ROCZNIKI NAUK SPOŁECZNYCH
Tom 17(53), numer 4 – 2025
DOI: https://doi.org/10.18290/rns2025.0044

DARIUSZ JURUŚ

ON CROSSING BOUNDARIES

A b s t r a c t . The article outlines the issue of crossing boundaries in art, starting with Marcel Duchamp, through conceptualism, and ending with bioart and zoesthetics. The focus was on the conceptual side of this phenomenon, while omitting its social, political and cultural dimensions. It is indicated that this crossing of boundaries evolved from the conceptual to the physical dimension. In this context the post-humanist approach – in which this crossing of boundaries places man not in a vertical, but a horizontal dimension, reducing him to the world of plants and animals – was critically assessed. It was also pointed out that from this perspective, the contemporary trends characterized here refer directly to the Darwinian vision of life, in which the boundaries at the level of micro and macroevolution are abolished.

Keywords: boundries; Duchamp; conceptualism; bioart; posthumanism; zoeaestehtics

INTRODUCTION

Boundaries are an inherent part of existence; they organize reality and create a hierarchy. As the principle of identity states: everything is what it is and nothing else. From the ontological point of view, the boundary establishes the identity of each being; and its annihilation leads to its disappearance. In science Darwinian evolutionism is the theory, which eliminates boundaries; Darwin assumed the continuity of all creatures both at the micro (species) and macro (inter-species) levels, starting from the assumption that *natura non facit saltum* (nature does not make leaps). Both before and after Darwin, scientists and philosophers have argued about the nature of reality, whether it is continuous (boundless) or rather discontinuous (with clearly marked boundaries).

Dr hab. DARIUSZ JURUŚ, prof. UJ – Jagiellonian University, Institute of Intercultural Studies; correspondence address: ul. Władysława Reymonta 4, 30-059 Kraków; e-mail: dariusz.jurus@uj.edu.pl; ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2108-9361.

The process of crossing boundaries, initiated with such force by Darwin, also took place half a century later among artists who tried – like Darwin – to abolish the boundaries between "species", which were "life" and "art", "visual" and "mental", and then these between "nature" and "culture" or "human" and "non-human." This abolition led to questioning not only the identity of concepts (conceptualist question: what is art?), but also the identity of man (posthuman question: what is human being?)

In the article, I will briefly present some movements in contemporary art, which main idea was to cross the boundaries. I will start with Marcel Duchamp, then I go to the Conceptualists, and I will finish with the artists of bioart. This choice is necessarily selective, but I hope it is representative of the issues I address.

I will discuss process of transcending boundaries in contemporary art primarily at a conceptual level, thus largely abstracting from the social, cultural, political and even religious context (including feminism, new materialism, ecology, postcolonialism and structuralism) being aware that to evoke all these aspects in relation to Duchamp, the Conceptualists, posthumanism, and bioart would exceed the conceptual framework of this paper and, *last but not least*, the editorial requirements.

1. MARCEL DUCHAMP – CREATING ART BY GESTURE

The Copernican revolution in art was brought about by Marcel Duchamp. In a note from the Green Box in 1913, Duchamp asked: "Can one create works that will not be 'works of art'?" (Tomkins, 2001, p. 11). The performative answer to this question were the ready-mades, about which Duchamp said they were "a way to deny the possibility of defining art" (Tomkins, 2001, p. 147).

The first object that appeared in Duchamp's studio in Paris in 1913, which was more of a toy than a work of art, was a bicycle wheel, which the artist mounted onto a stool using an axle and delighted in setting it in motion. As he wrote: "It simply appeared as a pleasure, something for my room, like a fireplace or a pencil sharpener for you, although it served no practical purpose. It was a pleasant device, pleasant because of its movement" (Tomkins, 2001, p. 126). "It was not for show, just for my own use", he added (Tomkins, 2001, p. 126).

Another item that appeared in Duchamp's Paris studio the following year was a bottle dryer. "I bought it", said Duchamp, "as a ready-made sculpture". However, as the author of Duchamp's biography, Tomkins, emphasizes, in 1914

the idea of the ready-made had not yet been born in Duchamp's mind (Tomkins, 2001, p. 127).

