Jerzy Kaczmarek[*]

iD https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8314-199X

VISUAL SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH USING FILM AND VIDEO, ON THE EXAMPLE OF URBAN STUDIES

Abstract. The use of film and video in sociological research, or social sciences in general, has a long and well-established tradition. Motion pictures have, on the one hand, been the object of analysis, as in the case of sociology of film, and, on the other, they have been used as a research tool. Moreover, films can be scientific statements in their own right, as is the case with sociological film.

The use of visual methods based on both still and moving pictures works very well for exploring the physical and social space of the city. The article looks at ways of using films and the actual process of obtaining film data in sociological research. Works featuring urban themes will be considered as special cases to illustrate the author's reflections. It is noteworthy that early cinema already showed urban space, as exemplified in the films by the Lumière brothers who, incidentally, treated their motion pictures primarily as a scientific tool.

City-related topics appear in research by film sociologists who analysed films featuring urban themes, among other things. Later, sociologists themselves began to use cameras in their studies and teaching. One way of using a camera for these purposes is simply to record observations of certain places and people's behaviour. These video recordings are subsequently analysed, applying various methods developed in the field of sociology and other sciences. Another technique, well-suited for exploring urban space, is a mobile camera, used for example for video tours, as introduced by Sarah Pink. And, finally, sociological film focusing on the city plays a vital role in social research.

Keywords: film and sociology, sociology of film, visual research, sociological film, city.

Introduction

Sociologists became interested in film as an object of analysis quite early on. The book *Zur Soziologie des Kino. Die Kino-Unternehmung und die sozialen Schichten ihrer Besucher* (Altenloh 1914) by Emilie Altenloh appeared in 1914. This was her published PhD dissertation, which she had defended a year earlier. It laid the foundations for a new sub-discipline, namely the sociology of cinema or film. Apart from analysing the film industry and cinema audiences, the author also reflected on films themselves. The focus on works and the search for their social

---

[*] Prof. UAM, Faculty of Sociology Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Wydział Socjologii UAM, ul. Szamarzewskiego 89, 60-568 Poznań, e-mail: jkaczmar@amu.edu.pl

content became one of the fields of interest within the sociology of film in the coming years. Polish sociology also developed the interest in this sub-discipline, as heralded by the 1919 short article by Jan Stanisław Bystroń entitled simply *Socjologia kina* [Sociology of Cinema] (B y s t r o ń 1975).

The camera as a research tool was introduced into sociological research in the mid-twentieth century. Not only did sociologists and representatives of other social sciences analyse existing film material but they also produced (or commissioned) new material for research purposes. The pioneers of such research include Ray L. Birdwhistell, Thomas Luckmann, Peter Gross, Charles Goodwin and Leonard Henny, to mention just a few. If we were to summarise this early period of sociological research using film and video, it would be best to quote the American sociologist Gary L. Albrecht:

> Videotape and film can be fruitfully used to define the research problem, collect records of behavior, test the representative nature of these records, construct hypotheses, and build theory. When employed, these tools often capture emergent structure, serendipitous acts, and secrets. Furthermore, when video methods are used in conjunction with interviews, they often raise and answer questions about the correspondence between attitudes and behavior, the existence of differential interpretations, and reasons for behavior. Finally, such immersion in the behavior of others elicits a vocabulary of motives and provokes serious discussion about values and ethics (A l b r e c h t 1985: 325–326).

Sociological explorations that involve video and film can be carried out in many areas that belong to different sub-disciplines. One of the areas is the physical and social space of the city, which seems to be particularly well-suited for studying using film and video cameras due to its visual layer. In my article, I would like to present the possibilities of applying film-related visual techniques in sociological research. The review of these applications from a historical perspective aims to show the research possibilities of the film medium. These possibilities will be presented using the examples of urban studies and studies of urban spaces. This research issue has a long-standing tradition in sociology and still occupies an important place in it, as evidenced by the vitality of a sub-discipline such as urban sociology. The article comprises several parts. First, methods of using film in sociological research are discussed. Next comes a discussion of the sociological potential that can be found in documentaries and ethnographic urban films. Subsequently, examples of sociological film analysis are presented. The next section focuses on using film as a research tool. Finally, theory and practice in sociological film are discussed.

Film in sociological research

Film and video can be used in sociological research in many different ways. As indicated above, film and video recordings have been and are used as material for sociological analyses. If this material is created prior to the analysis, it is

treated as an existing document. Studies of wedding films can serve as an example in this regard (see Dudek 2009). On the other hand, film materials can be created for the purpose of a research project. In the latter case, a researcher or his/her collaborator operates the camera and records the material. Another way of obtaining film footage is to give cameras to research participants, asking them to film places they are in and the people around. Recordings obtained in this way, either existing material or that produced for research purposes, can be used in various ways. First of all, it can be used for further sociological study of social reality. Sociologists use many methods of analysing film images in their research. Some are borrowed from other sciences while others were developed within the discipline itself. The most popular methods include iconographic-iconological analysis, the documentary method, content analysis, the semiological method, ethnomethodological conversation analysis, grounded theory, discourse analysis, and visual analysis within hermeneutical sociology of knowledge. Raw research material can also be used for teaching or illustrative purposes when one wants to enrich the content of a lecture or scientific text with a fragment of a film that then serves as "evidence" for one's reflections. Footage can also become the point of departure for a sociological film, after the material has been structured during editing.

