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Teleindividuation

1. Introduction

Thinking the status of technical objects went from classificating them as things, products, materials, to considering them in wider scope of ontological processes and giving them proper value as "things" with autonomous mode of being owed to them. Today we cannot think that technical objects are simply made without regard to technical tendencies as markers of culture conditiong by various technologies. So in stereotyped view they are not individuated, but produced. In that way we can't ask any questions regarding their status. What is left, is the statement pointing out and affirming their existence as merely thinks considered as result of various processes of production. The question how beings are and become themselves was the main concern of philosophical thinking. This coming into being as an unique and characteristic (in the sense – distinguishable from other beings) is called individuation and we know this term from Duns Scotus writings. Technical objects were thought as distinct from proper ontology – they were marginalized. Contemporary in the age of planetary technicization we cannot ignore technical objects and conform them as an subsystem of culture.

Gilbert Simondon showed that objects are not only things under the regulation of culture, but they have their own ontological dynamics that

arise from individuation – a process of constant renewal of their organization[1]. This essential thesis could be extended by theory of *quasi*-objects formulated by Michel Serres[2] and developed by Bruno Latour. Their assumption is similar to Simondons – *quasi*-object as technical objects exist only in motion, in dynamics of constant interaction and being between complex relations with other non-technical objects. It corresponds with Simondon's relational ontology. But contemporary objects are not so easily classified and named, because we are encouraging mainly virtual objects that are the product of technological manufacture on microscale (for example digital information, nanoparticles). They are also in-between, but this relations could be distinguished only by a special kind of technological apparatuses. So technical objects is always in-between never becoming fully individualized, because we cannot trace their existence as fully present and fully individualized in some form of long duration. What we can trace is their individuation, but also not in full range, but partially. This mode of thinking is relatively new, because individuation of technical technical objects understood in this context is never ending. Contemporary tendencies such as remediation and convergence are the surface effect and epiphenomenon of thinking individuation within cyberculture (as an mode of existence of technicized culture).

My thesis is that culture is a part of technics (and not inversely). In the perspective of this understanding culture is essentially a technical culture as an product of planetary technicization[3]. Technicization determines the way individuation occurs. Technical objects then are the source of reality which becomes increasingly virtualized by technologies of webs and programs[4].

So technical objects are becoming virtual objects. This doesn't imply that they are loosing their technicity in this transition – what is different, is their mode of existence and way of individuation. This new individuation – teleindividuation – could be traced only by telepresent technologies. What changes is their mode of being as an consequence of planetary

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[1] G. Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, trans. N. Mellamphy, University of Western Ontario, 1980.

[2] M. Serres, *Parasite*, trans. R.L. Schehr, The John Hopkins Univesity Press, Baltimore and London 1982.

[3] See the works of Martin Heidegger and Gianni Vattimo which are focused mainly on the technicization – escpecially the "late Heidegger's" writings.

[4] A term of Jean Baudrillard developed further in original philosophy of media by Wojciech Chyła. See. W. Chyła, *Media jako biotechnosystem. Zarys filozofii mediów*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2008.

installation of transformation technologies[5]. Technical objects are more linear, predictable and stable than virtual objects (which to some extent are also technical objects). Virtual object as an form technical object has paradoxical "nature"[6] – it can be and not be at the same time[7]; it could appear and disappear without the "loss of time", that is against any given form of historical and metaphysical temporality. This distinction is made to underlie the character of contemporary technical culture which changes it's mode of being when it is shaped by different technologies at macroscale (communication and technical media, robotics) and microscale (nanotechnology, biotechnology). What changes is eventization – events are not only in the surface as inaccessible for technical mediation, but they are installed as virtualities (in the sense of power to make relations[8]) in technical and virtual objects. Virtual object scould be source not only of events, but programs of eventization governing tendencies of technicization. Technical virtuality is installed in virtual objects which not only are, not only act, but also are functioning as interconnected construct of individuation through acentric webs of eventization. Events are bounded by technology of webs and programs – they are technoconnectionist events[9]. This forces us to think individuation again.

My thesis is that Simondon thinking of technical objects is still linear and in wider extent is not capable to grasp how current reality is shaped by contemporary modes of technicization. In Simondon's ontology of technical culture (and also in Stiegler more social and cultural focused approach on individuation) individuation is a singular process leading from ontological and social abstractization (from preindividual field) to concretization in particular technical objects (individuating in culture). Individuation is fixed as an process – actual field is extended by preindividual field where technical objects are formed as virtual potentialities that are concretized in given reality. So it is an never ending process – being must be individuated

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[5]   It is a term used by Bernard Stiegler to describe the technologies that are changing reality in the most profound way.

[6]   Here nature is understood as an basic tendency of individuation adequate to global tendency of technicization.