The first conscious ready-made was a snow shovel, purchased in 1915. It was placed in Duchamp's New York studio and titled *In Advance of the Broken Arm*. The term "ready-made" first appeared in writing in a letter to Duchamp's sister Suzanne in 1915. However, the most famous ready-made that Duchamp intended to present to the public was *Fountain* from 1917. Duchamp purchased a urinal from the J. L. Mott store, titled it *Fountain*, signed it R. Mutt, and, after paying the required fee, anonymously submitted it to the Independent Exhibition in New York. However, due to opposition from the majority of the organizing committee members, including Duchamp, the object was rejected. (As a protest, Duchamp resigned from the committee)[1].

Duchamp's ready-mades were not typical works of art, as their aim was not to evoke aesthetic experiences through quality or aesthetic values. "I would like to emphasize", said Duchamp, "that the choice of these 'ready-made things' was never dictated by aesthetic pleasure... The choice was based on a visual reaction of indifference, with a total absence of good or bad taste... essentially, on complete numbness/forgetfulness" (Sanouillet and Peterson, 1975, p. 141). The title of each ready-made was crucial, as it was meant to "lead the viewer's mind to other areas" (Sanouillet and Peterson, 1975, p. 141). Duchamp saw the viewers as a part of the act of creation, as they "bring the work into contact with the outside world by deciphering it and interpreting its inner conditions..." (Sanouillet and Peterson, 1975, p. 140).

The removal of boundaries was not just about introducing everyday objects into the world of art. Duchamp could have introduced these items into the art world and insisted (as some did) on their aesthetic value. He, however, did not merely bring everyday objects into the art world; he did so through a gesture. Note that Duchamp could have made the urinal himself, like the Mott company, and transferred it to the world of art (Duchamp was an excellent handyman, as evidenced by his *Boîte-en-valise*, which consisted of miniature works by Duchamp); however, he did not make it himself, but gave it the status of a work of art through the gesture. In this way, he questioned the status of a work of art as an artifact and the role of the artist as a creator. The crossing of boundaries for Duchamp has another dimension: this between visual (retinal) art and conceptual

[1] There is circumstantial evidence that Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven sent Duchamp this urinal, signed R. Mutt, as evidenced by a letter from Duchamp to his sister, informing her that a close friend had sent her this very item. Whatever the facts, one thing is certain: Duchamp, and no one else, intended to exhibit the Fountain.

(mental) art. Duchamp wanted to "return painting to the service of the mind" (Tomkins, 2001, p. 17) and wrote: "I was interested in ideas, not just visual products... I wanted painting to serve the mind again" (Coutts-Smith, 1970, p. 52). For Duchamp the idea always came first.

By dissolving the boundaries between art and life, visual and mental, artist and viewer, Duchamp questioned the identity of these beings. Life became art, an idea became a work of art, and a viewer became an artist. What was previously separate has been joined together thus changing the perception of reality.

2. CONCEPTUALISM – WORK OF ART AS AN IDEA

Alexander Alberro states that on the conceptual level: "(…) the conceptual in art means an expanded critique of the cohesiveness and materiality of the art object, a growing wariness toward definitions of artistic practice as purely visual, a fusion of the work with its site and context of display, and an increased emphasis on the possibilities of publicness and distribution" (Alberro, 1999, p. 54). On the other hand, on the ideological level, conceptual art was a critique of bourgeois culture, which was dominated by private ownership of works of art and the private pleasure as a consequence of it. Conceptual artists, by selling their ideas to everyone, undermined the capitalist status of a work of art and questioned the authority of the institutions.

I will focus on the two first points of Alberro's definition. i.e. critique of materiality and visuality of art, which leads to linguistic theory of art, because I believe that it is these aspects – and not the ideological background, which was common to other artistic movements of sixties and seventies – that makes conceptualism a unique trend in 20th-century art.

Conceptualism took Duchamp's ideas to the extreme. As one of its creators, Joseph Kosuth, wrote: "All art (after Duchamp) is (by nature) conceptual because art exists only conceptually" (Kosuth, 1987, p. 247). While Duchamp's works, though inherently conceptual, still required materialization, in the case of conceptualists, objects were often, as Lucy Lippard and John Chandler (1999) wrote, "dematerialized" and became unnecessary, since an idea, concept, or thought were what truly mattered.

