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Electronification of Images: Zen, Shell, Schizophrenia

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Chanwoong Lee

Nam June Paik's oeuvre can be divided roughly into three periods of time. His Fluxus and neo-Dada art in Germany is the first; secondly, his interest drastically moved towards TV and video art from 1963, which earned him worldwide reputation; and robot and laser account for the last period of his artistic trajectory. Now, what we have to think about is as follows. Where is the coherence that penetrates the diverse phases of Paik's art? The distance between his action-music and video art seems particularly considerable at a glance, and so how do we have to approach the gap? Although the answer to this question can be given from various perspectives, this paper aims to examine several points from a philosophical perspective.

1. Zen Buddhism and Electron: Nothingness

Robert Rauschenberg, John Cage, Nam June Paik produced common works around the same time. Rauschenberg creates 'white painting,' Cage, 'white music,' and Paik, 'white cinema.'¹ These might be called 'The Three Whites' of the 1950~60s. These works all show conditions in art that neo-Dada and concept art have reached. Earlier artists were devoted to distinguish harmony from noise, or if going further, they still focused on creating dissonance that could coexist with consonance. On the other hand, what these artists questioned is the division between harmony and noise, form and line itself. Rauschenberg declared, "Looking closely over a white canvas, one can see dust floating." In the same context, borrowing the terms of cybernetics, Paik said, "The signal, where the message is sent, plays [an] equally important role as the

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Robert Rauschenberg, <White Painting>(1951); John Cage, <4'33"> (1952); Nam June Paik, <Zen for Film> (1964).

signal, where message is not sent.”

The will to expel the lines whose forms are not discernible from a canvas, the will to remove dissonance, considered as noise, from music. These artists regard such wills as unfair, because all sounds have equal rights. When Cage sat quietly in front of the piano for 4 minutes 33 seconds, what he wanted audiences to hear was the sounds which they themselves produced. The Three Whites make us realize that only when we arrive at an absolute zero point, the discriminative division between form and line, harmony and noise is nullified. Here all formative elements claim their equal rights.

In connection with this, it seems necessary to emphasize once again that Paik was deeply influenced by Zen Buddhism, but interestingly, before the content of Zen Buddhism, the historical fact of this relationship of influence itself seems to be a cybernetic phenomenon. As well known, Paik began to be interested in Zen through Cage. Perhaps this opportunity may have been the moment that the topology of his thinking became complicated. It seems that in front of young Paik Korea and Europe were standing like a binary opposition. Korea and East Asia were located in the past, Europe and the USA in the future. But now the divisions between East Asia and Europe, East and West, tradition and innovation, past and future are complicatedly entangled with each other, intervening one another layer by layer, and start to draw complex circuits. Becoming skeptical of the composition method of Western music, Cage was absorbed in Japanese Zen, and Paik discovered Zen from Cage in Germany. In fact, Paik was not influenced by Zen itself, but by the effect that Cage received from it. It was this moment that future media and traditional Eastern thought formed vast feedback in Paik's world.

Zen is not already completed, systematic thought, but the practice of constantly erasing distinctions that occur in one's mind. Because the distinction between what is worth and what not is formed when we are not aware, we can reach a mindset that is totally empty only by realizing and erasing it. For example, in one dialogue a disciple asked his teacher whether Buddha exists in ordinary minds, not in Enlightened minds. According to the teacher, however, such distinctions and inquiries

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Huang Po, *On the Transmission of Mind*, Yoo-Jin Cheong, trans. ed., Seoul: Kyung-Seo Won, 2009, pp.157-8:
 "But is the Buddha the ordinary mind or the Enlightened mind?" "Where on earth do you keep your 'ordinary mind' and your 'Enlightened mind'?" "In the teaching of the Three Vehicles it is stated that there are both. Why does Your Reverence deny it?" "In the teaching of the Three Vehicles it is clearly explained that the ordinary and Enlightened minds are illusions. You don't understand. All this clinging to the idea of things existing is to mistake vacuity for the truth. How can such concepts not be illusory? [...] If you would only rid yourselves of the concepts of ordinary and Enlightened, you would find that there is no other Buddha." (Translator's note: English translation from *The Zen Teaching of Huang Po: On the Transmission of Mind*, rendered in English by John Blofeld, New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1958, p.57-8.) It is known to be John Cage's favorite Buddhist teaching.