[7]   Nor partial observer, nor technological apparatus, can distinguish path of individuation of virtual objects in every stages of their becoming.

[8]   It resembles to some extent the way in which Leibniz understood virtuality as an force and not merely a possibility.

[9]   See. W. Chyła, *Technokoneksjonistyczne zdarzenie jako źródłow "sztucznej wzniosłości" i "sztucznej nieskończoności"*, in: *Nauka-Kultura-Społeczeństwo*, J. Sójka (et al.) (ed.), Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2010.

perpetually to confirm it's individuality and uniqueness. In my view this can lead to a lot of misunderstandings, because these lines of individuation produce objects that must remain active, constantly searching for their confirmation as ontologically proper. In that way it is very hard to change the direction of individuation (for example it is also impossible to change from disindividuation to individuation) or focus on an different types of individuation. This type of ontological thinking "from" "to" can't grasp all the complexity that is invited to culture by extensive technicization in the function of virtualization. In my view individuation is not an binary (considered and thought in non-contradictory Aristotelian logic) process – there are other modes of individuating between pure individuation and pure disindividuation (lack of individuation or in reverse – pathological individuation[10]). Technical objects are directed into future to repeat their past states so their direction of individuation is current and stable. I'm arguing that today individuation doesn't work this way. That is the reason why I'm introducing the concept of teleindividuatation which in my opinion explains not only individuation between past (memory) and future (drives)[11], but mostly what happens in the present[12] – the present of individuation without and determined goal.

2. From individuation to teleindividuation

Teleindividuation is the remote individuation – beings don't need a preindividual field other then being installed in themselves[13]. Forms of impersonal, preindividual morphogenesis are now placed in technology. That means that technology mediated culture in the way that it's preindividual field is connected to it – is not an transcendental field, but immanent reality opened by and for technological operations. Teleindividuation is reversible – virtual objects have the power to deindividuate and individuate themselves in other objects. This process enables them to enter culture.

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[10] As monstrous individuation or disindividuation. But not every thing that can't be compared to proper way of individuation should be considered as pathological and wrong.

[11] For me Stiegler is focused on past (culture as tertiary memory as source of individuation and transindividuation) and Simondon on the present (culture as technical culture projecting itself for future organization).

[12] I'm not thinking here of "now" as an only form of time available for teleindividuation. My concern is placed on "now" as an time of realizing operations in programs consisting of this operations which are drivers of teleindividuations.

[13] Installation is an ontological process of linking virtuality to a field by technological mediation.

Preindividual field surrounding them becomes chaosmic[14] – an virtual field of chaosmosis. Technical and virtual objects individuate fields of reality that metastabilize culture. Virtual objects are momentary, fluent, where one immediately substitutes for other, where one virtual object without the loss of time replaces the other virtual object. That mode of being proper for technicized virtuality is based on acentric web ontology of relations between constantly appearing and disappearing virtual objects.

Individuation is too slow in this ontological schema, se we must bring teleindividuation as an mode of becoming virtual objects at infinite speed. Being Teleindividuation in transferred – lines of transfer connect heterogeneous stages of individuation. It is only possible because of acceleration as an imperative of contemporary technicization. Individuation doesn't have it's abstract and concrete correlates – this distintion is not removed, but merged into hybrid forms of abstract and concrete existence at the same time. Everything is controlled by virtual machines of teleindividuation. Only in that way the cosmic speed (infinite speed of linking and relationing) could be organized by technology enabling teleindividuation.

Simondon's and even Deleuze's machines of individuation are now considered as "scrap"[15], because they are to slow. It doesn't mean that they can't work. Scrap of individuation is placed in museums of individuation. It's a metaphor of vanishing historically oriented modes of indviduation and replacing them by ahistorical teleindividuation that operates only in real time – everlasting now[16]. Current speed of individuation is different, surely it is faster as technologies compute infinite amounts of data at macro and micro level. Against scrap yard of individuation machines there are laboratories of teleindividuation.

3. Acentric web of teleindividuation

We have now acentric web of teleindividuation instead of transindividuation[17] considered as collective individuation. In this approach there is no need

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[14] Chaosmos is a field of pure virtuality as understood by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.

[15] This is expressed in metaphorical sense to indicate the technological change made by the speed of contemporary technicization.

[16] Aion an Chronos as two modes of time introduced by Gilles Deleuze in *Logic of Sense* are not connected into one present time with installed function of past and future. Time of teleindividuation is then fixated in the form of One, but this is virtual One. This One means only the technologically mediated set up of tempoarality. See. G. Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, trans. M. Lester, C. Strivale, Columbia University Press, New York 1990.

