different material cycles are integrated with each other. As Kallipoliti states in our interview: 'You can't have hundreds of different circles that each operate on their own.' The problem of the so-called Anthropocene can thus also be stated as a problem of incompatible cycles: the extractive cycles of capitalist production are incompatible with the regenerative cycles of the planet. Gert Jan Harkema's contribution to this special section takes that perspective when it argues that Chloe Zhao's film *Nomadland* stages the tensions between the cycles of human life, seasonal labour, circular nomadism, geological formations, and even cosmic time. Focusing on the iterative creation of film stock, Miriam De Rosa and Andrea Mariani show how the producers of film technology like Agfa relied on the cyclical exchange with experimental artists, allowing for the photographic properties of film stock to be fine-tuned.

Cycles of history

Questions of overconsumption and resource depletion are also on Nancy Fraser's mind when she mobilises the ancient circular figure of the ouroboros in her book *Cannibal Capitalism* and reinterprets it to motivate her critique of capitalist societies: 'Like the ouroboros that eats its own tail, capitalist society is primed to devour its own substance.'^[9] This is interesting because the self-devouring of the ouroboros is not conventionally read as a self-annihilation or self-consumption of the world. It is rather about the cyclical regeneration of time and thus the world:

The ouroboros refers to the mystery of cyclical time, which flows back into itself. In Egyptian thought, this temporal concept stands in close connection with the annual flooding of the Nile. The Egyptian year begins with the onset of the flooding of the Nile in the summer. Through the flooding, the fruitfulness of the land is regenerated. The flooding of the Nile is thus a key symbol of cyclical time, which does not irreversibly pursue one goal, but rather flows back into itself like a circle and thus enables renewal, repetition, and regeneration.^[10]

Following Jan Assmann, the circle of the sun (god) across the sky is created anew every morning from the 'primordial' darkness of the night. This 'preworld is, according to Egyptian thought, neither "chaos" nor a "gaping void," but rather an embryonic pleroma'.^[11] This is important because it means that the world's successive cycles do not produce or feed into each other. Each cycle constitutes a new cosmic beginning. This points to an important characteristic of cyclical notions of time: their implicit suspension or denial of history. In *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, Mircea Eliade shows that 'there is an implicit abolition of profane time, of duration, of "history"' in cyclical conceptions of time.^[12] For instance, one anthropological function on New Year celebrations is the 'material expulsion (by noise and violent gestures) of demons and diseases': 'this annual expulsion of sins, diseases and demons is basically an attempt to restore – if only momentarily – mythical and primordial time, "pure" time, the time of the "instant" of Creation'.^[13] If this symbolic abolition of history can be understood as a humble acknowledgement of human activity's insignificance among early civilisations, it also points to the hubristic denial of human impact on the world among the moderns (who very much understand themselves as cultural and historical beings, but do not accord such historicity to the 'natural' world). To abolish history means to deny that the present is constituted and informed by the past, to deny that what occurs now happens because of certain past occurrences. Note that this cosmological rationale is not so different from the idealistic assumption of a zero-waste world, in which yesterday's waste is of little concern because we assume that it is fully absorbed to create a sustainable present. Both rationales posit a (potentially) infinite, stable cycle of matter and energy.

In light of this, Nancy Fraser's understanding of the ouroboros as a figure of destructive self-consumption is a noteworthy reinterpretation that also points to the transvaluation of the cycle in contemporary times. In stark contrast to 'perpetuity and infinity', the ouroboros now figuratively renders the degradation of the planet and capitalism's destruction of its own conditions of possibility including so-called 'Nature'.