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Nam June Paik, 1964, "Letter to George Maciunas," in Edith Decker and Iremeline Lebeer, eds., *Nam June Paik: Du Cheval à Christo et Autres Écrits*, Bruxelles: Lebeer Hossmann, 1993, p.202.

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Even if it looks like discontinuity that he moved from action-music to video art, note that in the background his constant interest in electrons forms continuity. See Nam June Paik, "Marcel Duchamp n'a pas pensé à la vidéo: Entretien avec Iremeline Lebeer (Bochum, 16 décembre 1974)," in Edith Decker and Iremeline Lebeer, eds., *op.cit.*, pp.131-2: "And how did you change your path from music and actions to happenings?" "The transition from one to the other was done very gradually. I knew that electronic music was limited, and also knew that someone would do electronic TV art some day. But I did not think it would be me. I thought it was rather a painter's work. Then one day I thought why not me?"

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Richard Webb, "Nothingness: Computers are Powered by Holes", *New Scientist*, Issue 2839, 19 Nov 2011, pp.46-50.

themselves obstruct Buddha.² In the same way as this teaching, a series of axiological distinctions around sounds disappear in Cage's silence.

In other words, the divisions between harmony and discord, between music and noise, moreover, between player and listener disappear, and in absolute silence finally all sounds with equal rights whisper.

Paik also aggressively challenged to tacit dualism, the premise of western modern thought and art. And behind this challenge lies Zen's fundamental and deconstructive question that was stimulated by Cage. On the other hand, when looking at it from Paik's personal and psychological level, he might have wanted to escape from his poor position within the division between Asia and Europe, traditional and modern. So to speak, he turned the sense of shame, which he felt due to his origin from the eastern corner of the world, into a destructive weapon to overturn the tradition of European culture. "Yellow peril, c'est moi."³ And it may be said that he found the justification for this in Zen logic.

It is not to say here that Paik abused Zen for his artistic ambitions. He was honest, and all this melted into his work as a kind of humor. Therefore, it seems he wanted to go over and destroy all kinds of boundaries, riding on Zen. In this way we can understand the continuity hidden between his Fluxus and video art,⁴ because video art or electronic art is also based on a certain nothingness or void.

When looking at the history of computing from a philosophical viewpoint, it is interesting to find that the working of a semiconductor is fundamentally based on a certain nothingness.⁵ The history of rectifying devices starts from galena, and then continues to transistor and semiconductor. The flow of electricity is defined as the opposite direction to that of negatively charged electrons. In other words, electricity is understood as the movement of the empty space between electrons, flowing against the direction of the electrons. This empty space was appropriately called a hole by Heisenberg. Therefore, the hole is nothingness, and yet, because of that, it enables electricity to flow. On the circuit which operates on the power of this 'nothingness,' all hierarchical boundaries between cultures are deconstructed and all self-contained narratives are damaged. Instead, we are given only endless fragmentizations, new connections and

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The line for Paik in <Zen for Head> (1962) continued in the form of a scanning line in <Zen for TV>(1963).

boundless possibilities.

Of course, it was not Paik who created TV monitors and the electronic age. However, it was he who first and most shrewdly grasped what this new medium means and what kind of new things this vast flow of electrons would bring to our sensibility and thinking. The line of electrons that is left after all forms are disintegrated is a rare thing that is ontologically qualified for filling a space where Zen is practised.⁶ We can detect this point in <TV Buddha>¹⁹⁷⁴. This absolute deterritorialization is a zone where emptiness is moving, and it points to a certain point on which all semantic articulations disappear, the very navel out of which all possible articulations within new connection will pour. In short, the line of electrons is not different from the space for Zen. This is perhaps what is so intensely demonstrated by <The Blue Buddha>¹⁹⁹². Here the form of Buddha is revealed only by emptiness of neon.

2. Cicada's Shell : Lucretius and Synesthesia

Every video artist is a Lucretian. Lucretius was a very disparate thinker in the Platonic tradition. In the history of western philosophy Plato established the fundamental division between form and image, essence and phenomenon. What we perceive and sense is all just an image, and the image itself falls short of the Form that maintains self-identity. As everyone knows, Plato called this Form Idea. Therefore, what we see, touch and taste falls behind the insensible Form, and only lingers around it. And depending on the fidelity of its imitation, the distance to the original Form is determined.