Film and video are increasingly popular as research tools in sociology. This is largely due to the fact that video cameras have become easily accessible, cheap, user-friendly and lightweight. Currently, footage can be taken not only by a film or video camera, but also by smartphones, tablets or digital cameras, which can also be used in research. Two turns in the humanities have also contributed to the growing popularity of cameras and other appliances used to register moving pictures, namely the pictorial turn and the mobility turn. They have resulted in a greater emphasis on the visual and mobile aspects of social reality, as well as research techniques that enable these aspects to be captured. Hence the growing popularity of the use of mobile cameras in social research, as exemplified by the video-tour technique applied by sociologists in their studies. Films can also be used as a solicitation mechanism in in-depth interviews. This technique was first used in photo-elicitation interviews. We have recently witnessed the use of film images to solicit interviews. In Poland, Krzysztof T. Konecki's research into yoga training is an example of such an approach. He showed fragments of hatha-yoga instructional films during conversations with his respondents. In this case, visual material played a huge role since, as Konecki put it: "One can go beyond that which is visual and superficially observable and reach deeper meanings solicited by images" (Konecki 2012: 184).

Obtaining film data in a social environment is not a neutral activity. It should be kept in mind that this is already a certain social process and the presence of a camera affects reality in various ways. Thus, in their research, sociologists treat the presence of a camera as one of the elements of a social situation that can be used in a positive way when collecting data. Lomax and Casey mention this in their text on the reflexive approach to research involving a camera: "We accept also that

video methods, far from being a means of neutrally reproducing social activity, create and define the event and are therefore fundamentally part of knowledge production" (Lomax, Casey 1998). This awareness of creating events in the process of filming can also take the form of social intervention, as in the case of video advocacy or participatory video (see Caldwell 2011).

Setting up archives and databases where all film material concerning social issues can be stored is a very important task for sociologists (see Drozdowski, Kaczmarek, Krajewski 2006). This would make it possible to systematise the material and conduct comparative studies. In sociology, films can also be used for promotion. Short films can be used to promote sociology or sociological studies, which serves the purpose of encouraging and attracting new students. And finally, film-related activities are of interest to sociology, i.e. sociologists can study practices related to making and distributing films. The focus here is not the film itself but what is related to it, that is, for example, the study of the film industry, audiences, film commercials, amateurs behind cameras, filming guides for amateurs, or discussions on specialist equipment for registering moving pictures.

The sociological potential of documentary and ethnographic films

Following this short overview of the possibilities of using film in sociological research, specific examples will be studied. The focus will mainly be on the exploration of urban space. Let us begin with reflections on documentary and ethnographic films, which can serve as very important material for sociological analyses of the phenomenon of the city and an inspiration for further research. They often serve as illustrations for scientific lectures and publications. Moreover, both types of film play a vital role in creating sociological film and have served as an important source of theoretical and practical inspiration. Documentary, ethnographic and sociological films have a lot in common, although the latter two types of film are scientific in nature, while documentaries do not have to be put to scientific test. Since this is not the subject of my deliberations at the moment, we will leave these issues aside.

Urban themes were already present in early productions. In 1895, inspired by Edison's Kinetoscope, Louis and August Lumière built and patented the cinematograph and began producing short films, which were extremely popular with audiences. Many of the films depicted urban scenes, for example *L'arrivée d'un train en gare de La Ciotat* [*Train pulling into a station*] or *La Sortie de l'usine Lumière à Lyon* [*Employees leaving the Lumière factory*]. Today, they are already of historical value and they show what the urban space looked like over a century ago. It is also noteworthy that film primarily had a scientific function for the Lumière brothers, as indicated by Louis Lumière's statement on the future of their invention: "[…] the film will be taken on by researchers and educators and it will become a valuable

aid in discovery work and scientific experiments as well as teaching" (cited in: Czeczot-Gawrak 1977: 42–43).