Among conceptualists, there was a fascination with the philosophy of language, particularly Alfred Jules Ayer's *Language, Truth, and Logic* (1936) and Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (1953). Language was seen as a "new kind of painting" (Kosuth, 1999b, p. 337). In this context, Kosuth wrote:

"Works of art are analytic sentences. Taken in their own context – like art – they do not provide any information about facts. A work of art is a tautology in that it shows the artist's intentions, who says that this work of art is art, which means it is a definition of art" (Kosuth, 1987, p. 249).

Kosuth stated that "A work of art is a kind of sentence, formulated within the context of art as a comment on itself" (Kosuth, 1987, p. 249), and that "(...) the sentences of art are not about things, but are linguistic – they do not describe the behavior of physical or even mental objects; they express a definition of art or the formal consequences of such a definition" (Kosuth, 1987, p. 250). "A work of art – emphasized Kosuth – is a kind of *proposition* presented within the context of art as a comment on art. We can then go further and analyze the types of 'propositions'" (Kosuth, 1999a, p. 165). Kosuth argued that art is analogous to an analytic proposition, and that the existence of art as a tautology allows art to remain "away" from philosophical assumptions (Kosuth, 1999a, p. 161).

The reduction of art to a linguistic statement was proposed by members of the *Art & Language* group, Terry Atkinson and Michael Baldwin. According to Atkinson, art is not about "looking at objects", but about "reading from objects" (Atkinson, 1999, p. 54). In a similar spirit, L. Lippard wrote: "The visual artist uses words to convey information about sensorial or potentially perceptible phenomena; his current preoccupation with linguistics, semantics, and social structures as exposed by anthropology is not surprising" (Lippard, 1999, p. 181).

Kosuth was interested in the definition of art as a work of art. The analyticity of conceptual art works was supposed to lie in the fact that they refer to art itself and do not refer to anything that could be verified by referring to experience. He claimed that, works of conceptual art were comments on art and its boundaries and had "nothing to do with conveying visual (or other) experience" (Kosuth, 1987, p. 253). A conceptual work of art "takes place" not in sensory space but in mental space; it is to be understood (whatever that means), not perceived. As Kosuth wrote: "(...) the transition from what is perceptual to what is conceptual is a transition from the physical to the mental" (Kosuth, 1973, p. 147).

Kosuth claimed that, the main task of artists should be to question the nature of art. Conceptual art, by questioning art, is a question about its meaning and simultaneously a departure beyond aesthetics. As Binkley wrote: "(...) the fact that something is aesthetic is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for it to be considered art" (Binkley, 1987, p. 426). According to Binkley, "art is

a practiced discipline of thought and action, similar to mathematics, economics, philosophy, and history" (Binkley, 1987, p. 440-441).

Lawrence Weiner published a three-point manifesto of conceptual art in the exhibition catalogue *January 5 – 31*: "1) The artist may make the work, 2) The work may be made [by someone else], 3) The work does not need to be made. All these states are equivalent and correspond to the artist's intention, and which one is chosen depends on the viewer and the conditions of reception of the work" (Meyer, 1972, p. 218). Hence, Weiner demolishes the myth of authority and authorship.

Conceptualism became a commentary on the role of an artist deprived of his authorial role. In conceptual art, visualization was accomplished not sensorially but conceptually; through a recipe that made the viewer/perceiver imagine or think about something. The viewer was therefore expected to read the image, not just see it. A conceptual work of art seems to be relational in nature because it is constituted in a mental space whose elements are the author, the viewer and the idea, which interpenetrate each other. Conceptualism blurred the line between the mental and the material, thus moving the piece of art from physical to mental space. And also, by questioning the visuality of art, paved the way for tactile experience as an important dimension of contemporary art.

3. BIO-ART AND ZOE AESTHETICS – COMING BACK TO DARWIN

While the boundary-pushing actions of Duchamp and the conceptualists were cognitive, in the case of bio-art, we deal with a performative crossing of boundaries. The artist crosses the boundary not only between what is visual and conceptual, but – staying within the realm of physicality – between what is human and what is non-human. The conceptualization of bio-art on the aesthetic level is zoe aesthetics, which has posthumanism as its intellectual foundation; posthumanism blurs the boundaries between the human and non-human, between nature, culture, and technology, positioning humans no longer above all creation but alongside other beings.