By developing radical atomism Lucretius sought to incapacitate this division. All things in the world, whether physical or spiritual, are created when various small particles are combined, and disappear when they are disintegrated. The Universe is a mass game of particles, moving incredibly fast. Here is no room for the division between essence and phenomenon. In relation to perception Lucretius developed a very impressive theory. Particles are constantly released from the surface of a

thing. When they touch our eyes, as a result, we see the image. As if cicadas cast off their shells in summer, things are constantly shedding off their extremely thin shells.⁷ We cannot say that this is merely an absurd fancy of ancient people, because analogue films or sensors in digital cameras catch particles from objects.

As a picture is the movement of particles, so the creation of an image is irrelevant to our awakening. Whether we are awake or in sleep, particles form on our cornea or brain screen.⁸ The Universe is inundation of images, and in the Universe the image of reality and the image of dream are not divided. Paik also believes that an abstract figure can be realized through electronic image. When Paik talks about a picture and the novelty of TV, he becomes closer to Lucretius than everyone else. He does not say that TV broadcasts the image of reality far out, but he thinks that reality itself mingles in real-time. Image is reality, and reality is just a multi-layer image.

In <TV Garden>^{1974, 2002}, installed in the Nam June Paik Art Center, he installed videos amongst densely planted trees. It seems he does not feel any ontological difference between artificial objects and natural objects. Citing Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal*, he said that nature is replaced by video space. This remark expresses not a methodological metaphor, but real equivalence. As a video artist Paik feels comfortable in Baudelaire's view on nature, because the poet defines nature as overflowing of sensitive images into each other.⁹ Together with the French poet, Paik simply wants to say: "What you are looking at is just a mysterious flash of 60 Hz wave."

However, the problem becomes somewhat more complicated when Paik technically distinguishes movie and TV. The reason is because, even though all media reach the point on which the division between essence and image collapses in a Lucretian sense, the distinctiveness of TV as a medium exists in a deeper place. According to Paik, while (analogue) movies capture particles released from nature in two dimensions, an electronic TV transforms them into lines, according to technical rules. "Television does not show image, only lines, like weaving. [...] As television space doesn't exist, all spatial information had to be translated into lines

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Lucretius, *On the Nature of the Universe (De Rerum Natura)*, Ronald Melville, trans., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997, IV, lines 51, 55-60:

"[...] we must call as it were their films or bark

[...]

Many things throw off bodies,
some rarefied
As bonfires throw off smoke or fires heat,
And others denser and more closely
knit Like the thin coats cicadas
often drop In summer, and when calves
in birth throw off
The caul from the body's surface."

8

Lucretius, *On the Nature of the Universe*, IV, lines 30-34:

"Exist what we call images of things;
Which as it were peeled off from
the surfaces
Of objects, fly this way and that
through the air;
These same, encountering us in
wakeful hours,
Terrify our minds, and also in sleep."

9

Nam June Paik, 1972,
"Communication-Art," in Edith Decker
and Iremeline Lebeer, eds., *op.cit.*,
p142: "If you replace Baudelaire's pre-
Marconian "nature" to our pan-cyber-
nated "video-sphere," all words and
insinuation of the symbolic poem
becomes a "clear-cut definition" of
what artist should be doing today as the
aerial antenna of this society. We have
million bits of UFO daily and Radar is
nothing but a two-way Television." "Like
endless echoes that from somewhere
far beyond, / mingling, in one profound
and cryptic whole unite, / Vast as the
twin immensities of night and light, /
So do all colours, sounds, and perfumes
correspond." (The second quote is
Baudelaire's poem, cited by Nam
June Paik.)

10

Nam June Paik, 1980, "Random Access Information," in Edith Decker and Iremeline Lebeer, eds., *op.cit.*, p.110, emphasis added by the author.

and points without layers [...] in television, there is no direct relation between the reality and the images, only coded system. So we enter the temporary dimension."¹⁰

Although here he speaks of reality and image separately, he is merely repeating how it is normally said. What is important is that in the case of TV technical and social rules intervene between reception and transmission. Therefore, one should say that in the case of TV it is a technical and social system as a whole that captures particles released from the surface of things. And in its transmission, technical editing and social modification intervene. What Paik discovered from TV media was exactly this gap between reception and transmission.