Together, Eliade and Fraser's perspectives on cyclical figures can help frame the loops of media culture in new ways. For example, under conditions of capitalist overproduction, certain storyworlds – most prominently those of comics universes – are regularly 'rebooted' because their sprawling histories leave less and less room for new story and character developments that do not contradict the established canon. The contingency of the past acts as a burden on the present rather than as a boon and, thus, needs to be abolished. One cycle has to end for another one to continue unhindered.^[14] The now popular 'multiverses' are another solution to the same problem as they allow for continued serial variation without contradiction by outsourcing divergent storylines to a parallel world. (In a sense, the multiverse serialises the reboot and thus makes the abolition of any one timeline unnecessary.) In other words, the mythical time of superheroes lends itself to the

ouroboros of capitalist media production, as the Marvel Cinematic Universe demonstrates.[15] As fashionable narrative devices, then, loops and cycles also indicate an aesthetic of overproduction.

Related to this topic, our special section offers a study of Flemish ‘nostalgic sequels’. In their article, Atalya de Cock, Eduard Cuelenaere, Gertjan Willems and Stijn Joye address the different modes and challenges associated with reusing older intellectual properties for contemporary media production. Vorozheikin Yevhen’s audiovisual essay also explores highly repetitive patterns of narration in the anime *The Melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya*. In another contribution, Beatriz Tadeo Fuica and Arthur Lezer look at the technological cycles that support film historical research itself, assessing the potential of AI-assisted database research in light of earlier technological transformations.

Cycles of control

It was already hinted that cycles can also be recursive, which means that their processual dynamic and/or its products can inform the cyclical mode of operation that generated them in the first place. In cybernetics, this is called a feedback loop. Indeed, the recent popularity of cycles can also be ascribed to a renewed interest in cybernetics and systems theory not only among media scholars, but also designers and architects, urbanists and environmentalists, and culture at large.[16] In part, this is because recent developments in machine learning, predictive computing, and sensing technology have created the (technosolutionist) hope that so-called ‘smart systems’ can regulate our currently unsustainable and inequitable modes of living, for instance by more efficiently distributing resources. In such a smart system, an array of sensors produces data that is analysed and fed back into the system in the form of corrective instructions. Such a corrective feedback loop is also called a negative feedback loop because the new input ‘negates’ the run-away effect ‘put out’ by the system. Generally speaking, all learning that works towards a norm involves negative feedback loops. By contrast, a positive feedback loop informs its system in a manner that amplifies an output effect. For example, rising CO₂ levels in the atmosphere accelerate the melting of the arctic ice sheet. A smaller surface of arctic ice, in turn, reflects less sunlight and heat energy back into space – and thus undermines an important cooling function fulfilled by the arctic ice sheet. And the weakening of this cooling function further amplifies the heating of the planet. The idea – or ideal – of self-regulation suggests that a smart system is able to create feedback loops that shift the system towards optimal benchmarks which may also have been determined by the system itself.

The contributions in this section also investigate the socio-cultural relevance of the technological imaginary of smartness and control through feedback loops. The crucial concern in this context can be summarised as follows: if control is (in part) delegated to a

technical system, it is by the same token taken away (in part) from human individuals and collectives. Concerned with the collective dimension, Orit Halpern and Robert Mitchell caution that what they call the 'smartness mandate' quite explicitly envisions a 'mode of automated, and seemingly apolitical, decision-making'.^[17] The concern is that smart systems will dispense with the necessity of politics. In contrast, popular media culture is more concerned with the individual dimension: if 'the system' is in control, then what about the agency of the self-determined individual? What about free will? This apprehension is expressed in the cultural figure of the NPC, a 'non-playable character' in a video game. The actions of NPCs are prescribed by the game software ('the system') and typically run 'on a loop'. That is, they repeat the same movement patterns and formulaic lines of dialogue. Popular cultural discourses have picked up this figure to express the broad cultural concern that, in our era of algorithmic control and automation, we ourselves might be running on a loop that we cannot control. However, as Daniel de Zeeuw and Jernej Markelj show in their article, the discursive mobilisation of the NPC figure is less often in service of self-identification and more prevalent in processes of othering. Radical online groups call out their political adversaries as NPCs because they presumably do nothing but parrot the empty phrases of, say, 'progressive liberalism'. As a structuring principle of socio-cultural processes, then, the prominent feedback loops and cycles in popular culture also raise fundamental questions concerning the very conditions of subjectivity and the relations between individuals and their surroundings, between internal desires and external necessities.