3.1 POSTHUMANISM – DE-CENTRALIZED MAN

Being aware of the multifaceted nature of posthumanism (also entangled in social, political, ideological, ecological and religious issues), I will focus on one of its essential features, namely the decentralization of the subject,

believing that from a philosophical point of view it is of key importance for understanding this theory.

The concept of posthumanism was introduced into scientific discourse by Ihab Habib Hassan, who wrote:

> First of all, we must understand that the human form – containing human desires and all its external representations – can undergo radical changes, and therefore must be re-examined. We must also understand that five hundred years of humanism may be coming to an end because humanism is transforming into something we helplessly must call posthumanism. The Vitruvian figure of man, with arms and legs defining the measure of things, so wonderfully sketched by Leonardo, breaks out of the surrounding circles and squares and spreads out into the cosmos (Hassan, 1977, p. 843).

The goal of posthumanism is to develop a new concept of subjectivity, which will respond to the "technological mediation of human life in the Anthropocene" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 15). Posthumanism assumes anti-essentialism and, as such, "does not ask what something is, but rather how it functions and what role it plays in relations with other human and non-human agents of events" (Bakke, 2010, p. 344). Posthumanism thus breaks with the tradition of social constructivism, where what is given or existing (nature) differs from what is constructed (culture) (Braidotti, 2014, p. 47). "The separation of nature from culture," writes Bakke, "is, according to Haraway, an act of inherited violence, and to put an end to it, we must finally come to terms with the fact that there is no 'return to nature.' To fully express this state of affairs, Haraway proposes her own term – natureculture – which arises from the 'implosion of the discursive areas of nature and culture'" (Haraway, 2000, p. 105).

"Posthumanism – claims Francesca Ferrando – "is post-centralism in the sense that it does not acknowledge one, but many specific centers of interest. It rejects the centrality of the center in its single, separate form, both in its hegemonic and counter-hegemonic formulations" (Ferrando, 2016, p. 19). "Posthumanism helps to recognize different centers of interest, which are variable and unstable, nomadic and ephemeral. This perspective must be pluralistic, multi-layered, and as comprehensive and all-encompassing as possible" (Ferrando, 2016, p. 19). In posthumanism, humanity is decentered; it is no longer the Archimedean point, but one of many beings on Earth. "Not ceasing to be human," says Bakke, "we cease to be what we were until now, namely, the measure and center of all things" (Bakke, 2012, p. 7).

Posthumanism abolishes all divisions and distinctions, both horizontal and vertical. As Ferrando writes:

> Posthumanism does not follow a hierarchical system: when formulating a posthumanist perspective, there is no room for higher or lower degrees of otherness; non-human differences are as attractive as human differences. Posthumanism is a philosophy that provides the right path for thinking in a relational and multi-layered way, extending its interest to the non-human realm in a new post-dualistic, post-hierarchical manner, allowing us to foresee a post-human future in a much deeper and more objective way, thus radically expanding the boundaries of human imagination (Ferrando, 2016, p. 19).

Posthumanists propose the incorporation of the natural and non-human into the realm of the humanities, thereby elevating the relationships between the human and non-human (Bakke, 2010, p. 342). As Donna Haraway emphasizes: "[...] we must create a relationship with nature that is different from reification and possession" (Haraway, 1999, p. 315). This relationship should, according to Haraway, be based on symmetry between what is human and non-human and free from all fears associated with crossing boundaries. According to Elaine Graham, the blurring of clear boundaries between humans, machines, and non-human nature can be interpreted as a threat to the ontological hygiene of humanity, "through which, for three hundred years, Western culture has drawn false lines separating humans from nature and machines" (Graham, 2002, p. 11). In the humanist perspective, humans thus become unhygienic, ontologically infected by bacteria or viruses, not perceived as foreign and dangerous, but as part of their ontological makeup. Posthumanism seeks to root out from humanity its belief in species and moral superiority over other beings. As Lynn Margulis writes in the context: "Deeply human belief in separation from the rest of the living world, our species superiority complex, is an illusion and arrogance" (Margulis, 2000, p. 140-141).

