FILM CULTURE

IN TRANSITION

FAROCKI/GODARD

FILM AS THEORY

VOLKER PANTENBURG

Amsterdam University Press

Farocki/Godard

Farocki/Godard

Film as Theory

Volker Pantenburg

Amsterdam University Press

The translation of this book is made possible by a grant from Volkswagen Foundation.

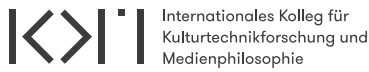
Originally published as: Volker Pantenburg, *Film als Theorie. Bildforschung bei Harun Farocki und Jean-Luc Godard*, transcript Verlag, 2006 [ISBN 3-899420440-9]

Translated by Michael Turnbull

This publication was supported by the Internationales Kolleg für Kulturtechnikforschung und Medienphilosophie of the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar with funds from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

IKKM BOOKS

Volume 25
An overview of the whole series can be found at
www.ikkm-weimar.de/schriften



Cover illustration (front): Jean-Luc Godard, *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapter 4B (1988-1998)
Cover illustration (back): INTERFACE © Harun Farocki 1995
Cover design: Kok Korpershoek, Amsterdam
Layout: Crius Group, Hulshout

Amsterdam University Press English-language titles are distributed in the US and Canada by the University of Chicago Press.

ISBN	978 90 8964 891 4
e-ISBN	978 90 4852 755 7
DOI	10.5117/9789089648914
NUR	670

Contents

Preface to the English Edition

The German version of this book was published in early 2006, after several years of intensive study of the work of the directors who are its subject. I had come to know Harun Farocki's work while an undergraduate in 1994, when Rembert Hüser showed some of Farocki's films in the classes he taught at the German Department of Bonn University. I vividly recall the surprise and excitement that Images of the World and the Inscription of War (1988) and As you see (1986) elicited in me. These were films unlike any others I had seen, both in their intellectual curiosity and in the intimate dialogue with film history and media theory that they enacted and contributed to. Farocki's work struck me as a mode of critical discourse that I had not known existed: elegant, complex, clearly informed by film history, not only well-grounded in cultural and visual theories but producing a genuine mode of theory in itself.

In the following years, I had the opportunity to watch more of Farocki's films. A small retrospective at the Kunsthochschule für Medien (Academy of Media Arts) in Cologne in 1995 comprised Workers leaving the Factory, which had just been completed, A Day in the Life of the Consumer (1993), and some of the observational films Farocki had made since 1983. We, a handful of students from Bonn, had been looking forward to this event and were quite surprised to see that, except for one KHM student, we were the only attendees. The screenings gave an impression of the range of approaches that Farocki had pursued since 1966, when he started studying film as one of the first students at the Deutsche Film und Fernsehakademie Berlin (DFFB). It would be misleading to claim that Farocki's work was unknown at the time, but it had certainly not yet received the attention it was to attract some years later, especially from the world of contemporary art. In 1998, when two important books on Farocki appeared in German, Thomas Elsaesser could still refer to him as "Germany's best known unknown filmmaker."

Even if my first encounter with Farocki took place only two decades ago, it is worth recalling that in the mid-90s the media environment was completely different. This was the last stage of the electronic era before the advent of the DVD, let alone websites like ubu.com or cinephile online-streaming portals. University screenings of Farocki's work felt somewhat like conspiratorial gatherings; VHS tapes with copies made from copies circulated like contraband from hand to hand; third- or fourth-generation TV recordings (with either the WDR or 3sat logo in the upper right corner of the screen) marked by blurred images and muffled soundtracks; films

introduced in awkward prose by TV announcers in 1980s clothing—this was the way to encounter the work of Alexander Kluge, Jean Luc Godard, or, for that matter, Harun Farocki.

It must have been around 1999 when I went to see Farocki and Kaja Silverman read a chapter of their book "Speaking about Godard," which had recently been translated into German, at Cologne University. The proximity (but, of course, also the differences) between Farocki and Godard seemed almost too obvious to me. Both directors had made the question of the image in its manifold guises their central concern. Both navigated in unmarked territory between fiction and documentary, using cinema and its tools as a genuine mode of research. Both took moving images seriously as agents of theory, and used film history as a treasure trove of material for thinking visually. Not least, they were tremendous film critics and writers who accompanied their films and TV programs with a corpus of highly original writings.

Farocki and Silverman's book provided ample evidence to substantiate the assumption that Farocki and Godard made a good pair. I was therefore surprised to see that no one had yet undertaken a more detailed study comparing the two as filmmakers, authors, and theorists. Another felicitous coincidence helped me pursue the hints and hunches that were eventually to turn into this book. In 1998, my first university job brought me to Münster, a city not exactly famous for its film culture, even if the beginnings of the journal *Filmkritik* can be traced back to Walter Hagemann's Institut für Publizistik (Department of Journalism), where Frieda Grafe and Enno Patalas had studied. These two were among the founders of the journal that Farocki would edit throughout the 1970s and early 1980s together with Hartmut Bitomsky, Peter Nau, Wolf-Eckhard Bühler, and others. The newly appointed director of the local *Kunstverein*, Susanne Gaensheimer, planned a show of Farocki's installations, as his work had steadily attracted more and more attention since his contribution to documenta X, Still Life (1997), and his participation in a group show at the Generali Foundation.[1] Since she knew that I was familiar with some of Farocki's work, she invited me to assist in editing a selection of his writing.[2] In lieu of a catalogue, this book was to accompany a retrospective of Farocki's films in the movie theater *Schloßtheater*, and an exhibition at the Westfälischer Kunstverein,

1 *Dinge, die wir nicht verstehen / Things we don't understand*, curated by Roger Buergel and Ruth Noack, who were to direct documenta 12 in 2007, January 28 through April 16, 2000, Generali Foundation, Vienna. Farocki presented his second installation, I thought I was Seeing Convicts (2000), commissioned by the Generali Foundation.

2 Harun Farocki, *Nachdruck/Imprint* (Berlin/New York: Vorwerk 8 and Lukas & Sternberg 2001).

exhibiting I THOUGHT I WAS SEEING CONVICTS (2000) and INTERFACE (1995), the two installations that Farocki had completed at the time. To make a selection of texts for the anthology, I started photocopying and avidly reading Farocki's early texts for *film,* compiled his numerous articles in *Filmkritik*, and tried to get hold of the more apocryphal texts he had published in various other media since the end of *Filmkritik* in 1984. We could only include a small selection of Farocki's immense output in the book, but my interest in Farocki was sparked and has never ceased since. Moving to Berlin in the spring of 2002 gave me access to his films and also allowed me to get in touch with other people on whom Farocki had had an enormous influence, be it as a teacher at film school, a witty and sharp author, or a colleague or friend. In retrospect, it seems logical to me that in October 2002 I decided to abandon a previous dissertation project and turn to the comparative study of Farocki and Godard that you now hold in your hands.

***

Why go into a lengthy and personal elaboration of how this book came into being? First of all, it is to situate this study historically. It was written before Farocki's well-deserved recognition in the art world really started to be felt; it was also written before discussions about "artistic research," a genre that Farocki contributed to avant la lettre, took off at art schools and in the academic public. Substantial work on Farocki was yet to come, and, of course, both Farocki and Godard have themselves continued producing new work at an astonishing pace. I am confident that pointing out these circumstances does not make this study seem aged or anachronistic but helps to contextualize its premises and arguments, and also accounts for some of the deficits that I now see more clearly than when I wrote the book. Apart from the personal embarrassment of re-reading a text that is ten years old, there are—how could it be otherwise?—things that I miss from today's vantage point. Let me point out four aspects that could become the subject of further thought.

For one thing, I regret not having written a chapter whose ruins must exist somewhere in the vaults of my hard disk. It would have dealt with the status of film history for Godard's and Farocki's respective take on images. Farocki's ambitious project of a "cinematographic thesaurus,"[3] but

3 See Wolfgang Ernst, Harun Farocki, "Towards an Archive for Visual Concepts," *Harun Farocki. Working on the Sightlines*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press 2004), 261–286.

also numerous lesser-known analytical works for television dealing with individual films and his extensive work as a writer and film critic all show that cinema and its history was and remained an important gravitational center of his activities. Workers Leaving the Factory (1995), The Expression of Hands (1997), and Prison Images (1999) are the most explicit contributions to an "archive of visual concepts," but the project has had extensions in the installation version of Workers (Workers Leaving the Factory in Eleven Decades, 2006) as well as in later installations co-authored by Antje Ehmann.[4] Here, as in many other works by Farocki, it is striking how sequences from film history interact with and reflect on contemporary "operational" images from surveillance cameras or pattern recognition software, and how the history, analysis, and theory of images combine and comment on each other.

In Godard's work, the monumental Histoire(s) du cinéma (1988–1998) is the most obvious result of the director's ongoing, almost obsessive preoccupation with cinema and film history. Both Godard and Farocki are thinkers whose working lives are inextricably linked to cinema and who evaluate this cultural technique by confronting it with contemporaneous images in an effort to create their own respective media archaeologies. In Godard's case, this endeavor is indebted to André Malraux, Henri Langlois, and Walter Benjamin, while for Farocki, Aby Warburg and the German tradition of *Begriffsgeschichte* (history of concepts) are the more relevant models.[5] So why did this chapter remain unwritten? As far as I recall, lack of time owing to a rigid deadline made me abandon it. But, to be honest, I also shied away from the task of having to come to terms with the intimidating Histoire(s) du cinéma— something that writers like Jonathan Rosenbaum, Frieda Grafe, Alexander Horwath, or Klaus Theweleit have achieved in their own intriguing ways.

