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Preface

The chapters of this book were written over the past three years for art historians, media theorists, and for students of art history and visual and modern culture. Given their respective tacit knowledge of the transitional and process nature of art and culture, these groups of readers' premises and approaches to often the same material can differ greatly. This collection of essays itself constitutes and examines a threefold transition process: firstly, it deals with the gliding contents and methods accompanying the transition process in which concepts of culture and capital cross, axes, as it were, of the historical and the geographical. Secondly, the thresholds encountered between the European and American way of life and thought as represented in the German speaking Central-European realm and the English-speaking North-West are a concomitant of the interplay of diverse circumstances. That process has its microcosm in the transitions of the present author's working places where the various chapters of this book have been conceived and written (following the physical transition from Western to Eastern Germany and Denmark, the full circle having begun, ultimately, in Croatia). Thirdly and not least, most of the texts collected here were not originally conceived, as they so often are, as conference papers or for an edited collection, even if they have found their place in such contexts. They have been selected from a range of papers written in this period because of their coherence (as discerned in retrospect) in terms of the three major themes they address. In many ways they represent a further contextualizing of some of the issues developed in *Closed Circuit Videoinstallations* (2004) and *Spiegel Medium Kunst* (2010), seeking to explore the grounds of today's challenges in art history and visual culture via three main concerns.

The first concern is how art history copes with what I call process art. The tremendous methodological difficulties in identifying the coherence of process art arise *ex negativo* out of the process of its very emergence. Its performance, installation, video, (hyper-)text and audio manifestations reveal a kind of coreless core or in other words, closed circuit arrangements. The second concern is the process of becoming of what I regard as the triple bind of visual culture studies. Mirrors, frames and immediacy appear as both a cause and effect of that coreless core, which I argue provides the wider intellectual context for many of the themes associated with vision and visuality. The third concern tracks research revolving around that coreless core (or 'nothing') and the steadily increasing correlation to relations between culture and capital, heritage and environment, and, ultimately,

the entirely consistent trespassing of the (in)visible cultural/-natural threshold by bacteria, the coreless beings *par excellence*.

The present volume proposes a process in which, inevitably, recursions within recursions abound, of progress and regress alike; a process for which a systematic representation has yet to be found. It traces cultural cohesion such as emerges in the wake of a peak of corresponding diffusion – a process in time, between borders, provinces and peripheries as interfaces where culture and capital dissolve. The ideas expressed in this are directly bound up with my previous writings, and I have often made reference to these. I hope the reader will forgive such frequent self-referencing, which is intended as a mode of providing backing for claims that otherwise cannot be exhaustively defended within the set frame. In some cases, recent essays are collected here not least because several chapters have not been published in their entirety before. Those that have been fully published have appeared in specialized places, making it difficult for readers to get an overview of the work and especially of its underlying coherence. Finally, only a few of the included essays have appeared in English before while some of them have been written especially to complete the wide interdisciplinary field of interest represented here. Apart from restoring the unpublished full text of several essays, a number of cross-references and explanations have been added to highlight links between them. My own bibliography is therefore listed separately at the end of the volume, while each chapter is closed with references and a list of quoted literature relating exclusively to that chapter. This is designed to render the sources quotable, which is regarded as a sounder method for the readers' orientation than to fake an uninterrupted flow in the author's arguments.

My work in the three mentioned interrelated areas has been sustained through the support of many friends and colleagues and numerous discussions of these issues with them. To them I have a special debt and they will recognize many of the concerns addressed here. I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of professors Hans Körner (Düsseldorf), Martin Lang (Osnabrück) and Tilman Baumgärtel (Berlin/Mainz) who read the manuscript and made helpful editing suggestions. In addition I must acknowledge the support of my colleagues from the Department of Arts and Cultural Studies of Copenhagen University and especially of my colleagues and students at the Department's section of Art History and Visual Culture for both their encouragement and tolerance for some of my ventures. I would also like to thank colleagues and students at the Osnabrück and Düsseldorf Universities with whom I discussed many ideas which eventually were incorporated into this book. Finally, thanks are due to my family, especially to Sabine for her tolerance, understanding and prolific arguments.