City-symphonies, in other words films that are monographs of cities, are extremely important for reflections about the city. These are works such as *Manhatta* (1921) by Paul Strand and Charles Sheeler, *Berlin: Die Sinfonie der Großstadt* [*Berlin: Symphony of a Metropolis*] (1927) by Walter Ruttmann, *Человек с киноаппаратом* [*Man with a Movie Camera*] (1929) by Dziga Vertov, or Jean Vigo's *À propos de Nice* [*On Nice*] (1929). These films depict life in big cities, their visual appearance, and residents' everyday life, as well as social problems, conflicts and inequalities. To this day, they constitute valuable material for sociologists who deal with urban issues or study social structure. These are also films that unequivocally and consciously criticise social inequalities and therefore resemble interventionist films, since their directors believed they could influence social reality through their work. This is Jean Vigo's stance. Vigo delivered a kind of manifesto at the premiere of his film *À propos de Nice*:

> But I want to talk with you more precisely about a social cinema, one that I am closer to: a social documentary or, more precisely, a documented point of view [*point de vue document*]. […] A social documentary is distinguished from an ordinary documentary *tout court* and weekly news-reels. It is distinguished due to the viewpoint that the author defends. This kind of social documentary demands that one take a position because it dots the i's. […] A social documentary should open our eyes (cited in: Czeczot-Gawrak 1977: 261).

Robert Gardner's classical ethnographic film *Forest of Bliss* from 1986 is also classified as a city-symphony. The filmmaker showed a day in the life of the city of Benares, a Hindu holy city. Its main theme is religious rites and funeral ceremonies. It is a special film, since there is no commentary at all. The viewer is presented only with the original visual and sound layer. Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin's *Chronique d'un été* [*Chronicle of a Summer*] (1960) is a very important piece of work for documentary, ethnographic and sociological cinema alike. The film shows life in Paris and Saint-Tropez during the holidays. It is not a simple account of what happens in summer in the capital of France and the seaside resort; the film delves into the lives of individual characters and tries to expose their state of consciousness. The film is not only the documentary classic that laid the foundations for the *cinéma--vérité* style of filmmaking, but it has clear links with ethnography and sociology. After all, Rouch is the classic filmmaker of the ethnographic film while Morin is a well-known French sociologist. I believe this film can be regarded a precursor of sociological film. The collaboration of the Argentinian filmmaker Fernando Birri with the Institute of Sociology of the Santa Fe University exemplifies links between the documentary and sociology. In the 1950s, Birri taught a seminar during which his students took photographs and collected tape recordings in the city. The film *Tire dié* was the outcome. The main theme of the film is the problem of poverty in slums in Santa Fe. Birri called it a "social survey film" (Birri 1986: 6).

The above selection of examples shows the importance of classical documentary and ethnographic films for sociological reflection on the city, and for illustration and teaching purposes. I believe it would be worthwhile to create a list of such works that can be used for scientific and teaching purposes. Some examples of Polish documentaries on the city include *Z miasta Łodzi* [*From the city of Łódź*] by Krzysztof Kieślowski, *Moja ulica* [*My Street*] by Danuta Halladin, *Portret małego miasta* [*Portrait of a Small Town*] by Władysław Ślesicki, *Gdzie diabeł mówi dobranoc* [*Out in the Sticks*] by Kazimierz Karabasz and Władysław Ślesicki, *Miasteczko* [*Small Town*] by Jerzy Ziarnik, *Warszawa 1956* by Jerzy Bossak and Jarosław Brzozowski, *Lubelska Starówka* [*Lublin Old Town*] by Bohdan Kosiński, *Miasto na wyspach* [*City on the Islands*] by Jerzy Dmowski and Bohdan Kosiński, and *Sopot 1957* by Jerzy Hoffman and Edward Skórzewski.

Contemporary ethnographic films (or anthropological films, as they are also sometimes called) are becoming, with increasing frequency, multimedia and interactive pieces of work. An example is the research project into a suburban community in the Oak Park district of Chicago carried out by the American anthropologist Jay Ruby. As the author himself put it: "[…] for me and for my project, film and video are not enough" (Ruby 2011: 172). Thus, Ruby communicates his research results on CDs in a multimedia version that combines film, photography, text and audio recordings. The viewer is free to decide where to start and finish browsing the material. Therefore, it seems that film recordings alone often no longer suffice for the study of social reality, which is becoming increasingly complex. Hence a multimedia approach becomes a must.

Film as an object of sociological analysis

From the very beginning of the sociology of cinema, film was the object of sociological analyses. Emilie Altenloh, the founder of this sub-discipline, analysed films in her work. Many studies by other authors that are often grounded in content analysis, sometimes semiological analysis, were later published within this field. Currently, more advanced computer-aided techniques are being used.

One of the contemporary examples of analyses of films about the city is Magdalena Saryusz-Wolska's work on film images of Berlin. The author analyses both feature and documentary films that show Berlin, dating from the Weimar Republic to the present day. Such a broad perspective makes it possible to trace the development of the city, its architecture, and the life of its residents against the backdrop of changing eras. In terms of the method of analysis used, Saryusz-Wolska employs Ewa Mazierska's method of historical discourse and the urban description methods presented by Bernward Joerges. Therefore, she starts from looking for "elements coming from a real metropolis in a film city" (Saryusz-Wolska 2007: 45) and moves to searching for "cultural contexts in which the film city is set" (Saryusz-Wolska 2007: 46).