Secondly, I regret that my self-inflicted preoccupation with theory and reflection made me neglect Farocki's observational films. These might appear to be less complex at first glance but are just as fascinating and no less reflective, albeit in a subtler manner. Farocki himself has sometimes

4 I am referring to War Tropes (Attention, Where is Elbe 14? Souvenir, Connection, Looking and Gazing, Why Wars), 6 videos produced for "Kleist-Festival" at Maxim Gorki Theater, 4 through 21 November 2011, and to Antje Ehmann's series of installations Topoi of Cinema History I-III (2004-2006), exhibited at "Cinema like never before", 20 January through 23 April 2006, Generali Foundation, Vienna; also shown in a different version 12 May through 8 July 2007, Akademie der Künste, Berlin.

5 For a recent reconstruction of Godard's (film-)historical project, see Michael Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard, Cinema Historian* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2013).

deplored the way critics and academics commented euphorically on Images of the World, Videograms of a Revolution (1992), or Still Life, but had next to nothing to say about works like Indoctrination (1987), The Interview (1997), or Nothing Ventured (2005), an offense I would have to plead guilty to as well. Today I think that Farocki's indebtedness to "direct cinema," about which he wrote in one of his last published texts,[6] would make a rich subject of comparison with Godard's various ruses of incorporating documentary techniques. Think of the manifold ways Godard confronts the cinematic fiction with ad hoc interviews inspired by Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin's cinéma vérité in his feature films of the mid-1960s, or think of his TV series Six fois deux (1976), in which the Lumière gesture of blunt registration is countered by sophisticated videographic techniques of writing on the surface of the image. A more detailed analysis could show how Farocki endows his sober observations of managers' meetings, interview training sessions, or prenatal classes with a strong narrative coherence in montage that creates a genuine form of condensation and dry humor (most notably in How to live in the FRG, 1990), while Godard manages to create an intense sense of contingency and presentness by injecting moments of surprise and contingency into a loose fictional texture.

If I were to re-write the book today, another chapter would probably try to tease out the educational forces in Godard and Farocki. It is obvious that the didactic, agit-prop thrust is most blatant in their Marxist and Maoist films of the immediate aftermath of 1968: Godard's partnership with Jean-Pierre Gorin and the films of the Dziga Vertov Group on the one hand, Farocki's "Lehrfilme zur politischen Ökonomie" ("Instructional Films in Political Economy"), made in collaboration with Hartmut Bitomsky, on the other. However, I would argue that a didactic undercurrent remains present throughout both directors' careers. The pedagogical elements that Serge Daney found in Godard in 1976[7] may well be detected in Farocki's children's programs for television, his film-analytical essays, or the structure of the double projection that has much in common with the tradition of slide projection in art history. My intuition is that the didactic can be regarded

6 Harun Farocki, "Zweimal Leacock," *Das Sichtbare Kino. Fünfzig Jahre Filmmuseum: Texte, Bilder, Dokumente*, ed. Alexander Horwath (Vienna: Österreichisches Filmmuseum/Synema 2014), 304–306.

7 See Serge Daney, "The T(h)errorized (Godardian Pedagogy)," [1976], trans. Bill Krohn, Charles Cameron Ball, online at http://www.diagonalthoughts.com/?p=1620 (accessed August 28, 2014).

as the remnant of a persistent political energy, even if the explicit activism has given way to a more detached attitude.[8]

Finally, it would certainly be illuminating to juxtapose the ways in which Farocki and Godard responded to the migration, during the past two decades, of moving image practices towards the museum and the gallery. Many who have come to know Farocki's work in the last 15 years regard him as an installation artist rather than a filmmaker. And indeed, far from simply using the gallery as an additional outlet for moving images, Farocki used the possibilities that came with commissions for installation work to develop his own praxis of "soft montage" and build an almost encyclopedic inventory of how two images can relate to one another. For Godard, in turn, the museum has been present throughout his career, but only in 2006 was he given the opportunity to use a large museum space to display his vision (and dystopia) of cinema today. In the same year, Farocki coincidentally also faced the challenge to transform his ideas about cinema into an exhibition and think about the opportunities and difficulties that a presentation in a museum space entails. *Cinema like never before* (2006, co-curated by Farocki and Antje Ehmann) and Godard's *Voyage(s) en utopie*[9] thus simultaneously became two strong statements about the potentialities and limitations that moving images face once they have left the movie theater to become mobile and handy, quick and nomadic, accessible but faced with the constraints of site-specificity, liberated but potentially commodified.

That I did not elaborate on these potential topics in this book can partly be explained by the simple fact that these developments still lay in the future. Yet they are also due to my decision to base the book's structure on Farocki's and Godard's respective strategies to confront visual media such as painting and photography with the filmmaking (and editing) process. That there are so many other facets to be explored only confirms that Godard's and Farocki's work is as relevant (or more so) as it was ten years ago. There

8 In his obituary for *Frieze* magazine, Thomas Elsaesser notes that he and Farocki shared a fascination with the films of the Institut für Film und Bild in Wissenschaft und Unterricht (FWU): educational 16-mm films that were used in classrooms from 1950 onwards. See Thomas Elsaesser, "Harun Farocki. Obituary," *Frieze* online, http://frieze-magazin.de/archiv/features/harun-farocki/ (accessed August 16, 2014).

9 *Cinema like never before*, January 20 through April 23, 2006, Generali Foundation, Vienna; also shown in a different version from May 12 through July 8, 2007, Akademie der Künste, Berlin. Publication: Antje Ehmann, Harun Farocki, eds. *Cinema like never before* (Cologne: Walther König 2006). *Voyage(s) en utopie. Jean-Luc Godard 1946–2006*, April 24 through August 14, 2006, Centre Pompidou, Paris. Publication: Nicole Brenez, David Faroult, Michael Temple, James Williams, Michael Witt, eds. *Jean-Luc Godard, Documents* (Paris: Centre Pompidou 2006).

is much more to say about their elective affinities, and I would be happy if this book could become the starting point for a wider discussion.

Now that I am writing this preface, my deepest regret is that Harun Farocki is no longer here to share his immense knowledge, inventiveness, wit, integrity, and intelligence with us. His sudden and unexpected death in July 2014 turns the following pages into a document of sorrow and commemoration. I feel an enormous gratitude for having known him, and dedicate this book to his memory.

Berlin, August 2014

Introduction

Two Image Researchers

"Even saying you don't want to follow him can turn you into a little Godard."
Harun Farocki[1]

At the *documenta* X in 1997, alongside two chapters from Jean-Luc Godard's video series Histoire(s) du cinéma, visitors were able to view the film Still Life[2] by Harun Farocki. While the final four-hour version of Godard's montage is a unique attempt to visualize a hundred years of (film) history not as a text but as a condensed mix of superimposed images, sounds, written inserts, and recontextualized quotations, Farocki's film is based on an apparently simple comparison. Godard layers and creates "image compresses";[3] Farocki juxtaposes and dissects. His parallel montage counters classical sixteenth- and seventeenth-century still-life painting with documentary footage from the studios of 1990s commercial photographers in which the same objects—clocks, food, glasses, money—become images. In advertising, one could say, the symbolic reference, which in the paintings of the sixteenth century evoked the divine through the objects, is superseded within the image by the deification of the goods themselves.

Seven years later, an exhibition entitled *The Government*[4] took place at the Kunstraum Lüneburg. Again, a work by Harun Farocki was linked to one of Jean-Luc Godard's films, and in this case both works actually came into contact with one another. The supermarket scene from Tout va bien was projected onto a screen stretched across the exhibition space. The reverse side showed an excerpt from Farocki's video The Creators

1 Harun Farocki, "Passion," *Filmkritik* 7/1983, 317–328: 317.

2 Histoire(s) du cinéma, F 1988–1998, director: Jean-Luc Godard; Still Life, D 1997, director: Harun Farocki. Still Life was commissioned for documenta X.

3 Klaus Theweleit introduced the concept of *Bildkompresse* to describe Godard's methods in his book *Deutschlandfilme*: Klaus Theweleit, *Deutschlandfilme. Filmdenken und Gewalt* (Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld 2003), passim. See also the newspaper interview with Theweleit conducted by Veronika Rall in 2003: "Sachbearbeiter von Wirklichkeiten. Der Diskurs-Jockey," *WOZ. Die Wochenzeitung*, September 11, 2003.