In the posthumanist perspective, humanity can only become itself once it realizes its kinship with the living and non-living world. As Bakke writes: "Only in contact with non-humans – both inanimate and animate – do we become who we are, that is, ourselves" (Bakke, 2012, p. 74). Bakke insists that we identify with magnesium, potassium, vitamin D, platelets, saliva, bile, etc. Donna Haraway goes even further, postulating solidarity-based co-suffering with animals subjected to medical experiments.

All this leads to a decline of thinking in terms of identity in favor of relational and fluid diversity. Braidotti defends posthumanism as vision of the subject as a relational process (Braidotti, 2013, p. 41). She puts it explicitly: "My anti-humanism leads me to object to the unitary subject…" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 26). Posthumanism, in Braidotti's opinion, overcomes the humanism-antihumanism dichotomy, and "inevitably mark the crisis of the former humanist 'centre' or dominant subject-position" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 37). She defines posthuman

subject "as a relational subject constituted in and by multiplicity, that is to say a subject that works across differences and is also internally differentiated…" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 49). The posthuman subjectivity Braidotti advocates is rather materialist and vitalist than spiritualist and mentalist. Humans are therefore created in relationships and are not determined once and for all. These relationships are interspecies in nature, which means that human beings are assigned a hyphenated identity – part animal, part plant, and part inorganic, which, of course, is true from a biological perspective, but it does not reflect what a human being is.

3.2 BIOART – BETWEEN BIOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGY

Bioart is a movement in contemporary art that uses biological science methods to create works of art. The material for bio-artists consists of living cells and tissues, so-called wet media. The creator of this concept is Brazilian artist Eduardo Kac, who wrote about it:

> In 1997, I first introduced the idea and coined the term 'bioart' – initially in the context of my work *Time Capsule* (1997), which dealt with the issue of wet interfaces and the digital memory of humans resulting from the implantation of a microchip (...) By 1998, I began to use the more precise term 'transgenic art' to describe new art that uses genetic engineering to create unique living beings (Kac, 2010, p. 13).

Bioart also draws on technological infrastructure, as does any modern science, thus crossing boundaries between what is biological and what is technological. As Kac writes:

> In telepresence art, which I have been developing since 1986, people coexist with animals through tele-robotic bodies. In biotelematics art, created since 1994, biology and networking no longer function only alongside each other but are merged to produce a hybrid of what is alive and what is telematic. With the advent of transgenic art in 1998, what is living can no longer be distinguished from what is technological (Kac, 2010, p. 14).

By creating transgenic entities, bioart fits into the posthumanist perspective, in which crossing the boundary between the human and non-human is a fundamental issue. Bioart, through a new kind of emotional and intellectual aesthetic experience, attempts to acclimatize humans to the reality that is coming. From this perspective, bioart cannot be reduced solely to artistic and technological dimensions but must be seen in a social context. As Kac stated: "As a transgenic artist, I am more interested in creating transgenic social subjects than in creating genetic objects" (Kac, 2005, p. 271). Kac designed a genetically modified

petunia flower and incorporated his own DNA into its tissue. The DNA material was taken from a protein responsible for the proper functioning of the human immune system – immunoglobulin, a blood component. These proteins are responsible for recognizing what is specific and what is foreign, non-body, in order to fight off threats. The human-plant hybrid, called Edunia, had human genes that could be observed as red veins on the surface of the petals.

In bioart, we can see strong reductionist tendencies characteristic of post-humanism. Here, the human is not perceived primarily as a spiritual or mental being but as a biological one. This level allows humans to be equated with other living beings. One such work is *Genomic Portrait of Sir John Sulston* (Nobel Laureate in Physiology and Medicine) by Marc Quinn. This piece contains genetic material taken from Sulston and cloned using bacteria. The result is a genetic portrait of the donor in the form of dispersed bacterial colonies. The emphasis on materiality is what moves bioart beyond ordinary conceptual works of art. The very flesh of the artist's subject is involved in the creation of the work.