The result of these inquiries is summarised as follows: "First of all, I am interested in the relationship between the film city and the real city; secondly, the context in which the film city functions. The intended final effect is a synthesis of icons and their connotations that create a film image of Berlin" (Saryusz-Wolska 2007: 46).

One of the most intricate visual analyses is the documentary method developed by the German sociologist Ralf Bohnsack, who started to apply it to the analyses of group discussions, later on photographs and, finally, films and videos. The method he developed aims at "[…] moving from the question of what cultural and social phenomena or facts are, to the question of their construction […]" (Bohnsack 2007: 69). Thus, this approach is about what Bohnsack calls the "praxeological sociology of knowledge", i.e. the answer to the question of how social reality is created in practice. He distinguishes two levels of documentary interpretation as part of visual analysis. The first level is formulating interpretation that "asks about what is presented in an image or text" (Bohnsack 2009: 56) while the other level is reflective interpretation that asks the question of how this representation is produced.

In his analyses of film recordings, Bohnsack identifies individual photograms and their sequences that allow him to follow subsequent phases of movement or elements of gestures. In this way, one can reach the film narrative and forms that constitute the non-narrative composition of the film. Further stages of the analysis focus on the reconstruction of the set, camera setup, changes in camera setup and the set, camera movement, image composition, and the reconstruction of planimetric composition. Two transcription systems are used in film documentary analysis. The first one is MoViQ (Movies and Video in Qualitative Social Research) introduced by Stefan Hampl and Aglaja Przyborski. It consists of synchronous transcription of the image and sound in a constant time rhythm of no longer than one second. The other system, developed by Ralf Bohnsack, is used to transcribe conversations and texts and is called TiQ (Talk in Qualitative Social Research).

An example of the documentary interpretation of urban footage is Ralph Bohnsack's analysis of the TV programme *Istanbul Total* broadcast from Istanbul by Pro 7 television (see Bohnsack 2009: 177–240). Bohnsack selected an approximately six-minute-long fragment for interpretation, transcribed it and proceeded to formulating his interpretation. The next step was the interpretation of the text and sound. Finally, reflective interpretation of the whole piece was made.

Another method of analysing film recordings draws on hermeneutical sociology of knowledge aimed at discovering the intersubjective meaning of human actions. In the analysis of film and video material these are two types of actions, namely those in front of a camera (the recorded image) and behind the camera (the process of film production and post-production). The essence of visual analysis in hermeneutical sociology of knowledge is "the discovery of the social meaning of action, that is, shaping of the image plus action captured by it, and not only the reconstruction of the meaning of the event shown" (Reichertz, Englert 2011: 29).

The analysis of a fragment of a TV programme from the *24 Stunden Reportage* series broadcast by the German SAT television is an example of the above analytical scheme. The analysis was carried out by Jo Reichertz and Carina Jasmin Englert. They selected an episode that showed the work of customs officials, tram conductors and police officers. The analysis focused on detailed description of audio-visual data, and thus on the operation of a camera and that which happens in front of it. The researchers applied two transcription types. One, HANOS (HAndlungsorienti-ertesNOtationsSystem), is the action-oriented notation system while the other was the field score (Feldpartitur). HANOS is a description of events with continuous text, while the field score uses graphical codes that "break the audio-visual content of the video recording into individual components […]" (Moritz 2010: 163).

Film as a research tool

The use of video cameras in social research has become increasingly popular with the development of technology. Cameras have become lighter and cheaper. They can be operated by one person and their operation is no longer as complicated as that of heavy film cameras whose operation used to involve an entire crew. Furthermore, contemporary video cameras can record images for many hours practically without breaks. Today, images can be shot not only with classical cameras but also mobile phones, still cameras or tablets. Technological progress has significantly contributed to the development of visual research techniques in the social sciences. Another factor that promoted development was the increasing focus on the image both in everyday reality and in sociological research, as indicated by William John Thomas Mitchell in his reflections on the pictorial turn: "The most important thing is to realise that while pictorial representation has always been with us, it is at this very moment that it inevitably stands out at every level of culture with unprecedented force, from the most sophisticated philosophical speculation to the most ordinary mass media productions" (Mitchell 2009: 8).

One of the first sociologists to use video for research in urban space was Leonard Henny of the Institute of Sociology at Utrecht University, who turned it into an important teaching aid. In the 1970s, he conducted seminars with students who were supposed to create films on important social issues in the urban environment. Individual problems presented in them were later discussed with the representatives of local communities. Thus, not only did film have research value but practical value as well, since it was supposed to contribute to solving social problems.