4 See Thomas Wagner, "Wie es euch regiert," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 2, 2004 and Thomas Wulffen, "Blick zurück auf die eigenen Zustände," *Der Standard* February 23, 2004. Roger M. Buergel, joint curator of the exhibition with Ruth Noack, translated Harun Farocki and Kaja Silverman's *Speaking about Godard* (New York, London: New York UP 1998) into German. He later became the director of documenta 12, which took place in Kassel in 2007.

of Shopping Worlds, an observation film that documents the planning sessions of several architects and designers of shopping malls.[5] Tout va bien is the last feature-length film that Godard made with Jean-Pierre Gorin, his partner in the Groupe Dziga Vertov collective, and is also the only one they produced in 35-mm cinema format with international stars.[6] It represents a short interlude between the aggressive, agitprop 16-mm films made in 1968–1972 and Godard's work on video.[7] The film deals with factory and media work, the industrial strike, and consumerism critique. The scene shown in Lüneburg consists of a single tracking shot, lasting several minutes, along a tediously large number of checkout counters in a shopping center.[8] The camera initially hovers to the left, while the loud noises of cash registers and students rioting in the supermarket can be heard on the soundtrack. When it reaches the last checkout, the camera changes direction and returns just as slowly to its point of departure. The world of consumerism is thus patiently surveyed, as if it were coextensive with the visible world, to which—at least in the logic of the shot—there is nothing exterior.

The projection of sequences from films by Farocki and Godard on the front and reverse sides of a screen provokes a series of interpretations: Are the past and present of consumer society being shown here? Or is its visible front—the modern supermarket in Godard's film—being confronted by its invisible reverse side, the infrastructure of planning and control that leads to a shopping mall? Godard shows consumer space as a political space; Farocki reveals the symbolic politics that decide on the visibility and invisibility of the merchandise and the movement of consumers in modern shopping centers.

5 Tout va bien, F/I 1972, directors: Jean-Luc Godard, Jean-Pierre Gorin; The Creators of Shopping Worlds, D 2001, director: Harun Farocki.

6 The leads are taken by Yves Montand and Jane Fonda; Gorin and Godard sharply criticize the nature of Fonda's commitment to the Vietcong in their last joint film Letter to Jane (F 1972).

7 Godard only returned to the cinema in 1979 with the film Every man for Himself (F/CH 1979), after several video productions and the television series Six fois Deux (F/CH 1976) and France Tour Détour Deux Enfants (F/CH 1979). Godard's video and television work has received increased attention in recent years, including a retrospective at the Swiss Institute in New York and a resulting collection of essays: Gareth James/Florian Zeyfang, eds. *I said I love. That is the promise. The tvideo politics of Jean-Luc Godard/Die TVideopolitik von Jean-Luc Godard* (Berlin: b_books 2003). For a complete filmography of the films of the Groupe Dziga Vertov, see David Faroult, "Filmographie du Groupe Dziga Vertov," *Jean-Luc Godard: Documents*, eds. Nicole Brenez, David Faroult et al. (Paris: Centre Pompidou 2006), 132–133.

8 The shot takes up the even more famous seven-minute tracking shot of an endless traffic jam on a French highway in Godard's Week End. This film shows consumers starting their weekend, while Tout va bien shows the place where they consume during the week.

***

The Berlin filmmaker and author Harun Farocki has often acknowledged the influence of the French New Wave, above all of its most maverick representative Jean-Luc Godard. Farocki, who was born in January 1944 and is thus thirteen years younger than Godard, began his training in 1966. He was one of the first students at the newly founded film school, the Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (DFFB), which in the following two years was to develop into a center of politicization in West Berlin. Here, he made short films, such as The Words of the Chairman and White Christmas,[9] which attest to the equally strong influence of the Vietnam War, the Chinese Cultural Revolution, and the work of Jean-Luc Godard. Farocki has described his relationship to Godard in a conversation with Thomas Elsaesser:

> For me, Godard has been way out in front for the past thirty years, he always encourages me to do things, and I always found out that I do what he did fifteen years earlier. Luckily for me, not quite in the same way. [...] So many ideas are hidden in his work that although you are a different director, you can nonetheless always refer back to him.[10]

Asked whether he had ever met Godard, Farocki once said that he avoids this, which can either be taken as a mark of respect and diffidence, or as a symptom of what Harold Bloom has called the "anxiety of influence."[11] Farocki's works certainly have a varied, often explicit, sometimes hidden connection to those of Godard. A particularly evident result of this over thirty-year involvement is the book *Speaking about Godard*, published in 1998, in which Farocki dialogues around eight of Godard's films with the American film theorist Kaja Silverman.[12] But the Franco-Swiss filmmaker had also been a central point of reference in Farocki's thinking during the

9 The Word of the Chairman, FRG 1967, White Christmas, FRG 1968, director: Harun Farocki.

10 Thomas Elsaesser, "Making the World Superfluous: An Interview with Harun Farocki," in *Harun Farocki. Working on the Sight-Lines*, ed. ibid. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2004), 177–189: 178. Harun Farocki had described Godard as a "role model" almost fifteen years earlier: "He was already a role model thirty years ago: He could deal with both intellect and money—he used both of them for his productions. Today, he represents someone who thinks in terms of film." Harun Farocki, "Biographical Note," *Harun Farocki. A Retrospective*, eds. Neil Christian Pages and Ingrid Scheib-Rothbart (New York: Goethe House New York 1991), 3.

11 See Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence. A Theory of Poetry* (New York: Oxford UP 1973).

12 Harun Farocki/Kaja Silverman, *Speaking about Godard* (New York, London: New York UP 1998).

preceding decades. The links between the two have occasionally been observed and put to productive use, primarily in art-related exhibition projects,[13] but there have been no detailed studies relating the oeuvres to one another until now.[14]

There are a number of striking similarities between the two directors. Both have always accompanied their cinematic work with texts—Godard even before his first article in the *Cahiers du cinéma* and other film journals, Farocki increasingly between 1974 and 1984 as an author and editor of the periodical *Filmkritik*.[15] As such, they can also be discovered as authors[16] who comment on their films in many different ways: on the one hand, through the voice-over commentaries in the films themselves, intertitles, books quoted, read, and processed; on the other, in accompanying texts, interviews, draft screenplays, research notes on individual films. The dialectic of proximity and distance between text and image is one of

13 The implications of this shift to different sites of presentation should be considered separately: What does it mean that more and more filmmakers have been moving from the cinema to the art scene since the 1990s? Does a film automatically become art through its presentation as an installation? Isaac Julien is also an example of the move from the cinema or television film to the gallery, along with Matthias Müller or Martin Arnold in the area of experimental film. See also *Texte zur Kunst*, September 2001, vol. 11, no. 43 [special edition on art and film] and the exhibition catalogue *Moving Pictures. Fotografie und Film in der zeitgenössischen Kunst*, ed. Renate Wiehager (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz 2001). An excellent catalogue on the mutual influence of art and film after the Second World War is *Hall of Mirrors. Art and Film since 1945*, ed. Kerry Brougher (New York: Monacelli 1996). In 2006, Harun Farocki and Antje Ehmann curated an exhibition entitled *Cinema like never before*, whose aim was "to detach image analyses from the discursive and enable them to be experienced through compellingly conceived visual configurations" (*Cinema like never before*, Generali Foundation Vienna, January 20 to April 24, 2006).

14 One exception is a short text by Christina Scherer. See Christina Scherer, "Bilder kommentieren Bilder: Die Analyse von Film im Film. Schnittstellen zwischen Harun Farocki und Jean-Luc Godard," *AugenBlick* 34, December 2003 [special edition on Godard and consequences], 73–85.

15 Bettina Klix has written an excellent text about this journal, which Rainald Goetz has described as the "central committee of young hard thought": Bettina Klix, "Das Zentralkomittee der Politik des Sehens," *Jungle World* 28, July 4, 2001. Farocki has published a short retrospective on the journal: Harun Farocki, "Filmkritik," *Fate of alien modes*, eds. Constanze Ruhm et al. (Vienna: Secession 2003), 103–104.

16 A step in this direction has been taken by a volume of selected texts by Farocki: *Harun Farocki: Nachdruck/Imprint. Texte/Writings*, eds. Susanne Gaensheimer and Nikolaus Schafhausen (Berlin: Vorwerk 8 2001). For the connection between Farocki's films and texts, see Volker Pantenburg, "Visibilities. Harun Farocki between Image and Text," 12-40. Many of Godard's interviews and texts have been collected in the two-volume French publication *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. 1, 1950–1984, ed. Alain Bergala (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma 1998) and *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. 2, 1985–1998, ed. Alain Bergala (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma 1998), henceforth quoted as *Godard par Godard I* and *Godard par Godard II*.

the crucial methods with which the coordinates of what can be called an "image" are determined. The texts find their way into the films, but the films simultaneously extend into the texts: "Indeed, some of your films exist as a written text and as a film," remarks Elsaesser in a conversation with Farocki,

> without the one canceling out the other, but also because it seems to me that your writing is already a form of filming, of spacing, editing, of transposing ideas into images and actions. On the other hand, there is also a sense in which for you the cinema is not a substitute for writing. On the contrary, writing has, since the advent of cinema, achieved a new definition, a new purity and outline that is paradoxically due to the existence of cinema.[17]

This kind of dovetailing of reception (reading) and production (filmmaking, writing) is constitutive of Harun Farocki's method. In the 1970s, while working on Between Two Wars,[18] he described this kind of organization as a "compound system":

> Following the example of the steel industry, in which every waste product flows back into the production process and almost no energy is lost, I try to compound my works. I finance the basic research on the material with a radio broadcast, review certain books studied during this research in other broadcasts, and some of what I look at goes into television programs.[19]