[17] Bernards Stieglers term for cultural becoming out of tertiary retentions.

for presence of virtual objects that transindividuate for there's source of individuation is acentric web as an source of constantly changing relations. In acentric webs of individuation there are installed drivers of individuation that steer and control packets of being. Drivers of individuation are special programs that connect virtual objects in the process of teleindividual linkage with any other objects. So this installation is virtualization in general. Virtual objects doesn't need to be present in the same territory to co-individuate. They could be anywhere (geographically), yet they remain teleindividual connection through technological mediation that enables this kind of remoteness (teleindividuation is remote individuation). For example – when Kevin Warwick steers robot hand as an extension of his own body by the electronic chip implanted in his hand, so the process of becoming a robotic hand (his telepresent prosthesis) is teleindividuation. Saying that Warwick becomes cyborg leads only to oversimplification. Cyborg is a product, an effect of individuation (fully individualized being) – an entity that is formed, even if it's remaining open for further developments and extensions. In this case we should rather consider this process as becoming an cyborg as ongoing sequence of teleindividuation where person, robotic hand form an acentric web of teleindividuation, where other elements could be plugged in, linked, connected. Acentric webs of teleindividuation are opened to extensions by their own access configuration, so they could be absolutely closed for further modifications or remain completely open. Here is important their access configuration. From it depends also it is possible to start new teleindividuations and individuations (as effect in territorially present to preindividual field).

The other example of teleindividuation is cloud computing. Computer programs that are essential for maintaining economy, data exchange in society, social media are now being placed into data clouds. They nature is virtual. On the ground there are only present large data banks in a form of silo's. But the computing sphere is placed in the cloud[18] – their form is liquid, constantly interacting, instable – virtual. All the regulations come from this cloud as an source of instruction for governing any form of social and cultural organization.

Acentric web of teleindividuation programs new circuits of teleindividuation as an source of eventization. When we want to know what is the source of teleindividuation we must show not only a web of interconnected virtual objects, but mainly focus on finding the driver of teleindividuation, in which they're inscribed instruction for linking different events that control whole process of becoming and installing virtual objects into culture.

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[18] It resembles the cloud of virtual that encompasses any actual object as described by Gilles Deleuze.

This indicates that source of teleindividuation is flickering, constantly changing reconfiguration by merging with other acentric webs of teleindividuation. This mode of existence of technical web (webs) of teleindividuation is not being plural or singular – rather it is ontologically hybrid[19] and it's model is curve and not a straight line.

4. Drivers of teleindividuation

Drivers installed in programs governing teleindividual web of teleindividuations are dispersed. Drivers of teleindividuation are not centers, but they act like centers of teleindivduation. Because of infinite speed of coming into existence of virtual objects they must stabilize arisen connections. So drivers of teleindividuations are programs that lead to sequences of individuation. Being could be individuated only partially and then its process of individuation could be remotely renewed. This is something what we have not met in culture till it's radical virtualization, because we thought of individuation in the way of never ending process. Bernard Stiegler spoke of disindividuation as an opposite to individuation[20]. Here we have not the reverse process, but rather an opposite tendency. Teleindividuation could be stopped at any phase, could be reversed and even accelerated. Drivers of teleindividuation cannot be named, so saying that something in particular moment is disindividuated doesn't mean that the process of becoming fully individual is impossible. It could be started, tuned, stopped. Individuation isn't anymore function of specific temporality than a mode of being for virtual objects. We are talking not in rigid distinctions, but rather possibilities and probabilities.

Drivers of teleindividutaion are programs. That means that their are made of specific codes and instructions that can be steered by commands introduced in specific programming language. The programming language of teleindividuation is language of relations and connections – technological language that could be expressed not only by technological means, but also in a way proper to any operation, any act of subject activity. It is not language nor in a common, nor in technological understanding. It is rather performative language of technoconnectionist events[21].

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[19] This assumption is based on Bruno Latour view on different ontologies.

[20] B. Stiegler, *The Disaffected Individual in the Process of Psychic and Collective Disindividuation*, http://arsindustrialis.org/disaffected-individual-process-psychic-and-collective-disindividuation [24.09.2011]

[21] In the sense of rechnoconnectionist events.

Drivers of teleindividuation can stop indiviiduttion of elements creating an acentric web of relations. Different elements of this web could be individuated or disindividuated in various ways. So if we have an web consisting out of four virtual objects it is possible to "freeze" the whole web – it will start teleindividuating itself after activating proper driver. It is not necessarily obligatory that the driver exists within the web of relations. They could be installed externally. In this understanding drivers of teleindividuation trigger the regulate the speed of individuation.