The significance of bioart is not only scientific and artistic but also philosophical, as it challenges humanity's traditional understanding of its superiority over non-human forms of life, which have always been subject to the division between subject and object. From this perspective, bioart's meaning lies in its ability to highlight the human/natural distinction and force us to reconsider the nature of the world around us.

3.3 Zoe-Aesthetics – biological eternity

One of the perspective of interpretation of bioart is zoe-aesthetics, which begins with the distinction between individual life (bios) and life in general, which is infinitive (zoe); the former refers to human life, while the latter refers to all forms of life; zoe is life which – as eternal, immortal, immaterial, and sacred energy – constantly reborn in mortal matter. As Nikolas Rose writes: "Our very understanding of who we are, what forms of life we are, and what forms of life we inhabit, has brought bios back to zoe", and "the question of the good life–bios – has become inextricably tied to the vital processes of our animal life–zoe" (Rose, 2007, p. 83). As Bakke adds: "Life as zoe thus represents a kind of generative, driving force, preceding what is human and at the same time always extending beyond what is human" (Bakke, 2010, p. 353).

Zoe-aesthetics – referring to the holistic tendency of posthumanism – advocates for a perspective in which individual and human bios dissolves into the universal and non-human zoe. The boundary between the human and non-human

thus becomes unnecessary and even harmful. However, this dissolution has metaphysical consequences, as it leads, on the one hand, to the materialization of individual life, and on the other, to quasi-immortality[2]. Materialization means perceiving humans through their physicality, which connects them to the world of living nature; immortality, in turn, refers to the world of non-living nature, of which humans, at the elemental level, are a part.

According to Bakke, the perspective of zoe-aesthetics is based on the following assumptions: (1) every life is embodied, (2) no body lives in isolation, (3) human and non-human bodies are interconnected on social, economic, biological (physiological and molecular) levels, (4) technologies are inseparable from bodies. Zoe-aesthetics, by allowing non-human bodies to be incorporated into the realm of "embodied philosophy", redefines human–non-human relations from an ontological-ethical perspective of species coexistence, according to which we – human animals – always become ourselves inextricably linked with other forms of life, such as non-human animals, plants, fungi, bacteria, viruses, and others. Some of these forms of life significantly constitute our own bodies, which are never only human, as they are created by, for example, microbes without which we could not survive. The human body – not only evolved from non-human bodies but also always exists only in a network of connections with other bodies, on which it feeds and to which it provides nourishment – is, whether we want it or not, a complex web of vital dependencies (Bakke, 2012, p. 234).

This kind of communion with other beings also occurs – Bakke notes – at the cellular level. "The number of non-human cells inhabiting the human body is ten times greater than the number of our own cells, so we can say that we are an ecosystem, not a closed and homogeneous whole" (Bakke, 2012, p. 78). This biological foundation is meant to provide the ontological basis for humanity and guarantee its immortality. As he declares: "Therefore, no human creation or heroic acts that turned the mortal Greeks into immortal heroes can compete with the durability of biological life that has lasted uninterrupted for millions of years" (Bakke, 2012, p. 238). It is worth noting, however, that humans do not compete for longevity with viruses and bacteria. The fact that the number of bacteria in the human body is greater than the number of its own cells is of no significance to the entity that thinks, feels, speaks, writes, or expresses emotions.

[2] As Deleuze writes, "only organisms die, not life itself" (Deleuze, 2007, p. 151).

CONCLUSIONS

Duchamp questioned the boundaries between art and life, between the visible and the mental, and between the creative act and the gesture. Conceptualists reduced the work of art to language and the artist to the creator of ideas. While Duchamp incorporated everyday objects into the art world, the conceptualists projected art onto everyday life. Duchamp and the conceptualists transcend boundaries horizontally: (i) art, regardless of whether it is an idea or an artifact, was art produced by humans; (ii) life that becomes art was also human life. It seems that for Duchamp and the conceptualists, the identity of man was not questioned, but at most their perception of reality.