More than thirty years later, this compound system has a different form. Since the discovery of Farocki's works by the art world in the 1990s, they have increasingly been presented in exhibitions and much less so in the cinema. Production can now be financed at least partially by galleries and art exhibitions; some works have both installation and television versions. The close relationship to texts remains unchanged, however, with the continuing appearance—if less regularly than during Farocki's *Filmkritik*

17 Elsaesser, "Making the World Superfluous," 179.

18 Between Two Wars, FRG 1977/78, director: Harun Farocki.

19 Harun Farocki, "Notwendige Abwechslung und Vielfalt," *Filmkritik* 8/1975, 360–369: 368f.

years—of notes on films, theoretical texts, or topical interventions, as in the case of the Iraq War of 2003.[20]

The interplay of film and text, in which the one is put into perspective by the other, is practiced just as intensively by Jean-Luc Godard. He too has always highlighted media boundaries in the very act of transgressing them. It is well known that he thought of his criticism as filmmaking (and vice versa), and that he accepted the invitation to a lecture series in Montreal in 1978 only on the condition that it would be seen as a "screenplay" for a film project—one he was only able to make a start on ten years later.[21] The fact that in the case of both artists their cinematic work, although understood as "work with images," often proceeds from books matches this logic of intermedia connection. In one sense, Godard's entire output can be interpreted as the compensatory gesture of a failed writer, who, despite having apparently renounced writing, continues to hold firm to the book: "I wanted to publish a debut novel with Gallimard. I tried 'Night is falling...' but I couldn't even finish the first sentence. Then I wanted to become a painter. And finally I made films."[22] Perhaps books migrated into Godard's films as a reflex against this early failure. It is hard to find a Godard film without books, from which the actors read, which are quoted in the soundtrack, whose titles are invoked, or which are even used as props, like the walls of Mao's *Little Red Book* in La Chinoise.[23] For Harun Farocki, the claim can similarly be made that his films and videos, despite their concentration on the image, are always the result of textual work, which in this case means research, the theoretical schooling of the eye, the confrontation of the seen with the said. Seeing is not only the result of previous acts of looking but also adjusts itself to what is read. In a long interview about his work, Farocki once described the textual side of this

20 See, for example, Harun Farocki, "American Framing" [1999] and "Controlling Observation" [1999], ibid., *Nachdruck/Imprint*, 292-304 and 306-320, which were written in connection with The Creators of Shopping worlds and Prison Images. Farocki's "war diary" appeared in two parts in the weekly newspaper *Jungle World*: Harun Farocki, "Der Tod der anderen," *Jungle World* 15, April 2, 2003 and "Experten und Projektile," *Jungle World* 16, April 9, 2003. A longer version in five parts can be found on the March and April 2003 pages of the film weblog *new filmkritik* (http://newfilmkritik.de/archiv/2003/03/ and http://newfilmkritik.de/archiv/2003/04/; accessed February 20, 2012).

21 For a short overview of the making of Histoire(s) du cinéma, see Joachim Paech, "Intermediale Figuration. Am Beispiel von Jean-Luc Godards *Histoire(s) du Cinéma*," *Mediale Performanzen. Historische Konzepte und Perspektiven*, eds. Jutta Eming, Annette Jael Lehmann, Irmgard Maassen (Freiburg: Rombach 2002), 275-295: 287ff.

22 Jean-Luc Godard, "Les livres et moi" [1997], *Godard par Godard II*, 432–439: 436.

23 La Chinoise, F 1967, director: Jean-Luc Godard.

"doubled gaze" as "filming my library."[24] An approximative reconstruction of this library reveals a conspicuous lack of distinction between theoretical and literary texts, between primary and secondary literature.[25] "The Second World War didn't go into a novel by some new Tolstoy, more into Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*,"[26] is how Farocki explains the close connection between narration and argumentation that also structures his films. Despite its narrative elements, Between Two Wars could equally be understood as the film version of one of the sociologist Alfred Sohn Rethel's theories, and, in addition to non-fiction books on the Vietnam War, Carl Schmitt's *Theory of the Partisan* also went into Before Your Eyes Vietnam.[27]

The correspondences between Godard and Farocki go beyond this narrow textual aspect, however: Both artists have written not only about their own productions but also about other directors and the overall conditions of filmmaking. They both combine self-reflection with a marked interest in the history of the cinema, its forms of expression, and its entanglement in economic contexts and constraints. Finally, for both of them, the year 1968 was an important break that strongly shaped a political concept of filmmaking: one that was opposed to the established film industry and reliant as far as possible on autonomous production.[28] This critical approach

24 Rolf Aurich/Ulrich Kriest, "Werkstattgespräch Harun Farocki," *Der Ärger mit den Bildern. Die Filme von Harun Farocki*, ed. ibid. (Konstanz: UVK 1998), 325–347: 343.

25 I refer here to the numerous interviews with writers that Farocki conducted for *Filmkritik*. The long conversations with Heiner Müller (5/1981), Peter Weiss (6/1981), or Georg K. Glaser (7/1982) are examples of Farocki's interest, since the 1980s at least, in literary writing and procedures. See also Rembert Hüser, "Wo fängt das an, wo hört das auf? Laudatio zum Peter Weiss-Preis für Harun Farocki," *Peter Weiss Jahrbuch* 2003 (St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag 2003) 21–31.

26 Rembert Hüser, "Nine Minutes in the Yard: A Conversation with Harun Farocki," Thomas Elsaesser (ed.) *Harun Farocki. Working on the Sight-Lines* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2004), 297–314: 313.

27 Before Your Eyes Vietnam, FRG 1982, director: Harun Farocki.

28 The year 1968 is particularly important for cinema history: In February, thousands of students and cultural practitioners, including Roland Barthes and Jean-Luc Godard, demonstrated against the dismissal of Henri Langlois as director of the Cinémathèque Française. In May, François Truffaut, Jean-Luc Godard, and others forced the discontinuation of the Cannes Film Festival. In Berlin the wave of politicization was closely linked to the DFFB, the film school where Harun Farocki was studying. For the complex "1968 and the cinema," see the informative catalogue *That Magic Moment. 1968 und das Kino*, eds. Hans Hurch, Bert Rebhandl (Vienna: Viennale 1998), in which contemporary texts and retrospective essays by those involved are collected. For a contemporary reconstruction of the events in France, see Enno Patalas, "Zum Beispiel Frankreich," *Filmkritik* 8/1968, 553-560. A short retrospective on the French developments can also be found in Joachim Paech, "Vor 20 Jahren. Das Kino lehnt sich auf," *epd*

to the medium of film—particularly around and after 1968—was formed by Marxist-materialist positions, which caused Godard to break temporarily with traditional cinema. After Farocki's expulsion from film school,[29] he was able to produce Inextinguishable Fire,[30] which was successful in political circles, but he was then dependent on television commissions for many years. Only in 1977 was Between Two Wars released, having been financed by all its participants.

Despite these parallels, the confrontation of Farocki's and Godard's work could raise an objection: Shouldn't Farocki's films—with the exception of the melodrama Betrayed[31]—be seen as documentaries, and Godard's as feature films? Don't they belong to two fundamentally different filmic registers, here the fictional and there the factual? The answer from Godard's and Farocki's perspective must be that the question is wrongly framed, because they both proceed from the uncertain difference between fiction and reality in the medium of film. For although the distinction between feature film and documentary has turned out to be one of the most tenacious in film-historical analysis, theoretically it is barely sustainable. As much as the mere recording of reality implies a framing, fictionalizing act, the arrangement and shaping of reality for the camera inevitably results in an implicit documentation of this process. Not only do both filmmakers challenge the basic distinction, they have also turned the relationship between reality and invention the subject matter of their films and texts. Godard seems to be more strongly attached to the cinema than Farocki; however, and despite his references to visual art, he essentially appears to work within the boundaries of cinema and film history. "Like Godard, Farocki has produced a political metacinema; yet whereas Godard has focused on the classic genres of film, Farocki concentrates on its military-industrial

film 7/1988, 24–27. See also Sylvia Harvey, *May '68 and Film Culture* (London: BFI 1978), 16-27; a chronology of the events can be found on pages 121–125.

29 For the political debates at the DFFB, which was temporarily renamed the Dziga Vertov-Akademie by its students, see Tilman Baumgärtel, *Harun Farocki. Vom Guerillakino zum Essayfilm. Werkmonografie eines Autorenfilmers* (Berlin: b_books 1998), 56–78. Seventeen other students were expelled from the school together with Farocki—including Hartmut Bitomsky (director of the DFFB from 2006–2009), Holger Meins, and Philip Sauber—after their occupation of the principal's office in November 1968. For the early history of the DFFB, see Volker Pantenburg, "Die Rote Fahne. Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin, 1966–1968," *1968. Ein Handbuch zur Kultur- und Mediengeschichte der Studentenbewegung*, eds. Martin Klimke, Joachim Scharloth (Cologne, Vienna: Böhlau 2006), 259–268.

30 Inextinguishable Fire, FRG 1969, director: Harun Farocki.

31 Betrayed, FRG 1985, director: Harun Farocki.

exploitation,"[32] writes Hal Foster, pointing out a possible difference. Yet although this differentiation should not be neglected, two points can be made here: First, Godard's interest goes beyond the cinema. He may not concentrate on the use of images in contexts of industrial production and destruction, as can be observed in Farocki's work since the 1980s, but his films, too, always aim for something more than the cinematographic and contribute to a general image critique. Second, Farocki's image critique, although not adhering to classical film genres, is always deeply grounded in practices of cinematic mise en scène. The way in which cinema films narrate and treat their material, and what this implies, is a constant background to his analysis of "found" images from archives and image-recognition software.