This is an important point, because it seems that it is exactly what Paik intends to reveal in a series of his works using television sets. In his view, the use of this gap can lead the contemporary world to two extreme poles on a global level, that is, decentralized feedback systems or centralized cultural imperialism. The interesting thing is that his way of revealing the gap in media lies in the mobilization of synesthesia. His video art uses television sets as a medium, and it is not limited to the visual range. In many cases it stimulates even a sense of hearing or touching. Imagine a large number of his works that visualize a symphony or use parts of the body as media. His synesthetic creation makes the viewer feel dizzy. This is another element that transpierces his entire artistic path. In other words, like the dead bull's head that he displayed, his television sets put pressure on viewers through the five senses.

Then, what is his artistic strategy to trigger synesthesia, when he cannot display a bull's head, in other words, when he uses a video synthesizer and television sets? It comes from image distortion and line deformation. For example, when the outline of a dancer's movement is exaggerated, destroyed or repeated, we experience more than a visual sense(<Global Groove>¹⁹⁷³). Why is that so? Let's return to Lucretius's thinking once more. Based on his atomism, Lucretius explains the reason for the difference between a visual sense and others. In the case of the visual sense, minute particles are released evenly from the surface, so there is not much distortion. On the other hand, for a sense of touch or smell,

when released, particles are disturbed. Therefore, it causes confusion and heterogeneity in perception.¹¹

Unlike the visual sense, for the senses of smell and hearing, the movement of particles is torn and shaken. Therefore, we can say that Paik made images like smoke or heat and transformed the visual sense into the senses of touch and hearing. Here the flow of particles becomes heterogenized and the visual sense feels something uncomfortable. And it makes way for other senses to act. According to Lucretius, viewers feel that “there are no straight openings to the paths.” By this, Paik calls us not into this side of an image, but into the deep inside. Seeing a dropped TV monitor, he instantly put a diode into opposite direction. This famous episode summarizes the whole problem of his video art (<Zen for TV>¹⁹⁶³),¹² because this work and episode draw us into the depth of its mechanism from the surface of the media. In this way Paik entered into the condition of media before anyone else and more sensitively than everyone else.

The very space opened up between these two poles is presumably the condition that made Paik’s video art possible. On the one hand, TV media is a receiver that captures particles released from things. On the other hand, when the particles are codified as the flow of electrons in order to be transmitted, it is possible that social power can intervene. In this open space Paik could carry out simultaneously creation and criticism through media. On the one hand, boundless multiplication, transformation, distortion, cross of images were his playgrounds. On the other hand, he tried to warn that this room for playfulness could fall into the black hole of cultural imperialism as much as global diversity.¹³ In such a way, the characteristic of synesthetic works comes from agitating the movement of particles, and this allows us to enter into the production and process of media.

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Lucretius, *On the Nature of the Universe*, IV, lines 90-94:e
 “Again, the reason why all smell,
 smoke, heat,
 So widely is that they come up from
 the depths
 And in their tortuous course are split
 apart,
 And there are no straight openings
 to the paths
 Of exit, through which they can push
 out together.”

12

Nam June Paik, 1963, “Afterlude
 to the Exposition of Experimental
 Television,” in Edith Decker and
 Iremeline Lebeer, eds., *op.cit.*, p.209:
 “I had put just a diode into opposite
 direction, and got a ‘waving’ negative
 Television.”

13

Nam June Paik, 1964, “Letter to
 George Maciunas,” in Edith Decker
 and Iremeline Lebeer, eds., *op.cit.*,
 p.198: “Above all I am against any
 centralization prescribed in advance.”
 Nam June Paik, 1970, “Global Groove
 and Video Common Market,” in Edith
 Decker and Iremeline Lebeer, eds.,
op.cit., p.154: “But, ironically, today’
 s video culture is far more nationalistic
 than print media.”

3. Schizophrenia: From Body to Medium

From Paik, schizophrenic symptoms frequently appear. First, let’s consider it in relation to his works. For instance, even in his early work <Symphony for 20 Rooms>¹⁹⁶¹ the sounds that have almost no relations

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Nam June Paik, "Marcel Duchamp n'a pas pensé à la vidéo: Entretien avec Iremeline Lebeer (Bochum, 16 décembre 1974)," in Edith Decker and Iremeline Lebeer, eds., *op.cit.*, p.134. In the same context, see Nam June Paik, 1963, "Afterlude to the Exposition of Experimental Television," in Edith Decker and Iremeline Lebeer, eds., *op.cit.*, p.211: "The simultaneous perception of the parallel flows of 13 independent TV movements can perhaps realize this old dream of mystics."