In the case of bioart mediated by posthumanism, the crossing of boundaries has a vertical dimension; humans, despite their creative role, are reduced to the level of plants and animals; making man, on the conceptual level, equal to the latter. A piece of art is no longer merely an emanation of thought embodied (or not) in artifacts, but thought embodied in another living organism. The boundaries between author and viewer, between physical work and idea, between humans and other beings are blurred. A continuity of forms is thus assumed – as in evolutionary thinking – natura facit non saltum. We are dealing with continuity instead of isolation, separation, and hierarchy. As Braidotti emphasizes: "My monistic philosophy of becomings rests on the idea that matter, including the specific slice of matter that is human embodiment, is intelligent and self-organizing. This means that matter is not dialectically opposed to culture, nor to technological mediation, but continuous with them." (Braidotti, 2013, p. 35). While Duchamp, and particularly, the conceptualists fought against matter, bioart and zoesthetics make it the foundation of the human condition.

It seems that for contemporary humans, the boundary has lost its original meaning and has become something that should be overcome or transcended at all costs. The boundary is no longer something that defines an area of safety and certainty, giving a sense of identity, but rather something that limits, enslaves, and prevents development, understood not as individual (after all, the individual is also something limited) but as collective. The removal of boundaries is also the freedom to experiment, and thus to create something new. But what does implanting cells with which I do not even identify (if I did, every loss of blood would be a painful psychological experience) give to a plant? The hybrid that is created is not a plant-human hybrid, but a combination of human cells with plant cells, and nothing more. This apparent liberation of humans from the corset

of ontological hygiene causes humans to become enslaved by their biologicality. The new vision of humanity is not liberating but rather a reductionist perspective.

A propoenent of zoe-aesthetics, Monika Bakke, writes in a mentoring tone: "Separation is an act of pride and unjust appropriation because 'every territory encompasses or cuts across the territories of other species or cuts through the routes of animals deprived of territory and creates interspecies connections'" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2000, p. 204, in Bakke, 2012, p. 241). However, it is not entirely clear what this pride consists of; whether it is because we have no intention of identifying with algae, viruses, and bacteria, because we believe that this is beneath our human dignity. (The concept of dignity is probably not included in the reductionist vision of posthumanists).

Roman Ingarden, in his *Booklet on the Human* in the essay *On Responsibility and Its Ontological Foundations*, wrote: "If any 'open' system is to remain effectively (real) within the real world as something identical for some time, it cannot be universally open, but must be demarcated from its surroundings and partially isolated from it or – better – shielded at least from some sides" (Ingarden, 1987, p. 125). He further writes: "Empirical studies on the structure and function of organisms and the various processes occurring within them suggest that every organism is, in fact, such a "relatively isolated" system and must to some extent be so". For Ingarden, crossing boundaries means exactly the opposite of what it means in posthumanism and bioart: "Human nature – writes Ingarden – consists of the constant effort to transcend the animality inherent in humans and to rise above it through humanity and the role of humans as creators of values. Without this mission and without this effort to rise above oneself, a human falls back into their pure animality, which constitutes their death" (Ingarden, 1987, p. 25). Unfortunately, posthumanists, bioartists and zooesthetics encourage us not to cross the limits of the vertical dimension, but only to the horizontal dimension, in which man is to once again become part of the animal and plant world. It seems that in this aspect bioart and zoe aesthetics are the realization of Darwinian evolutionism in the field of art.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alberro A. (1999), *Reconsidering conceptual art: 1966-1977*, [in:] A. Alberro and B. Stimson (Eds.), *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. xvi-xxxvii.

Ayer A. J. (1936), *Language, Truth and Logic*, London: Victor Gollancz.

Bakke M. (2010), *Posthumanizm: człowiek w świecie większym niż ludzki* , [in:] J. Sokolski (Ed.), *Człowiek wobec natury – humanizm wobec nauk przyrodniczych*, Warszawa: Neriton, pp. 337-357.

Bakke M. (2012), *Bio-transfiguracje. Sztuka i estetyka posthumanizmu*, Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM.

Binkley T. (1987), *Przeciw estetyce*, trans. K. Biskupski, [in:] S. Morawski (Ed.), *Zmierzch estetyki – rzekomy czy autentyczny*, Warszawa: Czytelnik, pp. 274-288.

Braidotti R. (2013), *Posthuman*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Braidotti R. (2014), *Po człowieku*, trans. J. Bednarek, A. Kowalczyk, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.