Despite my concentration on two directors, Harun Farocki and Jean-Luc Godard only represent one focus of this study. The texts and films of these two auteurs are also the point of departure for a further discussion of the relationship between the medium of film and theoretical discourse. The understanding of "film as theory," as the title of this book suggests, is a particularly strong feature of the work of Farocki and Godard, but it is in no way restricted to these two directors or to the "genre" of the auteur film. Many of the procedures described here can readily be found in conventionally structured narrative films, in which the interweaving of different visual levels or reflexive loops activate a process of thinking about the medium itself.[33] The works of Farocki and Godard are not special because they categorically differ from other films: the crucial thing is that for several decades, and on a basic level, they have emphatically raised questions about "cinematic thinking": How can concrete visible material be combined in such a way that something invisible and abstract can be perceived? To what extent has the medium of film introduced a new form of thought, above all through the possibilities of montage? Few other filmmakers have shown such a continued interest in using film not primarily as a medium of entertainment, and in developing the technical *dispositif*—be it cinema film, video installation, or television broadcast—into a theoretically versed instrument of research that can make things visible that would otherwise have remained hidden.[34] Farocki's and Godard's aim is a form of

32 Hal Foster, "The Cinema of Harun Farocki," *Artforum*, November 2004, 156–161: 158.

33 See, for example, Katharina Sykora's analysis of the use of painting in the classical Hollywood film: Katharina Sykora, *As you desire me. Das Bildnis im Film* (Cologne: Walther König 2003).

34 Farocki's film titles particularly indicate this central interest: Before Your Eyes Vietnam (1982), As You See (1986), Eye/Machine (three-part installation, 2000-2003). The list could be extended by several further titles.

image research that doesn't see film as a self-evident, easily manageable recording medium but that primarily aims to clarify its presuppositions: What characterizes the images that are generated by the filming process and subsequent montage? What rules does their combination follow? How can the conventional approach to images be countered by a praxis that turns the image itself into an agent of theory? These questions are not asked to the same degree in every film. Godard's Le Gai Savoir or Farocki's As You See foreground the question of how images function more directly than Breathless or The Interview, one of the "observation films" in which Farocki documents institutions that rehearse economic, social, or leisure behavior.[35]

Nevertheless, the investigation of images—not only in the realm of cinema, but also as a structuring feature of all areas of life—has been the central motivation of both filmmakers for several decades. Writing about Farocki's contribution to documenta X, Bert Rebhandl claims that "in principle," he has "built his entire filmic work around the analysis of images,"[36] and this can quite easily be applied to Godard as well. It may be less obvious than with Harun Farocki, but Godard also wants his images to be an analysis of the image: "Art and theory of art, at one and the same time; beauty and the secret of beauty; Cinema and apologia for cinema,"[37] he wrote early in his filmmaking career about the cinema of Jean Renoir, outlining an agenda for his own auto-reflective cinema praxis of the coming decades. The ideal unity of art and art theory—here film and film analysis—can be traced back to one of the central demands of the Romantic aesthetic, which gives an important indication as to how "theory" should be understood in this book. In the light of early Romantic thought, it can be described as an approach that challenges the distinction between object language and meta-language. Theory implies a double and oscillating view of one's subject matter and methods. It thus requires—and chapter one will address this apparent paradox—a

35 Apart from The Interview (1996/97), the "observation films" (a termed coined by Tilman Baumgärtel) hitherto include An Image (1983), Indoctrination (1986/87), Image and Sales or: How to Depict a Shoe (1989), How to Live in the FRG (1991), Retraining (1994), The Appearance (1996), Words and Games (1998), The Creators of Shopping Worlds (2001), Nothing Ventured (2004), In Comparison (2009), and most recently Immersion (2010), A New Product (2012), and Sauerbruch Hutton Architects (2013).

36 Bert Rebhandl, "Bildsprache. documenta X: Sieben Filmemacher im Kunstfeld," *Meteor* 9 (1997), 4–12: 9.

37 Jean-Luc Godard, "Jean Renoir" [1957, 1972], *Godard on Godard*, ed. Tom Milne (New York: Da Capo 1986), 62–64: 63.

practice that switches back and forth between concrete object and abstract generalization, and at the same time turns this back and forth into the subject matter of the work. This also means that theory is understood as a general term for various forms of articulation rather than a strictly delimited field. At many points this concept borders on related terms, such as (self-)reflection or criticism.[38] However, there are various reasons for my recourse to the term "theory". For one thing, it relates the films and texts of Farocki and Godard to the developments in the humanities since the 1960s, and attempts to analyze them against the background of the contemporary version of Romantic positions that has emerged as theory during this period.[39] On the threshold of structuralist-oriented concepts and the various models that followed them, which are usually described as "poststructuralism," the linguistic constitution of one's own speaking comes into primary focus.

The term "theory" as it has evolved over the past fifty years—and thus in parallel to the works of Farocki and Godard—is closely linked to the production of relationships and references. "Representation," in the sense of a distanced, unambiguous connection between signifier and signified, becomes an equivocal practice; new forms of combining secondary and primary texts, object language and meta-language, are put to the test. This is not least connected to the reflexive development that can equally be observed in French theory and the films of the New Wave and subsequent cinematic tendencies:

> [The] contemporary practice of taking the signifying practice as one's subject, often in the very text in which the signifying practice under scrutiny is occurring, is paralleled by developments in film criticism and theory. (At this point and in this context, the distinction between theory and practice is not without ambiguity, insofar as a film which reflects upon its own or some broader signifying processes is necessarily theorizing, and theorizing is itself a practice in need of theoretical scrutiny.)[40]

38 I mean the concept of criticism that Walter Benjamin reconstructed in his study of early Romantic thought; see Walter Benjamin, "The Concept of Criticism in German Romanticism" [1920], ibid., *Selected Writings*, vol. 1, eds. Marcus Bullock, Michael William Jennings (Cambridge: Harvard UP 5th ed. 2002), 116–200: 149ff.

39 See, for example, Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory. A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford/New York: Oxford UP) 1997, 1–17.

40 Don Fredericksen, "Modes of Reflexive Film," *Quarterly Review of Film Studies*, no. 4, summer 1979, 299–320: 303f.

This book examines the convergence that Don Fredericksen detects here between film and theory. It understands theory as the result of observation, the investigation of visibility. In doing so, it follows the concept's etymological trail. "As the words 'reflection,' 'speculation,' and 'theory' indicate, there is more than a casual relation between visual representation and the practice called theorizing (*theoria* comes from the Greek word 'to see')."[41] This is not to claim that this form of theory—as much as it is organized in images—can relinquish language altogether. Theory in the medium of film depends on constant translation. What the film presents as a mixture of forms, sounds, and images can be read as an appeal to unmix and re-relate it in text and image. Godard has described this dialectic of mixing and unmixing, of confusion and clarity, as crucial to his poetics: "To show a mix-up clearly is quite difficult. This is always the kind of cinema I've tried to do and it's a little confusing for people. So I try to be clearer in this confusion by showing, by being interested in mixing things up."[42]

Methodologically, this book tries to follow the examples of Godard and Farocki, who don't apply theory to their films from the outside but develop it from the image sequences themselves. Instead of mobilizing the conceptual apparatus of film semiotics, psychoanalysis, or other disciplines, the films are understood as contributions to a theoretical discourse whose potential is developed in readings of individual works or thematic complexes. Against this background, it is also possible to understand the striking disagreement between Godard and structuralist theorists at the film festival in Pesaro in 1966, after which Godard was often unjustly accused of a "refusal of theory."[43] While semioticians like Pier Paolo Pasolini or Roland Barthes sought scientific precision to analyze the "langage cinématographique," Godard preferred phenomenologically oriented thinkers such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and trusted in the theoretical (and less systematic) vigor of cinema itself: "We are the children of the cinematographic language," he wrote after the festival with the characteristic pathos of a "ciné-fils."[44] "Our parents are Griffith, Hawks, Dreyer, and Bazin, and Langlois, but not you. And apart from that,

41 William J. T. Mitchell, "Metapictures," ibid., *Picture Theory* (Chicago: Chicago UP 1994), 35–82: 82.

42 Jean-Luc Godard, *Introduction to a True History of Cinema and Television*, ed., trans. Timothy Barnard (Montreal: Caboose 2014), 319.

43 See also Marc Cerisuelo, "Godard et la théorie: tu n'as rien vu à Pesaro," *CinémAction*, no. 52, 1989 [special edition on "Le cinéma selon Godard"], 192–198: 194.

44 This was how the film critic Serge Daney described himself. Godard wrote an obituary of him following his early death: Jean-Luc Godard, "Le Ciné-Fils" [1992], *Godard par Godard II*, 252–253.

how can you talk about structures without images and without sounds?"[45] Godard insists on the autonomy of the visual, which is perfectly capable of formulating its own non-predicative theory and of speaking for itself. The image comes before the structure; it adheres to its own laws and brings about theoretical "concepts" in the conjunction of images themselves.