The most obvious way of using a camera in social research is to record observations and interviews that are subsequently analysed. They can also be used in teaching, or to make a sociological film or multimedia statements. An example of research based on recorded observations is a project by Monika Wagner-Willi, who filmed students of a primary school in Berlin and followed the so-called rites

of passage in different school situations based on the analyses of the recordings (see Wagner-Willi 2007). Long hours of film recordings also form the basis for analyses in workplace studies that focus on interactions in the workplace (see Heath, Knoblauch, Luff 2000). Examples of recorded interviews include studies of people who were the first to settle in the town of Gubin after WWII. The analysis of recorded interviews made it possible to reconstruct the lives of the Polish–German neighbourhood in a divided town (see Kaczmarek 2011). A popular form of video recorded interviews is the recording of focus group interviews, whose analysis forms the basis for research reports.

Recording from observations can be made by the researcher themselves, or by a co-investigator. In order to capture the specific perspective of the respondents, at some point the respondents were asked to film their surroundings. The pioneer of such an approach was Sol Worth, who gave video cameras to young black people so that they could film the world around them. This happened back in the 1960s, in Philadelphia. The practice of giving cameras to subjects was repeated by Sol Worth in a research project conducted among Navajo Indians. In this way, Worth obtained the point of view of the subjects instead of that of the researchers.

The mobile camera has become a very important research technique in today's sociology. Among other things, it has to do with the so-called mobility turn in the social sciences, which is a response to the increasing mobility of modern societies. This attracts interest in such research and mobile data acquisition methods. Sarah Pink is one of the pioneers in this field. She developed a video tour method in which the camera accompanies the subject and records his or her statements and movements. As Pink puts it, such research can reach "practices, material and sensory meanings as well as processes of creating a place" (Pink 2011: 118). The use of film in social research therefore enables the visual representation of practices associated with moving around the city, which provides knowledge not only of physical space but also of how the space is experienced and produced by the actors involved. This is undoubtedly one of the advantages of using film as a research tool, as compared to traditional methods. It is extremely difficult to combine two important elements associated with urban space, namely visuality and mobility, using traditional methods. An example of video tours in urban spaces includes a study of a main street in Poznań, St Martin Street. The camera accompanies residents walking along the street and telling the researcher about it.[1]

Mobile research with the use of a camera can also be carried out in such a way that the camera is operated by the people surveyed. Lesley Murray's project is an example of such research. Murray gave cameras to children for them to film their way to and from school. This made it possible to capture children's movement in urban spaces and the difficulties they might come across during these journeys. Murray indicates the value of such studies in an increasingly mobile world: "Mobile

---

[1] See: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7BfQKCS3DRQ (accessed 7.10.2020).

methods enable comprehension of socio-spatial processes the way they are experienced. They make it possible to explore everyday mobility practices produced by social relations which are at the same time producing individual cultural practices" (Murray 2012: 781).

The use of footage in social research is increasingly popular as an element of a holistic approach or for delivering findings. It assumes a multimedia form. Obviously this has to do with the development of digital media, which are also used in scientific research and the communication of its results. In this context, Sarah Pink writes about ethnographic hypermedia performances (Pink 2009: 243–275). One of the stages of the project "Socio-Spatial Transformations of German–Polish Interstices. Practices of Debordering and Rebordering"[2] can be cited as an example of using multimedia in sociological research. In this research, respondents were provided with a smartphone application. They were supposed to fill in virtual diaries by entering their daily activities and their interactions with the border. They were also supposed to take pictures of the border, its debordering and rebordering. The application could also be used for monitoring the movement of respondents. It made it possible to trace, for example, the frequency of Polish–German border crossings. All the data were saved on a server. The subsequent part of the research involved conducting video tours with each respondent at the border site indicated by him/her, as well as at a site selected on the basis of data from the application that showed the location of the respondent and the photos he or she had taken. The issues raised during video tours had to do with the selected sites, their daily visit by the respondents, their links to the border, changes in them, and their importance for the local population. An in-depth interview followed the video tour. The interview referred to the places visited and photographed by the subject, among other things.

Sociological film

The concept of sociological film first appeared in the 1950s in the context of ethnographic film. The difference between the two genres was that sociological film depicted the life of Western societies while ethnographic film showed the life of peoples from other civilisational circles. Sociological film was defined very broadly as film containing social content (see de Heusch 1962). More recent definitions identify the specific characteristics and functions of sociological film and distinguish it from other documentary and scientific films. Radhamany Sooryamoorthy is one of the most renowned theoreticians and practitioners of sociological film, although he did not apply the notion of sociological film himself. Sooryamoorthy used the term "research film", which for him was the effect of research that presented a research problem or part of a research project (see Sooryamoorthy 2011: 177–200).

---

[2] Research project financed as part of the NCN Beethoven 2 competition No. 2016/23/G/HS6/04021.

Sooryamoorthy compares research films to research reports, and highlights their clearly scientific nature. He points out the following advantages of using research films in sociology: "By making research films, one can broaden the horizon of knowledge of a given discipline and supplement the results of one's own research with visual representations that have not been artificially produced (as fiction films) but reflect social reality and are consistent with a sociological perspective" (Sooryamoorthy 2011: 183). Ronald Kurt is another sociologist dealing with sociological film. He perceives sociological film as a complete scientific statement that allows one to express that which cannot be put into words. According to Kurt, such film is meant to reconstruct social reality and indicate what is important and typical in it (see Kurt 2010: 195–208).