Several contributions in this section mobilise the notion of cybernetic subjectivity to conceptualise processes of subjectivation that are informed by a larger (technical) system of control. De Zeeuw and Markelj introduce Bateson's cybernetic theory of the self as a conceptual middle ground between determinism and free will, the above-mentioned false alternatives implied in the NPC discourse. Violaine Boutet de Monvel shows that video artists and early computer artists have conceived and arranged their creative processes in those relational, cybernetic terms. Mihai Bacaran explores recent map-based net art projects that are meant to shift processes of subjectivation by inducing moments of disorientation. Two of our audiovisual essays are on topic here: the title of Veronika Hanáková, Martin Tremčinský, and Jiří Anger's essay clearly states their central claim – 'Cycles of Labour: In the Metaverse, We Will Be Housewives'. Daniel O'Brien's 'Time Looping in Playful Films and Cinematic Games' pays close attention to the systemic pressures faced by protagonists in time loop narratives, in particular the systemic pressures of race.

Contributions to the special section

The special section opens with an interview with architect, designer, and scholar Lydia Kallipoliti, whose new book *Histories of Ecological Design: An Unfinished Cyclopedia* is

forthcoming in December 2023. This book explores the emergence and conflicting definitions of ecological design from the 19th century to the present. In our interview, Kallipoliti takes us through this history and its three phases: naturalism, synthetic naturalism, and dark naturalism. We discuss the potentials and limits of thinking with cycles through a number of ecological design examples, including 20th century attempts to create self-replicating ‘closed worlds’ like Biosphere 2. All of these attempts failed. Lydia Kallipoliti tells us what insights we can draw from these failures. We address the politics of cycles and the role that mediation plays in ecological design thinking.

In ‘Of sand and stone: Thick time, cyclicity, and Anthropocene poetics in *Nomadland*’, Gert Jan Harkema proposes an ecocritical reading of Chloe Zhao’s 2020 film. Harkema analyses the film’s temporal aesthetics and demonstrates that it articulates several cyclical temporalities and their interconnections. The film connects the protagonist’s circular nomadism to the capitalist cycles of production, the geological cycle that underlies the depleted gypsum mine, all the way to the cosmic cycles of the universe showcased in the observatory scene. Harkema demonstrates that the film’s ecocritical potential resides in the way the film puts the temporality of human experience into perspective. In this way, it becomes clear that Fern drifts away from the exhausting cycles of capitalism and moves closer to the seasonal cycles of nomadism.

In their co-authored article ‘Breaking the loops of digital agency panic: Embracing your inner NPC and depathologising internet addicts’, Jernej Markelj and Daniël de Zeeuw address the apparent problem of ‘subjectivity caught in a loop’ through two prominent cultural figures: the NPC and the internet addict. In their reading of online discourses, these figures problematise the liberal-humanist understanding of autonomous individual agency. It becomes hard to believe in such an idea if one acknowledges, as many of us probably do, that one’s life is shaped and conditioned by a network of interdependent factors. Or, simply put, the NPC and the internet addict express agency panic. As a conceptual solution, the authors propose that we embrace our inner NPC, or, conceptually speaking, a cybernetic understanding of subjectivity and agency.