Godard's reservations about the academic and systematic, which are reflected in his confrontation with Barthes, point beyond their immediate cause. They are also a sign of the gap between the cinephile discourse of Farocki's and Godard's texts and films and the language of the university. What was irreconcilably opposed in the 1960s has meanwhile, at least partially, become a smooth transition. Farocki and Godard both stand for the attempt to bring about a dialogue between the two poles: to inform cinephile writing and speaking academically, and to school academic language through film;[46] to embrace theories, but to think about them in terms of the cinema and its images.[47]

45 Jean-Luc Godard: "Trois mille heures de cinéma" [1966], *Godard par Godard I*, 291–295: 294.

46 Many interesting thinkers who have written and continue to write about the cinema occupy this "intermediate space" somewhere between the cinema and the auditorium: Frieda Grafe, Klaus Theweleit, Gilles Deleuze, Raymond Durgnat, Manny Farber, Serge Daney, Gilberto Perez, Alain Bergala...

47 Godard is accordingly one of the directors who is most discussed in universities, and Farocki's films have also received much academic attention since the 1980s. The literature on Godard is now vast: Julia Lesage's bibliography *Jean-Luc Godard. A Guide to References and Resources* appeared as early as 1979 (Boston: Hall 1979). Alongside the early studies by Richard Roud, Jean Collet, and Ian Cameron (Richard Roud, *Jean-Luc Godard* [London: Secker & Warburg 1967]; Jean Collet, *Jean-Luc Godard* [Paris: Seghers 1967]; Ian Cameron [ed.], *The Films of Jean-Luc Godard* [London: Studio Vista 1967]), numerous monographs and anthologies have appeared over the years, of which only a few can be named here: David Sterritt, *The Films of Jean-Luc Godard. Seeing the Invisible* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1999), Raymond Bellour, Mary Lea Bandy, eds. *Jean-Luc Godard. Son + Image 1974-1991* (New York: Museum of Modern Art 1992), Michael Temple, James S. Williams, eds. *The Cinema Alone. Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985-2000* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2000), and finally the substantial conference proceedings *For Ever Godard*, eds. Michael Temple, James S. Williams, Michael Witt (London: Black Dog Publishing 2004). The first biography of Godard was written by Colin MacCabe: *Godard. A Portrait of the Artist at Seventy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux 2003). An immensely useful source book with much hitherto unpublished material was published in conjunction with Godard's exhibition *Voyage(s) en utopie* at the Centre Pompidou in 2006: Nicole Brenez, David Faroult et al., eds. *Jean-Luc Godard. Documents* (Paris: Centre Pompidou 2006). The state of research on Harun Farocki is more easily outlined. Two volumes published in 1998 examined his work for the first time in detail: Rolf Aurich, Ulrich Kriest, eds. *Der Ärger mit den Bildern. Die Filme von Harun Farocki* (Konstanz: UVK 1998) and the dissertation by Tilman Baumgärtel, *Harun Farocki. Vom Guerillakino zum Essayfilm. Werkmonografie eines Autorenfilmers* (Berlin: b_books 1998). An English-language anthology on Harun Farocki appeared in the fall of 2004 and contains a number of previously published texts, together

The starting point of this study is the fact that theoretical thinking is generally identified with texts.[48] Logical thinking seems to be even terminologically bound to the word (to the Logos). The texts and films of Godard and Farocki suggest a different model, in which the practice of image production also implies an image theory. In this way they exemplify the conflation of theory and practice. Writing about painting, Maurice Merleau-Ponty has emphasized the inseparability of (intellectual) theory and (physical) practice: "The painter, any painter, *while he is painting*, practices a magical theory of vision."[49] For Merleau-Ponty, artistic access to the world is much more than an aesthetic supplement to scientific or philosophical thought: painting is itself a mode of cognition. His proposition can be taken up and generalized. Must theoretical thought take place in words? May not images, and above all the complex combination of images and sounds that cinema has established since the early twentieth century, be an equally or more suitable vehicle? Theoretical thought, according to this hypothesis, need not necessarily adopt a written or oral form of communication but can certainly be articulated in the medium of film. This applies all the more when the theory in question concerns the image, its production, function, distribution, and reception, as is the case in the works of Godard and Farocki.

The theoretical character of these films and texts is challenging for their readers and viewers. The work of both authors has long been considered sophisticated, difficult, and complex. The excursiveness and range of association, the breaking off and restarting, with which one is continually confronted in Godard's films, is also characteristic of his texts. Gilles Deleuze has described this as Godard's "creative stammering,"[50] in which he sees an effective method of avoiding the precepts and restrictions of

with an introduction by the editor: Thomas Elsaesser, ed. *Harun Farocki. Working on the Sight-Lines* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2004). Most of the research on Farocki since then has been published in catalogues accompanying numerous exhibitions and retrospectives. See *Harun Farocki, Against What? Against Whom?* eds. Antje Ehmann and Kodwo Eshun (London: Raven Row/Koenig Books 2009).

48 Peter V. Zima's *Was ist Theorie? Theoriebegriff und Dialogische Theorie in den Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften* (Tübingen/Basel: Francke 2004), which stakes out the conceptual field of "theory," also fails to consider a theoretical dimension of images. See above all the author's foreword (ix-xiv) and introduction (1–23, particularly 8), which formulate the linguistic nature of theoretical thought as a *conditio sine qua non*.

49 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind" [1964], in *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader*, ed. Galen A. Johnson, (Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press 1993), 121–149: 127.

50 See Gilles Deleuze: "Three Questions on Six Times Two," *Negotiations*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia UP 1995), 37–45: 44. See also Vrath Öhner "Godards Stottern", *Meteor* 6 (1996), 28–31.

a logocentric discourse organized from the top down. For Deleuze, this can primarily be seen in the combination of images and sounds, which doesn't follow a causal or temporal principle but occurs with Godard by means of a simple AND. The AND, a basically *assembling* conjunction, takes the place of a hierarchical relationship between the individual discursive elements; it unbalances the evenly flowing language and draws attention to the linguistic material itself. Thinking of Godard's AND as an articulating form of montage brings us to a concept that is central both to his work and that of Harun Farocki.

This book considers the theory that arises from montage from five different perspectives. The first chapter—"Le film qui pense"—sets the framework and outlines the relationship between the medium of film and various forms of theorizing. If the initial concern during the early phase of the silent film was to establish cinema as an art form and remove it from the popular-cultural context of the funfair, from the 1920s onwards—particularly in the Soviet Union—many writers, who also understood their own cinematic practice at least as implicit theory, began to describe film theoretically. Sergei Eisenstein's reflections on "intellectual montage" provide a first conceptualization that closely links film to thought and seeks to identify theory and filmic practice with one another. This tradition, barely established, initially broke off with the victory of the sound film. It was superseded as a descriptive model by theories of cinematic realism for which, despite their differences, the names of André Bazin and Siegfried Kracauer can stand. The far-reaching separation between discursive and filmic thought was thus permanently accomplished. For even the critics of realistic film theories during the 1960s and 70s generally assumed that every theory approached film from the outside in textual form. Against such claims of the incompatibility of theory and visual practice, I propose an alternative model in which film itself becomes a theorizing subject through the use of montage and other ways of relating images to one another. Such a model is supported by recent approaches in visual studies—William J. T. Mitchell's concept of the "metapicture,"[51] for example—and by the deliberations of Klaus Theweleit or Frieda Grafe, who champion Godard as a representative of genuine "filmic thought."[52]

Yet what would such a "film theory" look like, and where can it be observed? Chapters two ("The Camera as Brush—Painting and Film") and

51 See Mitchell, "Metapictures,", 35–82.

52 See Theweleit, *Deutschlandfilme*, 7–87.

five ("Taking Pictures—Film and Photography") are devoted to the fault lines inherent in the medium along which theory, as understood in this book, comes about. With the transitions between painting and film on the one hand, and photography and film on the other, two media constellations come into view at which the juxtaposition of different types of images triggers a reflexive potential that gives film itself a perspective on its functioning and possibilities. The question of the self-reflexive possibilities of film is asked here—more explicitly than in classical "film in film" constellations—in an oscillation between two kinds of image. By focusing on a different type of image, film speaks about itself.

Between the discussion of photography and painting, two chapters might seem to lead away from the images themselves in order to take a different perspective on "theory." Chapter three ("Deviation as Norm—Notes on the Essay Film") considers various positions on the essay film that pertain to the problems dealt with in this study but discuss them in relation to genre rather than on the level of visual relationships. The term "essay film," which is frequently used to describe the work of Farocki and Godard, obscures the fact that in these films fundamental questions are asked about images—their possibilities, their ideology, their integration into social and political contexts—that can't easily be covered by a generic term. In the adaptation of an unclear literary genre, the infelicitous and rather undifferentiated term "film essay" tends to compartmentalize films whose questions transcend the work at hand and address more general questions of image production. The formal determination of the essay undertaken by Theodor W. Adorno during the 1950s can—contrary to his declared dislike of the cinema—be read as an implicit theory of montage and applied to the construction of films: "The essay [...] takes the anti-systematic impulse into its own procedure, and introduces concepts directly, 'immediately,' as it receives them. They gain their precision only through their relation to one another."[53] Adorno not only sees a relationship between the essay form and thinking as montage; he also locates the genre as a whole in proximity to the theoretical in his assertion that it has an "affinity to the visual image"[54] and is "necessarily related to theory."[55]

The production of film theory, in the sense of this study, is not only found at the fault lines between different types of images; it also occurs at

53 Theodor W. Adorno: "The Essay as Form" [1958], trans. Bob Hullot-Kentor and Frederic Will, *New German Critique*, no. 32. (Spring–Summer, 1984), pp. 151–171, 160.

