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# Filming the Political Space of Technical Setups

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## Abstract

Human societies have the distinctive characteristic of needing to put themselves into representation in order to exist: this is the role of technical setups, in other words formal arrangements which create exchange zones. A shop, a counter, a collective project... Each is an example of a setup that makes social interactions between individuals possible by providing the institutional framework for their commitments. In accordance with this perspective, we can wonder how to film human activity in a shop, at a counter of a train station for example or during the realisation of a project such as the construction of a building or an educational programme. In other words, how can one film a mercantile transaction, a request for information, or a co-operation or negotiation discussion? As this ordinary situation of human activity is not self-evident: it engages each "interacting parties" in a face to face relationship; in an exchange equilibrium that it is appropriate to maintain, by knowing how to behave according to the status and the role defined by the interaction framework. Filming human activity leads to focusing on the *social relation effort*: a symbolic work that creates a political space, in the sense that individuals mobilise and build forms of representations through which they produce society. Filmed anthropology precisely aims to report these political spaces created by the technical setups in order to help understand what is at stake in a given human activity. This understanding results from the creation of the narrative with regard to the circumstances of commitment through the filmed observation of social interactions. This communication will draw on an extract from one of the filmed anthropologies by Christian Lallier.

**Keywords:** filmed anthropology, political space, technical setup, social relation effort, commitment and representation, symbolic.

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