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For instance, Nam June Paik, "Letter to Wolfgang Steinecke" in Edith Decker and Iremeline Lebeer, eds., *op.cit.*, pp.239, 241.

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Nam June Paik, "Marcel Duchamp n'a pas pensé à la vidéo: Entretien avec Iremeline Lebeer (Bochum, 16 décembre 1974)," in Edith Decker and Iremeline Lebeer, eds., *op.cit.*, p.133.

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Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991, pp.31, 162-5; Hunyee Jung, "Nam June Paik's 'Zen Time,'" *THE MISULSAHAKBO: Reviews on the Art History*, Issue 28, 2007, p.197.

to one another are juxtaposed. "Water flows. An old pendulum clock strikes loud. There is a tape recorder. (1): mezzo piano, every three minutes for three seconds it sounds like the following. (1) a sound of a bell (Buddhism? Christianity?) (2) 2000 Hz 1/10sec. sine waves (3) French Radio TV (French female presenter) (4) announcement of Cologne Railway Station..."

The goal of this work is to realize pluralism of time. When viewers walk around 20 rooms, following different paths, the choice and chance can constantly make time furcate. Here the identity of the artist is retreated or deleted. The world is schizophrenically put together. "Becoming Fluxus is to hide one's ego."¹⁴

Paik's journey is also one example of schizophrenic becoming. Arriving at the opposite end from the eastern end of the Eurasian continent, Paik was overcome with a fear that he himself would not fit in as a mere foreign element. However, as previously mentioned, in a short time this is turned around as a source of creation. In the letters he wrote in the late 1950s several passages in which he apologized for his grammatical mistakes are found.¹⁵ Immediately, he wanted himself to become rather the incorrect or meaningless within the language of western culture.

Also, when he entered into a new region, he had to create ceaselessly in order to step over the threshold that the place required. "I wanted to go back to New York, but had to bring something to show at that time. I made robots and jumped into color TV work."¹⁶ Around that time, New York was the place where the most cutting-edge technology and art gathered, and according to such a geographical requirement, he transformed himself. This is a certain transformation, but not a transformation by the artist's intention. What defines this transformation lies in the threshold and movement of the territories. Paik constantly renovated, perceiving the cultural characters and requirements of the regions, Korea, Japan, Germany and the USA.

Fredric Jameson referred to schizophrenia as a distinct feature of postmodernism and mentioned Paik as a typical example.¹⁷ One can agree with his comment, except for his negative tone. It would be better for us to consider other thinkers who positively conceptualized schizophrenia. Deleuze and Guattari in *L'Anti-Oedipe*¹⁹⁷² creatively interpret

schizophrenia, and from this they derive a new model of thinking, practice and creation. The schizophrenic subject is not premised upon transcendental self-identity, but constantly changes and creates, according to a series of affects. Only at the end of the becoming, he finally confirms himself as one surplus. “There is the Nietzschean subject who passes through a series of states, and who identifies these states with the names of history: every name in history is I...”¹⁸ Only when we keep this schizophrenic subject in mind, we are able to understand Paik’s strange declaration. “Yellow Peril, c’est moi.” Paik defined himself only with the affects and actions, with which he poured out disorder and subversion within western modern art, which he was longing for, leading East Asian legendary figures.

When he said, “I am a baby TV”¹⁹ like a schizophrenic, the power of great affirmatives and playfulness brims over. And this saying reminds us of Freud’s interpretation on Leonardo Da Vinci and Deleuze and Guattari’s reinterpretation. Childhood is not oppressed as a bygone era, but operates as the underlying past that co-exists with the present. Simultaneous “childhood block.” Thinking of childhood is not to look back on what is forgotten, but to look for something to push the present into the line of becoming.²⁰ In order to produce a new creation with TV media, Paik surrounded it with his own childhood, tradition of East Asia, the Neolithic period of humans, and pushed them through.

Video image is in essence a schizophrenic way of thinking. Schizophrenia, which does not secure self-identity, does not distinguish image from essence, and does not understand tenses other than the present tense. Paik says that often video art evokes the Neolithic period.²¹ This reminds me of the investigation of Eisenstein and Pasolini. If there is a language for movie, they think that this should be close to the communication of primitive men, who did not use articulated languages. To a Bushman all situations are segmented with the images of the present or infinitive like ‘lion-follow-I-run away.’ The language for movie or video art is located under the syntactic structure, based on double articulation. In this sense one can say that it is a-syntactic.