Therefore, how can sociological film be defined today such that the definition is not too broad and identifies the specific nature of this form of scientific expression? I attempted to define sociological film in one of my earlier works, describing it as "an autonomous piece of scientific work that analyses social reality on the basis of sociological knowledge. This piece of work constitutes a structured and interpreted statement, whereas the formation of this structure and interpretation takes place mainly in the process of editing" (Kaczmarek 2014: 201–202). Thus, I treat the sociological film as a scientific work in its own right, equal to written texts but operating in the language of film expression. The characteristic features of this kind of expression are the social subject, sociological competence, relevant shots, sound, commentary and topic, technical competence, disclosure of the context and interrupted behaviour of filmed people, explaining breaks during shooting, avoiding staging, and allowing for the full expression and full statements of filmed people. Some of these characteristics are related to the strictly sociological context, while other features are common for shots in documentaries. This should come as no surprise since we are dealing with a medium that links scientific film with other genres.

I would like to mention examples of city-related sociological films created by visual sociologists and students of sociology at the Institute of Sociology of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. *Przystanek* [*Tram Stop*] (M. Kleban, M. Krajewski, M. Leoński and Ł. Rogowski) is a study of the space of tram stops and actions taken by people frequenting them. *Niech się święci 1 Maja!* [*Let's Celebrate May 1!*] (A. Gierszewski, S. Hadryan, J. Kaczmarek, M. Krajewski and E. Nadolna) is edited footage of the First-of-May celebration in the city of Poznań, while *Alternatywna mapa miasta* [*Alternative City Map*] (W. Rapior) shows the space of the city and places on its map from the point of view of individual residents. *Olsztyn przedstawia: miasto w oku spreja* [*Olsztyn presents: the City in the Eye of Spray*] (M. Lechowska, K. Leśniewska, M. Szwarc) is a film about city graffiti, whereas *Mury mówią. Uliczne mądrości* [*The Walls Speak. Street Wisdom*] (N. Słowińska, A. Sobańska and K. Szewczyk) takes up a similar topic of inscriptions on walls. *Rytm miasta* [*The Rhythm of the City*] (F. Grabski and W. Rapior) is a kind of

a metaphor for urban movement and space compared to different genres of music. *Osiedla zamknięte* [*Gated Communities*] (S. Leszkowicz-Baczyńska, P. Franek and M. Krasa) presents an increasingly widespread phenomenon in Polish cities, namely the gated and guarded housing estates mentioned in the title. *Granicza*[3] [*Barder*] (J. Kaczmarek and W. Wrzesień) is a study of a Polish–German neighbourhood, namely the divided town of Gubin/Guben. *Żydowski Lublin* [*Jewish Lublin*] (Ł. Posłuszny) is a film made of photographs of pre-war Lublin that shows the Jewish community living there. There are also another three films worth mentioning. They were made as part of the *Niewidzialne miasto*[4] [*Invisible City*] project, which explored the grassroots activities of residents in urban spaces. These films present creators of the invisible city and the effects of their actions: *Pewnie dlatego rosną* [*That's Probably Why They Grow*] is a story about a garden created in a block of flats in Wrocław, *Dobre chęci* [*Good Intentions*] shows the backyard of a Łódź tenement house, *Nic mi nie zaszkodzi* [*Nothing Can Do Me Harm*] shows the "Juter" drink bar in Toruń, its owner and her clients, whereas *Zapraszam ponownie* [*Come Back Again*] is a study of a shoemaker's shop in the Jeżyce district of Poznań. It is noteworthy that the above-mentioned project on the Polish–German border within Beethoven 2 also aims at creating a sociological film that will use fragments of video tours, among other things.

Conclusion

The above reflections and research examples indicate that it will no longer be possible to overlook issues related to the use of film and video in sociological research in the age of visuality and mobility. This is also true of the films that study urban spaces. Objects of research, research methods and techniques, as well as methods of communicating scientific knowledge, require the use of cameras and other means of recording motion pictures. Sociology has always been based on visuality, since its key research methods have been based on the observation of individuals and social groups. After all, not only different types of observations but also interviews triggered a sense of vision and analysis of that which had been observed. Today, in the era of the permanent registration of social life by omnipresent cameras, as well as easily accessible private recording devices, we seem to have an abundance of visual material that may also constitute an important object of sociological analyses

---

[3] The title of the film is a misspelling of word for "border" that appeared on an information board on the German side. It is intended to symbolise the uneasy processes of mutual understanding and settlement.