54 Ibid., 170

55 Ibid., 165

a specific location within the filmmaking process, to which chapter four ("Cut—Interlude in the Editing Room") is devoted. As the motif and site of "practical theory," the editing suite is central to both directors' investigations of the preconditions of cinematic articulation. Reading images and relating them to one another, as a simultaneous act of reception and production, is a defining element of the work at the editing table, which in this respect most clearly conflates thinking about film with film itself: the cutting room is the place where filmic thinking and practical action come into contact. The filmstrip becomes tactile material that the editing will alter. Hand and eye are productively interconnected. The hand has also been an astonishingly consistent motif of Farocki's and Godard's films for more than thirty years and is the subject of chapter six. Its title, "Two or Three Ways of Speaking through the Hands," evokes the various ways of talking about the relationship between abstract conception and concrete intervention. In Farocki and Godard, the hand becomes a communicative organ ("medium") that links theory and practice.

***

In the 1950s, the French film critic and theoretician André Bazin, who may be seen as both inspiration and antagonist to Farocki and Godard, drew a simplifying but helpful distinction between two types of filmmaker: those who believed in the image, and those who believed in reality.[56] The "realists" (following Leon Battista Alberti's recommendation to see the painting as a window[57]) attempted to look through and beyond the image on the screen. The believers in the image, however, were sensitive to the mechanisms of filming that produced the "reality effect."[58] Bazin himself used this provisional distinction to characterize American cinema between 1920 and 1940. Applying it to Jean-Luc Godard and Harun Farocki also

56 See André Bazin, "L'évolution du langage cinématographique" [1951,52, 55], ibid., *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma*, vol. I, *Ontologie et langage* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf 1958), 131–148: 132. For a critical reconstruction of both positions, see Rudolf Kersting, *Wie die Sinne auf Montage gehen. Zur ästhetischen Theorie des Kinos/Films* (Basel/Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld 1989), 268f. Bazin's main work *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma?* [1967–71] is available in English in a translation by Hugh Gray: André Bazin, *What is Cinema?*, vols. 1 and 2 (Berkeley: University of California Press 2004). There is also a new translation by Timothy Barnard of selected essays from the book: André Bazin, *What is Cinema?* (Montreal: caboose 2009)

57 See Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, trans. Rocco Sinisgalli (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge UP 2011), 39.

58 This is Roland Barthes's much-quoted phrase. See Roland Barthes, "The Reality Effect" [1968], *The Rustle of Language*, trans. Richard Howard (Oxford: Blackwell 1986), 141–148.

reveals its limitations, since both filmmakers have always insisted on the inseparability of image and reality. Talking about the image in film means talking about the reality portrayed, and talking about reality also implies the medium through which it is portrayed.[59] In La Chinoise, Godard condensed this to a succinct formula: art doesn't have to do with the reflection of reality, but with the reality of reflection. In this sense, the films of Godard and Farocki direct a doubled gaze onto the world. In their attempt to observe the medium as much as what is conveyed "through" it, they are sensitive to the materiality of both reflecting tool and reflected object.

59 Yvonne Spielmann has analyzed Godard's reflexive practice in a similar way: "In the strict sense the self-reflexive film analysis of media-conveyed reality includes two aspects of mediality: the staging of reality and the production or preservation of an *effet de réel* [reality effect, trans.], on the one hand, but also the interruption of and intervention into this staging, on the other (brought about by the fragmentation and destruction of continuous proceedings, familiar contexts, and visual homogeneity). In film terminology these phenomena are known as mise en scène and montage." Yvonne Spielmann, "Zerstörung der Formen: Bild und Medium bei Jean-Luc Godard," *Theater und Kino in der Zeit der Nouvelle Vague*, eds. Volker Roloff, Scarlett Winter (Tübingen: Stauffenburg 2000), 111–124: 114.

1. Le film qui pense

Image, Theory, Practice

> "Theory has not really been able to arrive at the image—to speak, to hold to, to live by the image; infinitely less has it been able to retain the image in its words. Perhaps this union of theory and image is an impossible marriage. Yet I continue to believe in the surprises that could arise, at this level, from encounters of the word and the image."
>
> Raymond Bellour

Raymond Bellour's statement comes from his text "Analysis in Flames," which returns to the debates around "film as text" and is concerned with the relationship between text and image.[1] Bellour's retrospective diagnosis sounds resigned, but a cautious optimism can also be sensed. On the one hand, he considers the attempt to bring theory and visual practice into closer approximation to have failed, surmising a fundamental irreconcilability between the two spheres: although image and text occasionally come together—in particular film-analytical texts, for example—their relationship remains supplementary and does not bring about a real synthesis that would allow us to characterize film as a theoretical language in its own right. On the other hand, this failure can equally be understood as an appeal: where word and image collide, but also where images enter into mutual relationships, something new might emerge.

Bellour's observation is my point of departure for a more general inquiry. In fact, a clear dividing line is usually drawn between the visual practice of cinema and the field of theory. Theory—even image theory—is per se not image, but needs to be translated into the language of the logos. William J. T. Mitchell summarizes this position in his canonical book *Picture Theory*: "We tend to think of 'theory' as something that is primarily conducted in linear discourse and logic, with pictures playing a passive role of illustrations, or (in the case of a 'theory of pictures') serving as the passive objects of description and explanation."[2] Why this incompatibility? one might naively ask. Couldn't the irreconcilability also be understood as a challenge? From this point, at any rate, questions can be posed that will form a guideline throughout the following text. What is the relationship between theoretical

1 Raymond Bellour, "Analysis in Flames," *Diacritics*, vol. 15, no. 1 (spring 1985), pp. 52-56, 56.

2 William J. T. Mitchell, "Metapictures," ibid., *Picture Theory* (Chicago: Chicago UP 1994), 35–82, 82.

discourse and visual language? How can one put forward an argument not only *with* images but *from* the images themselves?[3] And more basically, could the apparent distance between both areas help to illuminate the general relationship between theory and practice?

Theory and practice are usually understood as opposites, as mutually exclusive poles of thought and action, of abstract reflection and concrete realization. Here the thinking head, there the executive hand: two body parts by which the spectrum of initial conception and subsequent realization of idea and material can be gaged. Theory implies abstraction and distance. In its aim to make general assertions, it needs to abstract from concrete action and individual cultural artifacts, and to adopt a distanced position of observation in regard to its subject matter. Theory—and here is the measure of its validity—is supposed to encompass and explain all the phenomena within its defined territory. Yet in doing so, theory can never be both explanation and object of explanation—the solution as well as the problem. Theory shouldn't be affected by its subject matter; it knows no feelings.

There are good reasons for questioning such juxtapositions. From the perspective of poetics and literary theory, this has been occurring for at least two hundred years. Attempts not only to combine theory and practice—which even within a model of combination continue to be thought of as separate areas—but also to contest the very premise of splitting the field of discourse into theory and practice, can be found in the aesthetic theory (and practice, one would need to add) of early Romanticism. In one of his most well-known programmatic comments, Friedrich Schlegel remarked that transcendental poetry would have to "portray itself within each of its portrayals, being at all times poetry and the poetry of poetry."[4] In this sense, all writing practice should be combined with a self-reflection of the same practice. Schlegel outlines one of the most incisive and far-reaching concepts that early Romantic thought drew on: a distanced, self-confident speaker position is called into question—not for incidental, playful reasons but out of epistemological necessity—in favor of a mingling of discursive

3 See also Gottfried Boehm, who traces the important stages in the marginalization of the image and suggests how a "logic of images"—a non-predicative logic, that is—might look: Gottfried Boehm, "Jenseits der Sprache? Anmerkungen zur Logik der Bilder," lecture in the series "Iconic Turn" at the Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich, January 16, 2003, printed in *Iconic Turn. Die neue Macht der Bilder*, eds. Hubert Burda, Christa Maar (Cologne: DuMont 2004), 28–43.

4 Friedrich Schlegel, "Athenäums-Fragmente" [1798], *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe* vol. II, ed. Ernst Behler (Munich, Paderborn, Vienna: Schöningh 1967), 165–255, 204.

levels. In practice this skepticism leads to a permanent, ambiguous oscillation between meta- and object language, and in the end to a questioning of the differentiation between them. This not only has consequences for the neat separation of linguistic levels but also disrupts the question of genre. As Friedrich Schlegel, the most important "practical" theorist of early Romanticism along with Novalis, puts it: "Such a theory of the novel would itself have to be a novel,"[5] and thus a text that would be understood as both theory and practice.[6] What Schlegel calls for is an attitude that doesn't categorically differentiate between poetic theory and authorial practice but makes the utopian concurrence of both areas the aim of thinking and writing.