This characteristic of image makes historical meaning, which

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Deleuze et Guattari, *L’Anti-OEdipe*, Minuit, 1972, p.28. Artaud, who the authors consider as most important in relation to schizophrenia, says: “I am becoming God, I am becoming woman, I was Joan of Arc and I am Heliogabalus and the Great Mongol, I am a Chinaman, a redskin, a Templar, I was my father and I was my son.” (p.101)

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Nam June Paik, “Marcel Duchamp n’a pas pensé à la vidéo: Entretien avec Iremeline Lebeer (Bochum, 16 décembre 1974),” in Edith Decker and Iremeline Lebeer, eds., *op.cit.*, p.136.

20

Sigmund Freud, “Leonardo Da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood,” *Art, Literature, Psychoanalysis*. Jang-Jin Cheong, trans. Paju: The Open Books co., 2003, p.249; Deleuze et Guattari, *Mille Plateaux*, Minuit, 1980, p.360.

21

Nam June Paik, “DNA Is Not Racism,” in Edith Decker and Iremeline Lebeer, eds., *op.cit.*, p.65: “Audio-visual structure of memory.”

22

Nam June Paik, "Marcel Duchamp n'a pas pensé à la vidéo: Entretien avec Iremeline Lebeer (Bochum, 16 décembre 1974)," in Edith Decker and Iremeline Lebeer, eds., *op.cit.*, p.135: "What does Global Groove mean?" / "Global Groove means Global Music. Festival, a kind of imaginary video-landscape that anticipates what is going to happen when all the countries in the world become interconnected via cable television."

a particular culture accumulated with the past tense, relativized, nullified and sometimes an object of ridicule. Paik's own cosmopolitanism relies on the very nature of image. He said that if many regions in the global village could communicate equally with each other, that is because video can deal with images as events without tenses. That may be what <Global Groove>¹⁹⁶⁵ represents.²²

However, experiencing a great change between a battle and a child, some coherent attitude flows in the deep inside of Paik's life. That is, he does not reduce varied things into an abstraction of a single thing, but externally connects the varied things with one another, and arranges and synthesizes them. In this sense, this artistic thesis is clearly and humorously summarized in <The More The Better>¹⁹⁹⁸, most famous among Koreans. And the musical arrangement of <Symphony for 20 Rooms> heralds the global simultaneity of <Global Groove>. From <TV Cello>¹⁹⁶⁴ to <The Rehabilitation of Genghis Khan>¹⁹⁹³, the heterogeneous arrangement of musical instrument-media-living forms continues. In this coherence we can say that the practice of schizophrenic synthesis has advanced from body to media. That is, during the Fluxus era of the 1950s, Paik performed schizophrenic resistance or defiance through his body, but after entering New York he could practice new creation through video, which is schizophrenic itself.

4. Conclusion: Galena and Diode

Through Paik's video works, we move from meaning to device, news to image, the surface of a picture to its mechanism, one picture frame to multi-picture connections. This kind of deconstruction and transference was a motive that coherently guided Paik's art work, and as many researchers have already pointed out, its goal was to connect the global world of the 1960s in a decentralizing way and to form immediate contemporary time and space.

What we have so far examined in this paper is what condition enabled this kind of art practice. I have discussed it from the three

perspectives: electronic Zen Buddhism, Lucretius' atomism and schizophrenic synthesis. While the condition during the Fluxus period was the concept of Zen Buddhism or practice of Zen, in video art the condition was material – the line of electrons, in other words, emptiness. Therefore, during his early years Paik seemed to carry out an Idea, and it was mainly achieved through his body. However, in the middle phase, aiming at the material conditions, such as TV and video, he seemed to struggle to explore their possibilities and at the same time to solve problems. Between Paik's body that smashed down the violin and the Genghis Khan monitor riding a bike, both discontinuity and coherence, mentioned above, coexist.

Finally, can we say that during the Fluxus years Paik himself was a kind of galena? Galena is a mineral that was used for rectification and amplification before transistor, but due to its typical instability it was replaced.²³ If we do not derogate this instability, or rather, we regard that as something like aleatorism unique to Fluxus, it may be said that Paik was a galena that rectified the flow of art and amplified new signals. Therefore, it is not at all strange that Paik opened the age of video art, putting a diode in opposite direction. #3

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