In ‘(Dis)orientation in net art: Disrupting the feedback loop of cybernetic subjectivities’, Mihai Bacaran looks at net art that engages with mapping and map-based digital services such as Google Maps. While such maps have become indispensable tools of orientation for many, they also – cybernetically – orient us towards certain behaviours, for instance of consumption. Bacaran looks at Off Site Project’s Google Maps Residency Program (2018-2022), Arram Barthol’s sculpture *Map* (2006-2019), Petra Szeman’s video *Trajectories* (2017), Jon Rafman’s *Nine Eyes of Google Street View* (2008-2020), and the Transborder Immigrant Tool (2007-ongoing) by Electronic Disturbance Theater 2.0/b.a.n.g. Lab. The analysis shows that these art projects create divergent uses which foreground elements of

the territory that do not fit into the cartographic representation, thereby challenging the normative operations of the attention economy and questioning imperatives of usefulness.

In *'Cybernetic subjectivities on a loop: From video feedback to generative AI'*, Violaine Boutet de Monvel explores different artistic engagements with feedback loops to bridge the gap between video art and AI art. The author first distinguishes between optical feedback in video art and feedback loops in digital systems, partly to highlight the new creative potentials that artificial intelligence offers. Boutet de Monvel then highlights the continuities between these different moments of recursive aesthetics, demonstrating insightfully that art grounded in feedback loops has long been motivated by a move away from a humanist subject of efficient intentionality.

In *'Rewind, recycle, revive! An investigation into nostalgia-driven sequel and requel practices in small European film industries: The case of Flanders'*, Atalya de Cock, Eduard Cuelenaere, Gertjan Willems, and Stijn Joye look at three recent 'nostalgic sequels' from Flanders. The article theorises the recent wave of nostalgia for popular culture in a global context and provides useful distinctions between sequels, remakes, requels, and legacyquels. The analysis of three case studies looks at the films, their promotional material, and audiences responses to establish: first, how the different projects balanced faithfulness to the original with the need for innovation; and second, how audiences responded to these nostalgic sequels.

In *'From still to moving images and vice versa: Analysing technological cycles and the use of AI to study film history'*, Beatriz Tadeo Fuica and Arthur Lezer report on their experience of doing historical research with Snoop, a Content-Based Image Retrieval (CBIR) software. Their assessment is framed by a methodological reflection on the influence of technological cycles on film research: the very methods of film studies have followed successive cycles of audiovisual technologies from reels and photogrammes, over video recorders and DVD, to large digital content libraries. Their detailed account of working with Snoop highlights both potentials and limitations of their exploratory method.

In *'Experimenting in circles: Agfa, amateur cinema, and the art of R&D'*, Miriam De Rosa and Andrea Mariani study Ubaldo Magnaghi's 1933 film *Symphony of Life and Work*. The analysis reads the film's circular motifs and camera movements in light of their production context: the experimental film was supported by Agfa, and Magnaghi's cutting-edge techniques meant to test the potentials and limits of Agfa's new film stocks. This allows the authors to trace a 'mutual cycle of experimentation' in which the suppliers of photographic technologies and experimental artists support each other to advance the mechanical art of cinema.

In 'A genealogy of migrant organising by Germany's Asiatische Deutsche: Presenting the Asian Film Festival Berlin', Feng-Mei Heberer foregrounds the precarious cyclicity of film festivals. Taking the Asian Film Festival Berlin as an example, Heberer shows how this festival developed out of prior cycles of organizing, for instance in migrant labor movements and migrant women's groups. The article subsequently addresses the complex systemic challenges that undermine the longevity of film festivals, especially those of migrant communities.

Contributions to the audiovisual essays section

In 'Cycles of Labour: In the Metaverse, We Will Be Housewives', Veronika Hanáková, Martin Tremčinský, and Jiří Anger reflect on the cyclical nature of reproductive labor. Their audiovisual essay replays segments from Chantal Akerman's *Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* and overlays them with a simulated touchscreen interface that controls and tracks the (metaverse) housewife's efforts to maintain and reproduce the domestic sphere. The audiovisual essay reflects on the domestic sphere as a site of primitive accumulation which attempts to produce the docile cybernetic subjectivities required to keep the system running.