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Chapter 1. ‘Introduction: Cultural Turn & Speculative Capital’ has been written for this occasion and has not been previously published.

Chapter 2. ‘Roads to Recursion. Some Historiographical Remarks on a Core Category of Process Art’ was originally published in *Icono14 – Online Journal of Communication and Emergent Technologies* vol 12, no. 2 (2014), pp. 70–85 [<http://dx.doi.org/10.7195/ri14.v12i2.682>]. Reprinted by permission of the editors.

Chapter 3. ‘Reflecting thresholds. Unseen images and untold processes’ is a longer version of the lecture held at the Academy of the Arts in Berlin within the program of the exhibition *Schwindel der Wirklichkeit* on October 15th 2014.

Chapter 4. ‘Process Art in Education, Research & Archiving. Two Cases’ is a merger of two essays. The first essay, ‘Video Art at the Dusseldorf Art Academy 1976–96’ takes up the first three sections. It was originally commissioned for the reader *Die Geschichte der Kunstakademie Düsseldorf seit 1945* (Deutscher Kunstverlag Berlin & Munich, 2014), but was not published. Because of the obvious importance of the topics, which widely surmounts the individual and local interests, I have decided to correct this deficit by publishing and contextualizing the original German text here for the international audience. The second part takes up the last two sections and was originally published as ‘Archives, Data Bases and Processual Arts’ in van der Meijden P & J Fleischer & A Lumbye Sørensen (eds.), *Arkiver i kunst og visuel kultur* (IKK, Copenhagen 2013), pp. 218–46. Reprinted by permission of the editors.

Chapter 5. ‘Mirroring the Invisible. Culture, Technology, (Self-)Observation’ is a longer version of a keynote lecture held at The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters in Copenhagen on June 21st 2012 as a contribution to the Second Conference of the Research Network *Negotiating (In)Visibilities* (IKK, Copenhagen). It was originally published as Slavko Kacunko, ‘Mirroring the Invisible’ in H Steiner & K Veel (eds.) 2015, *Invisibility Studies: Surveillance, Transparency and the Hidden in Contemporary Culture* (Peter Lang, 2015).

Chapter 6. ‘Margins moved to the Middle. Process Art in Visual Studies’ is a longer version of a lecture held at the international conference *Framings* (IKK,

Copenhagen) on November 30th 2013. It was subsequently published in Harli-zius-Klück, E. & S. Kacunko & H. Körner (eds.), *Framings* (Düsseldorf 2015, forthcoming). Reprinted by permission of the editors.

Chapter 7. ‘On Speculative Difference’ is an extended version of a lecture held at the closing seminar of the international lecture series *Bildwissenschaft & Visual Culture* (IKK & KADK Copenhagen) on September 10th 2014 and at the seminar *Det digitale subjekt* (research group *Digi-Comm*, Department of Nordic Studies and Linguistic, Copenhagen University) on October 30th 2014.

Chapter 8. ‘Culture as Capital in Media Democracy. Envisioning the post visual Condition’ has not been previously published.

Chapter 9. ‘Great Dane meets Dalmatian. Ejnar Dyggve and the Mapping of Christian Archaeology’ was originally published in *Quadratura – Writings in Danish art history*, a series released by the Danish Art Historian Society. Available online [http://www.kunsthistoriker.dk/filer/Quadratura_01_2014.pdf] Reprinted by permission of the editors.

Chapter 10. ‘Coreless. Bacteria, Art, and other Incommodities’ is a merger of two essays. The first, ‘Big Bacteria: A future Framework for Arts, Sciences and Humanities’ summarizes my recent and current collaboration research and has not been previously published. It makes up the first two sections, while the third section is a revised and translated version of the essay ‘Das Leben, der Tod und die Staubige Wiedergeburt: Zur Vermittlung von Bo(o)tschaften zwischen Kunst und Wissenschaft’. It was first published in Barberi, A & T Hug & P Missomelius & W Sützl (eds), ‘Potenziale digitaler Medienkunst’ in *Medienimpulse. Beiträge zur Medienpädagogik 2* (2014), a series released by the Austrian ministry for education, art and culture, Vienna. Available online [<http://www.medienimpulse.at/articles/view/622>]. Reprinted by permission of the editors.