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Concerning the transition of the reception of music video due to a change in the politics of distribution of the music video- and the music (TV) market

In the past years the reception of the music video has been prominently tied to the medium of the television. The point of reference of the research on the audience has thus been the private resp. public TV-setting. Technical developments and changes in the politics of the market have, however, recently made that the audience has become disperse in a much higher level of complexity. Which challenges a research on the reception of music video is thus faced with will be sketched in the following. To the fore of our examining perspective is the relation between music video and music television which determines the socio-economical and –cultural frame of a use of clips in everyday life. Although both, clip and TV, have to be separated phenomenally, they are – especially historically – interwoven in such a way that the one can't be understood without the other. In the given case it will be proceeded on the assumption that it was music television which made the music video popular while the music video – as a tool for the economies of advertising and as an aesthetic form – contributed to the success of the music television. Thus, the paper starts from the assumption of an ideal-typical original situation where the music television with the help of 'its' music videos established a functional economic and socio-cultural routine which today is facing a crisis. Music video and music television – so a first thesis – are about to separate from each other and to go 'their own ways'. This decoupling is happening a double way: One the one hand it will be argued that the music video itself succumbs a process of a dissolution of boundaries on a genre- and product level which forces the music television on the other hand to modify their politics of distribution, programming and advertising. The main part of the paper will thus deal with questions of the dissolution of the boundaries of the music video (clips online, alternative providers etc.) on the one and with questions of the dissolution of the boundaries of the music television on the other hand (new, especially digital offers of MTV, changed contents of program). With a view on the way or tendency of the development this will be qualified as discontinuous (which means as a rupture with the development so far and the ideal-typical model sketched at the beginning). Questions of continuity, especially of the economic expansion of the monopoly (see for this the situation in the German-speaking countries, especially the buyout of VIVA) will be not considered in the context of this argumentation, but do furnish the base for the successful (world-wide) operation of the music television up to today. All this – this will be shown towards the end – has grave consequences for the structural conditions of the reception of the music video which have to be classed among different levels (such as e.g. genre/types; program structures; offering framing entities; technical accessibility).