In 'Split Screen as Hermeneutic Tool: Recursivity and Crosstalk in Better Call Saul', Nicolás Medina and Miklós Kiss engage with recurring motifs and recursive character development in *Better Call Saul*. One of the series' recurring motifs is the split screen in its various forms. By carefully tracing these compositional choices in *Better Call Saul*, the authors make a twofold discovery: 1) *Better Call Saul* indicates intratextual references through frame composition; 2) further significant aesthetic patterns and relations can be observed by using the split screen itself as a hermeneutic tool in their essay.

'Close Circuit' by the Brussels-based artist collective Tripot is an audiovisual contemplation on so-called 'oddly satisfying' ASMR videos. The artists have compiled ASMR videos from the internet and reworked them through various editing and compositing techniques, distortions, and AI effects. The result is an essay that foregrounds various aspects of ASMR aesthetics, such as their tendency to create intimate sensory feedback loops (or 'close circuits') through highly mechanised and repetitive soundscapes.

Vorozheikin Yevhen's audiovisual essay 'I foresee that I'm going to have known it' investigates the highly repetitive narrative of 'Endless Eight', an important narrative arc in the second season of the anime *The Melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya*. Part of this narrative arc is the eightfold repetition of (almost) the exact same episode. This sparks Yevhen's audiovisual reflection on melancholia, fannish media consumption, and serialised production more generally.

Daniel O'Brien's 'Time looping films, games, and the cycle of abuse' looks at time loops in cinema and video games. This comparison allows O'Brien to first appreciate how games' dynamic of repeated failures that lead toward success have influenced time loop games. After reviewing a number of mainstream examples with white protagonists, the essay looks at Desmond Roe's 2020 short film *Two Distant Strangers* to suggest that time loop narratives play out in different ways for racialised protagonists. While more privileged characters can afford to fail toward successes (such as the 'respectable middle-class happy ending' in *Groundhog Day*), the Black protagonist of *Two Distant Strangers* must resolve himself to face the same violent loop over and over again.

Author

Toni Pape is Assistant Professor of Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam. His book publications include the co-authored *Nocturnal Fabulations: Ecology, Vitality and Opacity in the Cinema of Apichatpong Weerasethakul* (Open Humanities Press, 2017) as well as the monographs *Figures of Time: Affect and the Television of Preemption* (Duke University Press, 2019) and *The Aesthetics of Stealth: Digital Culture, Video Games and the Politics of Perception* (MIT Press, forthcoming in 2024). He is on the editorial board of the open access journal NECSUS and the open access book series Immediations (Punctum Press).

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Notes

- [1] Sloterdijk 2011; Lima 2017; Baumgärtel 2023. See also the 2020 issue on circulation of the *Zeitschrift für Medienwissenschaft*.
- [2] Baumgärtel 2020, 2023.
- [3] Weber 2020.
- [4] Lima 2017
- [5] Lawton 2023.
- [6] Ibid.
- [7] Dimbleby & Lewis.
- [8] Ibid.
- [9] Fraser 2022, p. xv.
- [10] Assmann 2017, 61.
- [11] Ibid., 60.
- [12] Eliade 1959, 35.
- [13] Ibid., 54.
- [14] It should be mentioned that, in a sense, the opposite is also true: cinematic motifs and clichés can be repeated periodically because they lack contingency. Sabine Hake has demonstrated this for the seemingly inexhaustible figure of the Nazi in screen fiction (2012). Other forms of popular and experimental cinema layer traumatic histories

#CYCLES: ON CIRCULARITY AND RECURSIVITY IN MEDIA CULTURE

- for instance, of colonial warfare or ethnic conflicts - in genre cycles predicated on non-linear or cyclical time (Lim 2009 and Galt 2012).

[15] Cf. Serra 2016.

[16] See e.g. Halpern 2014; Gabrys 2016; Holl 2017; Belgrad 2019; Busbea 2019; Hui 2019; Diederichsen & Etxeberria 2020.

[17] Halpern & Mitchell 2022, p. 1.