5. Chaosmos as an source of teleindividuation

This shift from individuation to teleindividuation is an surface effect[22] of introducing chaosmos into culture. It is an plane of pure virtuality and a source of virtual objects that by technological operations are brought into culture. Chaosmos[23] is becoming chaos which disrupts existing modes of individuation. So technical objects are becoming mainly virtual objects – this is a technical tendency not an law or other form of imperative. Teleindividuation introduces interconnected virtual objects to culture, where they are create layers of reality (folds). Chaos is an effect for an observer that cannot see this complex ralations. But this mode of culture works according to autoregulations (programs of autoregulation) of technologically structured chaosmos, which in culture is considered as chaos because it's changing stable symbolic relations for virtual objects that appear and disappear constantly. Chaosmos can't be grasped and controlled as an whole plane of existence. This is the reason why teleindividuation is the new mode bringing beings into existence as an source of allostability.

6. Allostability

This teleindividuation of acentric web of virtual objects is allostable. Allostasis[24] as an basic course for allostable organization of technicized

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[22] In *Logic of sense* Gilles Deleuze says that events are surface effects, because their are impersonal. What is important here is that in relation to the technical objects events get technological grounding. This enables to install in being drivers of teleindividuation that not only individuate being by concretization of preindividual virtualities, but also program the series of events.

[23] See. F. Guattari, *Chaosmosis: an Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm*, trans. P. Bains, J. Pefanis, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 1995.

[24] Allostatis means marinating stability by change. Homeostasis has fixed points to which system strives for. Allostasis has only virtual points of consistency – they are

culture as an process of keeping organs of culture (and in my opinion also machines and virtual objects) in their individual form of organization. But this kind of stability requires adaptation which could lead to partial reorganization or transformation of internal and external relation of organism. Homeostasis was an form of maintaining stability as is an form of organization focused on fixed points to which system strives (for example human body temperature). Metastability[25] is an organization, in which system maintained by *quasi*-fixed set of points that are constantly changing (also the system as an whole is open for transformation). Allostability introduces stability based on chaos, on difference, on constant motion of chaotization and differentiation, where are no fixed points of stability – only virtual points of teleindividuation. This means that by teleindividuating being is constantly individuating in the function of changing by chaotization-virtualization. So it isn't only points of stability that are transforming, but the being itself. Teleindividuation is based on virtuality that lacks consistency and continuity, without establishment. Teleindividuation is being out of chaos, that is acentric webs of virtual objects coming into existence on the plane of culture to overwrite it's symbolic based organization for pure virtual and allostable relations. In this way allostability is a mode of stabilizing chaosmos entering culture.

7. Individuation from chaos to chaos

Chaosmos is a constant source of individuation. It's virtual structure enables to enrich technical objects with properties capable of stopping, accelerating and changing individuation. Chaos as an state of reality emerging from chaosmose is individuation itself as appearing and disappearing particles, elements, relations. Technical objects are only media of chaos – not chaos itself. So do question could be posed: "How it is possible to start and steer individuation from chaosmos in the form of chaos?". The answer to this question is the process of teleindividuation which interconnects virtual objects in the form of acentric web.

8. Conclusion

Teleindividuation is a key concept to understand what happens in contemporary world shaped by technical media of culture transmission. Phenomena

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constantly changing. By allostatis I mean an philosophical concept which includes also (as an source of inspiration) allostasis as an biological phenomena.

[25] Concept of metastability was mostly developed by Gilbert Simondon.

such as collaborative work, distance learning, collective intelligence, distant robotics, telepresence could be well understand to referring not only to technologies of webs and programs, but for the most part to the mode of teleindividuation of contemporary technicized culture. Chaosmos as teleindividuation of technical virtuality (technovirtuality) into culture doesn't explain itself. We must then introduce new concepts that are following constantly changing programs of teleindividuation that in essence imposing acentric organization of culture by virtualizing it. It is not that an technical objects is surrounded by virtual cloud[26] – rather culture technicized by radical virtualization forces culture to shape in the chaos-form of clouds, from which it teleindividuates itself remotely. This kind of "wired" immanence is a great challenge for human thought.

The final conclusion is that we have gone from thinking individuation as process of avoiding one reference, one ontologically "still" object to operations of teleindividuation. Teleindividuation as individuation through technicization controls the distribution of difference, temporality of technical relations from technologically structured chaos.

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[26] As expressed in Deleuze's essay *The Actual and The Virtual*.

Abstract

The goal of this article is to introduce the theory of teleindividuation. It is stated that individuation in the way formulated by Gilbert Simondon and it's interpretation and extension made by Bernard Stiegler should be verified and thought through again, because it doesn't fit to contemporary mode of technicization of culture. Teleindividuation conforms to the way in which technical objects as virtual objects emerge – the manner in which they are becoming what they are. Teleindividuation is only possible when a allostable mode of organization of technical culture is reached. It is also said that this shift from individuation to teleindividuation is considered as technical tendency (it is not universal). In the conclusion there are underlined consequences for culture.

Key words: teleindividuation, individuation, chaosmos, allostability, allostasis, technical media