Coutts-Smith K. (1970), *Dada*, New York: Studio Vista.

Deleuze G. (2007), *Negocjacje: 1972–1990*, trans. M. Herer, Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Dolnośląskiej Szkoły Wyższej Edukacji TWP.

Deleuze G. and Guattari F. (2000), *Co to jest filozofia*, trans. P. Pieniążek, Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo słowo/obraz terytoria.

Ferrando F. (2016), *Posthumanizm, transhumanizm, antyhumanizm, metahumanizm oraz nowy materializm. Różnice i relacje*, Rocznik Lubuski 42, part 2, pp. 13-26.

Graham E. L. (2002), *Representations of the Post/human. Monsters, Aliens and Others in Popular Culture*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Haraway D. (1999), *The Promises of Monsters. A Regenerative Politics from Inappriоprate/d Other*, [in:] J. Wolmark (ed.), *Cybersexualities. A Reader on Feminist Theory, Cyborgs, and Cyberspace*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 314-366.

Haraway D. (2000), *How Like a Leaf. An Interview with Thyrza Nichols Goodeve*, London: Routledge.

Hassan I. (1977), *Prometheus as Performer: Toward Posthumanism Culture?*, The Georgia Review 31, no. 4, pp. 830-850.

Ingarden R. (1987), *O naturze ludzkiej*, [in:] *Książeczka o człowieku*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, pp. 19-26.

Kac E. (2005), *Telepresence and Bio Art. Networking Humans, Rabbits, and Robots*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Kac E. (2010), *Bio Art: Od "Genesis" do "Natural History of Enigma"*, trans. M. Sułkowska-Janowska, Folia Philosophica 28, pp. 13-37.

Kosuth J. (1987), *Sztuka po filozofii*, [in:] S. Morawski (Ed.), *Zmierzch estetyki – rzekomy czy autentyczny*, Warszawa: Czytelnik, pp. 239-258.

Kosuth J. (1999a), *Art After Philosophy*, [in:] A. Alberro, B. Stimson (Eds.), *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 158-176.

Kosuth J. (1999b), *1975*, [in:] A. Alberro, B. Stimson (Eds.), *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 334-349.

Lippard L.R. (1999), *Introduction to 557,087*, [in:] A. Alberro, B. Stimson (Eds.), *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 178-187.

Lippard L.R. and Chandler J. (1999), *The Dematerialization of Art*, [in:] A. Alberro, B. Stimson (Eds.), *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*,Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 46-51.

Margulis L. (2000), *Symbiotyczna planeta*, trans. M. Ryszkiewicz, Warszawa: CiS.

Meyer U. (1972), *Conceptual Art*, New York: EP Dutton & Co. Inc.

Rose N. (2007), *The Politics of Life Itself. Biomedicine, Power, and Subjectivity in the Twenty-First Century*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Sanouillet M. and Peterson E. (Eds.) (1975), *Salt Seller. The Writings of Marcel Duchamp*, London: Thames & Hudson.

Tomkins C. (2001), *Duchamp. Biografia*, trans. I. Chlewińska, Poznań: Zysk i S-ka.

O PRZEKRACZANIU GRANIC

S t r e s z c z e n i e

W artykule zarysowano problematykę przekraczanie granic w sztuce począwszy od Marcela Duchampa, poprzez konceptualizm a skończywszy na bioarcie i zoeestetyce. Skoncentrowano się na konceptualnej stronie tego zjawiska, pomijając jedocześnie jego wymiar społeczny, polityczny i kulturowy. Wskazano, że owo przekraczanie granic ewoluowało od wymiaru konceptualnego do fizycznego. Krytycznie oceniono w tym kontekście podejście posthumanistyczne, w którym to przekraczanie granic prowadzi do umieszczenia człowieka nie w wymiarze wertykalnym, lecz horyzontalnym, redukując go do świata roślin i zwierząt. Wskazano również, iż w tej perspektywie współczesne scharakteryzowane tu nurty nawiązują wprost do Darwinowskiej wizji życia, w której to granice na poziomie mikro i makroewolucji zostają zniesione.

Słowa kluczowe: granice; Duchamp; konceptualizm; bioart; posthumanizm; zeoestetyka