
Visions of a Timeline: A Videographic, Tool Critical Perspective on the Media Suite's Video Annotation Functionalities

Christian Olesen^{*1}

¹University of Amsterdam [Amsterdam] – Netherlands

Abstract of the answer to the call for proposals

Contributing to the DARIAH 2021 event's sub-theme of The Making of Interfaces this paper presents on-going research on the documentation of the CLARIAH Media Suite research environment's interface in a historical, tool critical perspective.

As the central university level access point in the Netherlands for digital, AV collections and tools for analysis of AV materials, the Media Suite is a hub for digital media studies scholarship. Among other collections, the environment offers students and researchers access to the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision's broadcast collections and to film and film-related collections from Eye Filmmuseum. The collections can be researched with a number of tools ranging from visualization of word frequencies in metadata, data enrichments and video annotation tools.

In its combined effort to make digital collections and tools available, the Media Suite's teaching initiative Learn is committed to developing tool critical perspectives on the environment's interface and encourages users to reflect critically on the ways in which the Media Suite conditions their research (Koolen et al., 2018). With regard to especially the environment's video annotation functionalities, the Media Suite team attends to the ways in which these relate to previous multimedia scholarship and depart from it, in order to gain a deeper understanding of how the Media Suite functionalities shape qualitative analysis of AV materials. This endeavour focuses in particular on the interaction between users and the environment's timeline and the creation of personal collections of and thematic relationships between clips through segmentation and annotation.

This initiative entails two main components, respectively: (1) to carry out a comparative analysis between previous multimedia scholarship and the Media Suite to understand its timeline in a historical perspective as a tool for knowledge production (Rosenberg & Grafton, 2010), and (2) to critically reflect on the Media Suite as a networked infrastructure on the web in relation to other online (formal and informal) archival resources. In order to achieve the first aim, Media Suite Learn documents the ways in which film and media CD-ROM projects throughout the 1990s and 2000s - in particular the Labyrinth Project, The Virtual Screening Room and Hyperkino - offered access to archival film and television, so as to compare different modes of interaction with audiovisual items, playback modes, timeline organization, annotation approaches to ultimately discern different knowledge regimes. For the second aim, screen recordings are made of online research in and outside the Media Suite to critically compare different contemporary modes of navigation and interaction with

^{*}Speaker

audiovisual items. Based on the recordings made, a videographic work is produced that analyzes the affordances and methodological implications of both historical and contemporary multimedia scholarship.

Currently the first phase is being carried out following the principles of CD-ROM documentation formulated by Sandra Fauconnier (2013), while material is being gathered and organized that documents the Media Suite interface's development since 2014. At DARIAH 2021 the implications of the project will be presented and sequences of the videographic work discussed in relation to the Media Suite's tool critical principles.

References

Estrada, Liliana Melgar, Eva Hielscher, Marijn Koolen, Christian Gosvig Olesen, Julia Noordegraaf and Jaap Blom. "Film analysis as annotation: Exploring current tools and their affordances." *The Moving Image* 17, no 2 (Spring 2017): 40-70.

Fauconnier, Sandra. "The CD-ROM Cabinet." In *Speculative Scenarios*, edited by Annet Dekker 115-118. Eindhoven: Baltan Laboratories, 2013.

Koolen, Marijn, Jasmijn van Gorp and Jacco van Ossenbruggen. "Toward a model for digital tool criticism: Reflection as integrative practice." *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities* 34, no. 2 (June 2019): 368-385. <https://doi.org/10.1093/llc/fqy048>
Rosenberg, Daniel and Anthony Grafton. *Cartographies of Time. A History of the Timeline*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010.

Keywords: Tool Criticism, Videographic Criticism, Video Annotation, Research Infrastructure, AV Archives