[4] The full name of the project implemented in 2009–2012 is: "Invisible City. Objectives and Consequences of Non-institutionalised Forms of Modifying Space of Large Polish Cities and Methodological Problems of Studying them Using Visual Data" (Ministry of Science and Higher Education grant No. NN116433837).

that is still being used by sociologists to only a limited extent. This is certainly due to a variety of reasons. One of the main reasons is the lack of visual competence of the researchers themselves. Sociologists should invest in enhancing their visual competence in their own research areas. Luc Pauwels writes about this in one of his texts, and I would like to quote his words at the very end of this piece – to remind all social researchers that:

> Visual scientific competence includes in-depth knowledge of specific characteristics of visual media and the ability to translate this knowledge into verbal-and-visual constructs. Finally, visual scientific competence manifests itself as a form of thinking and acting with images throughout the entire research process: from conceptualisation of the problem through the entire research process, starting with conceptualisation of the problem, through the phase of data collection (production of visual material), to the phase of presenting data and research findings (Pauwels 2011: 35).

Bibliography

Albrecht G.L. (1985), *Videotape Safaris: Entering the Field with a Camera*, "Qualitative Sociology", no. 4, pp. 325–344.

Altenloh E. (1914), *Zur Soziologie des Kino. Die Kino-Unternehmung und die sozialen Schichten ihrer Besucher*, Eugen Diederichs, Jena.

Birri F. (1986), *The Roots of Documentary Realism*, [in:] J. Burton (ed.), *Cinema and Social Change in Latin America: Conversations with Filmmakers*, University of Texas Press, Austin.

Bohnsack R. (2007), *Die dokumentarische Methode in der Bild- und Fotointerpretation*, [in:] R. Bohnsack, I. Nentwig-Gesemann, A.-M. Nohl (eds.), *Die dokumentarische Methode und ihre Forschungspraxis. Grundlagen qualitativer Sozialforschung*, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden.

Bohnsack R. (2009), *Qualitative Bild- und Videointerpretation. Die dokumentarische Methode*, Verlag Barbara Budrich, Opladen, Farmington Hills.

Bystroń J.S. (1975), *Socjologia kina*, [in:] J. Bocheńska (ed.), *Polska myśl filmowa. Antologia tekstów z lat 1898–1939*, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich – Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk.

Caldwell G. (2011), *Zastosowanie wideo do celów rzecznictwa*, transl. K. Olechnicki, [in:] M. Frąckowiak, K. Olechnicki (eds.), *Badania wizualne w działaniu. Antologia tekstów*, Fundacja Nowej Kultury Bęc Zmiana, Warszawa.

Czeczot-Gawrak Z. (1977), *Zarys dziejów teorii filmu pierwszego pięćdziesięciolecia 1895–1945*, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wrocław.

Drozdowski R., Kaczmarek J., Krajewski M. (2006), *Otwarta Baza Danych Wizualnych*, [in:] J. Kaczmarek, M. Krajewski (eds.), *Co widać?*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza, Poznań.

Dudek K.J. (2009), *Filmy weselne. Nowe media a zmiany w rytuale*, "Kultura i Społeczeństwo", no. 4, pp. 117–130.

Heath C., Knoblauch H., Luff P. (2000), *Technology and social interaction: the emergence of 'workplace studies'*, "British Journal of Sociology", no. 2, pp. 299–320.

Heusch L. de (1962), *Cinéma et sciences sociales. Panorama du film ethnographique et sociologique*, [in:] *Rapports et documents de sciences sociales*, no. 16.

Kaczmarek J. (2011), *Gubin i Guben – miasta na pograniczu: socjologiczne studium sąsiedztwa*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza, Poznań.

Kaczmarek J. (2014), *Zobaczyć społeczeństwo: film i wideo w badaniach socjologicznych*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza, Poznań.

Konecki K.T. (2012), *Czy ciało jest świątynią duszy? Współczesna praktyka jogi jako fenomen psychospołeczny*, Difin, Warszawa.

Kurt R. (2010), *Diener zweier Damen. Videobasierte Sozialforschung zwischen Datendokumentation und Filmproduktion*, [in:] M. Corsten, M. Krug, C. Moritz (eds.), *Videographie praktizieren: Herangehensweisen, Möglichkeiten und Grenzen*, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden.

Lomax H., Casey N. (1998), *Recording Social Life: Reflexivity and Video Methodology*, "Sociological Research Online", no. 2, http://www.socresonline.org.uk/3/2/1 (accessed 8.10.2019).

Mitchell W.J.T. (2009), *Zwrot piktorialny*, "Kultura Popularna", no. 1, pp. 4–19.

Moritz C. (2010), *Die Feldpartitur. Mikroprozessuale Transkription von Videodaten*, [in:] M. Corsten, M. Krug, C. Moritz (eds.), *Videographie praktizieren: Herangehensweisen, Möglichkeiten und Grenzen*, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden.

Murray L. (2012), *Patrząc na i patrząc wstecz: wizualizacja w badaniach nad przemieszczaniem się*, transl. A. Dzik, [in:] M. Bogunia-Borowska, P. Sztompka (eds.), *Fotospołeczeństwo. Antologia tekstów z socjologii wizualnej*, Wydawnictwo Znak, Kraków.

Pauwels L. (2011), *Zwrot wizualny w badaniach i komunikacji wiedzy. Kluczowe problemy rozwijania kompetencji wizualnej w naukach społecznych*, transl. M. Frąckowiak, [in:] M. Frąckowiak, K. Olechnicki (eds.), *Badania wizualne w działaniu. Antologia tekstów*, Fundacja Nowej Kultury Bęc Zmiana, Warszawa.

Pink S. (2009), *Etnografia wizualna. Obrazy, media i przedstawienie w badaniach*, transl. M. Skiba, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków.

Pink S. (2011), *Uruchamiając etnografię wizualną. Wytwarzanie szlaków, miejsc i obrazów*, transl. Ł. Rogowski, [in:] M. Frąckowiak, K. Olechnicki (eds.), *Badania wizualne w działaniu. Antologia tekstów*, Fundacja Nowej Kultury Bęc Zmiana, Warszawa.

Reichertz J., Englert C.J. (2011), *Einführung in die qualitative Videoanalyse. Eine hermeneutisch-wissenssoziologische Fallanalyse*, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden.

Ruby J. (2011), *Kilka opowieści z Oak Park: eksperymentalna wideoetnografia*, transl. W. Rapior, [in:] M. Frąckowiak, K. Olechnicki (eds.), *Badania wizualne w działaniu. Antologia tekstów*, Fundacja Nowej Kultury Bęc Zmiana, Warszawa.

Saryusz-Wolska M. (2007), *Berlin: filmowy obraz miasta*, Rabid, Kraków.

Sooryamoorthy R. (2011), *Kulisy kręcenia filmów badawczych w socjologii*, transl. M. Brzozowska-Brywczyńska, [in:] M. Frąckowiak, K. Olechnicki (eds.), *Badania wizualne w działaniu. Antologia tekstów*, Fundacja Nowej Kultury Bęc Zmiana, Warszawa.

Wagner-Willi M. (2007), *Videoanalysen des Schulalltags. Die dokumentarische Interpretation schulischer Übergangsrituale*, [in:] R. Bohnsack, I. Nentwig-Gesemann, A.-M. Nohl (eds.), *Die dokumentarische Methode und ihre Forschungspraxis. Grundlagen qualitativer Sozialforschung*, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden.

Jerzy Kaczmarek

WIZUALNE BADANIA SOCJOLOGICZNE Z WYKORZYSTANIEM FILMU I WIDEO (NA PRZYKŁADZIE BADAŃ NAD MIASTEM)

Abstrakt. Wykorzystanie filmu i wideo w badaniach socjologicznych, czy też w ogóle na obszarze nauk społecznych, ma już swoją długą i ugruntowaną tradycję. Obrazy ruchome stanowiły z jednej strony obiekt analiz, jak miało to chociażby miejsce w socjologii filmu, z drugiej zaś używano ich jako narzędzia badawczego. Poza tym nagrania filmowe mogą przybrać postać samodzielnej wypowiedzi naukowej, jak dzieje się to w filmie socjologicznym.

Zastosowanie metod wizualnych, opartych zarówno na obrazach nieruchomych, jak i ruchomych, bardzo dobrze sprawdza się w eksploracji przestrzeni fizycznej i społecznej miasta. W swoim artykule chciałbym pokazać, w jaki sposób można wykorzystać filmy oraz sam proces pozyskiwania danych filmowych w badaniach socjologicznych, zaś szczególnymi przypadkami, którymi głównie chciałbym zilustrować moje rozważania, będą przykłady prac dotyczących tematyki miejskiej. Trzeba zauważyć, że już początki kina związane są z pokazywaniem przestrzeni miejskiej, czego przykładem mogą być chociażby filmy braci Lumière'ów, którzy zresztą swój kinematograf traktowali przede wszystkim jako narzędzie naukowe.

Problematyka związana z miastami pojawia się w pracach badawczych socjologów filmu, którzy poddawali analizie między innymi obrazy o tematyce miejskiej. Później socjologowie sami zaczynają już używać kamer w swoich badaniach, jak również w działalności dydaktycznej. Jednym ze sposobów użycia kamery w ich pracach jest po prostu zapis obserwacji pewnych miejsc i zachowań ludzi, które następnie poddaje się analizie przy zastosowaniu różnych metod wykształconych na obszarze socjologii czy też przejętych z innych nauk. Następną techniką, szczególnie nadającą się do eksploracji przestrzeni miejskiej, jest użycie mobilnej kamery, czego przykładem jest chociażby wideozwiedzanie, którego pomysłodawczynią jest Sarah Pink. Ważne miejsce w badaniach społecznych zajmuje wreszcie film socjologiczny, którego obiektem zainteresowań jest także miasto.

Słowa kluczowe: film a socjologia, socjologia filmu, badania wizualne, film socjologiczny, miasto.