Film as a "Concrete Medium"

These thoughts may seem inappropriate to introduce a discussion that is essentially concerned with two filmmakers. But they refer to basic questions that can equally be asked about working with images. How can we think about the relationship between theory and practice? Is it possible to imagine developing (film) theory within film, and if so how might this look? As long as we are involved with language, particularly the poem, whose concentrated form always seeks to be read as both a message and a reflection on it, the connection between theory and practice may be obvious. The poetological program appears to be firmly woven into the practical implementation of rhyme and meter. But how are we to assess the relationship between theory and practice in the medium of film? Can Schlegel's adage be translated to mean that a theory of film could only be imagined *as film*? Can films express themselves "theoretically" at all, or at least be understood as theoretical expressions? It may at first come as a surprise to see film placed in such emphatic proximity to the theoretical. After all, filmic reality—excluding animation and certain forms of abstract film that do without the camera altogether—deals per se with a concrete material, which is merely "doubled" in the film image. Film, to echo Kant, is entirely a matter of intuition; it is separated from the concept by an

5 Friedrich Schlegel, "Brief über den Roman" [1800], ibid., 329–339, 337.

6 In Novalis's *Fichte-Studien* the mingling of theory and practice is conceived even more programmatically: "Theory without practice, practice without theory, is incomplete." (Novalis, *Werke, Tagebücher und Briefe Friedrich von Hardenbergs*, vol. 2, *Das philosophisch-theoretische Werk*, ed. Hans-Joachim Mähl (Darmstadt: WBG 1999), 57).

apparently unbridgeable divide.[7] Within the dichotomy between empty thought and blind intuition developed in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, one would undoubtedly have to characterize the reproductive mode of film as "blind," and Jean-Luc Godard's blind assistant editor in JLG/JLG[8] may be an allusion to this specific blindness of film.

The point, however, is that this blindness can also be considered film's decisive accomplishment. It was its exactness of reproduction, which apparently allowed no leeway for interpretation or abstraction, that was revolutionarily new about the medium in the early twentieth century. Only for this reason was film also able to serve as a media utopia for a number of materialistically oriented theories.[9] The technology itself put a stop to unrestrainedly abstract philosophizing. Speculative flights of fancy seemed to have become impossible because of the dictate of documentary reification. However the diagnosis was evaluated, the medium was considered "mindless," and this could either be condemned or welcomed—depending on whether it was felt to indicate anti-intellectual dullness or the fulfillment of anti-idealistic hopes. But there was general agreement that in film a moving train was so alarmingly "real" that the viewers, according to the gladly recounted (although undocumented) anecdote,[10] hastily fled the hall at the first public projection on December 28, 1885—a scene which Jean-Luc Godard took up ironically in 1963 in his film The Carabineers, when the naive protagonist Michel Ange anxiously covers his face with his arms during a similar scene.[11] According to Hartmut Winkler, the success of the medium of film can partially be ascribed to the fact that it formulated a *concrete* answer to the groundlessness of linguistic representational models, which Hugo von Hofmannsthal had explored in his "Lord Chandos Letter"

7 See the famous juxtaposition of reason and the senses in "Transcendental Logic": "Without sensibility no object would be given to us, and without understanding none would be thought. Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind. It is thus just as necessary to make the mind's concepts sensible (i.e., to add an object to them in intuition, as it is to make its intuitions understandable (i.e., to bring them under concepts). Further, these two faculties or capacities cannot exchange their functions. The understanding is not capable of intuiting anything, and the senses are not capable of thinking anything. Only from their unification can cognition arise. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* [1787], translated by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1998), 193–194.

8 JLG/JLG. Autoportrait de décembre, F/CH 1994, director: Jean-Luc Godard.

9 Walter Benjamin's and Bertolt Brecht's canonical media theories greeted the medium as a materialistic release from an idealistic understanding of art.

10 The sense and purpose of propagating such legends needs to be examined separately. What is certain is that at its moment of birth, an effectiveness and power was ascribed to the medium that goes far beyond all other media.

11 The Carabineers, F/I 1963, director: Jean-Luc Godard.

of 1903, taking up Nietzsche's "mobile army of metaphors."[12] While the fin de siècle had learned to mistrust language as a field of permanent dislocations and imponderabilities, film had a stable counterpart in reality. To doubt the formation of significates in the light of floating signifiers seemed inappropriate here.

> Photography and film were enthusiastically welcomed as a release from language; in a very direct way, they realize what is anticipated as an aesthetic experience with Chandos, and they choose the same way out of the crisis: photography and film are in fact the radical form of a language exclusively articulated in *concreta*. They counter the increasingly false generality with the respectively individual, and the unity of the concept with the variety of examples. If the concept "table" can indeed be dissolved into the plurality of concrete, photographable tables, this primarily means that abstraction and subsumption, ultimately in fact the formation of significates, can be avoided.[13]

Winkler radically contrasts language and film, telling us that film functions according to a fundamentally different principle. In the light of the mistrust of language felt by Nietzsche, Hofmannsthal, or Fritz Mauthner, film does in fact appear to be an ideally language-free realm in which reality and representation match one another perfectly. But objections can easily be raised to a description of the fin-de-siècle "language crisis" and the development of the technical media of photography and film as two sides of a coin. Asking about the social groups who can be said to have "enthusiastically welcomed" the film certainly won't lead us to those who were "infected" by the language crisis. Mistrust of language has to be seen as an "intellectual disease" and did not occur in the same social class as the triumph of the cinematograph, which at least until its literary ennoblement around 1910 was closely connected to the funfair, the music hall, and vaudeville. Those who were responsible for the economic success of the cinematograph during its first two decades had a much less complicated relationship to language and neither the leisure nor the refined taste buds to upset their stomachs on Hofmannsthal's famous "moldy mushrooms."[14] However, Winkler seems less

12 Friedrich Nietzsche, "On Truths and Lies in an Extramoral Sense" [1873] *Nietzsche and the Death of God Selected Writings*, ed. Peter Fritzsche (New York, Boston: Bedford, St. Martin`s 2007), 47–51: 51.

13 Hartmut Winkler, *Docuverse. Zur Medientheorie der Computer* (Munich: Boer 1997), 206f.

14 See, for example, an early analysis of the cinema audience: "Concerning the viewers, they overwhelmingly came from the working classes. Persons from the middle classes were entirely

concerned with a precise socio-historical argument than with a systematic description of film as a "concrete medium." His definition can raise some initial questions pertaining to "film as theory": How does this "adherence to the concrete" relate to the possibilities of theoretical expression in film? Does it merely limit these possibilities, or exclude them altogether? In other words, should film be classified as an "untheoretical" medium because of its technical a priori?

Since the 1950s, this question has repeatedly been answered with a clear "yes" by realistic film theories. Concreteness was the decisive distinguishing feature that set photography and film apart from all other types of image and art forms, particularly in those writings, such as Siegfried Kracauer's *Theory of Film* or André Bazin's film-theoretical texts, that emphasize the realism of the medium. There seemed to be no reason to doubt the adequacy of filmic representation; film adhered to reality—or reality to film—like a shadow to the object that throws it. This not only prevented the articulation of abstractions, but, in the decades following its invention, also spoke against the consideration of film as an art form at all. For according to common sense, artistic expression and conceptual abstraction were equally reliant on the accentuation of differences from their source material in order to attain an individual style. It thus seemed impossible that art could be created through mere doubling.[15] Or—to rephrase this media specificity in semiotic terms—the "pure" denotation of the film image appeared to surpass all connotation, which in spoken and written language has the greater part in the formation of meaning.[16] It is exactly this point that Siegfried Kracauer wishes to make in the subtitle of his book with his programmatic definition of film as a tool for the "redemption of physical reality." What he describes as a "marked affinity for the visible world around us,"[17] and repeats like a mantra throughout the book, structurally occupies

unrepresented in many cinemas. The better families and the educated appear to ignore the cinema entirely." "Drucksache Nr. 2317 der Nationalversammlung vom Jahre 1920," quoted in Konrad Lange, *Das Kino in Gegenwart und Zukunft* (Stuttgart: Enke 1920), 124.

15 For this reason, numerous nineteenth-century arguments against photography repeat themselves in the early debate on cinema. Wolfgang Ullrich has shown how the photographic blur was primarily used to ennoble the apparently cold, inartistic medium by technically imitating the painterly techniques of Romantic landscape painting. Wolfgang Ullrich, *Die Geschichte der Unschärfe* (Berlin: Wagenbach 2002), 19-29.

16 For a differentiation of the denotation and connotation of cinematic image sequences, see Christian Metz, "Quelques points de sémiologie du cinéma" [1966], ibid., *Essais sur la signification au cinéma*, vol. 1 (Paris: Klincksieck 1971), 95-109, 99ff.

17 Siegfried Kracauer, *Theory of Film. The Redemption of Physical Reality* (New York: Oxford UP 1960), ix.

the same place as Winkler's unavoidable mimetic reification. The flipside of the argument is that film, with this emphatic relationship to reality, is denied any possibility of abstraction. Kracauer's model therefore rigorously subsumes conceptual thinking under the heading of "uncinematic content." The concrete relationship of the medium to reality is diametrically opposed to the formulation of general concepts, which ultimately leads Kracauer to make the categorical judgment that "conceptual thinking is an alien element on the screen."[18] He ontologically isolates the nature of film in its "realism," and sees a departure from the essence of the medium in increasing abstraction. André Bazin, by opening his essay collection *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma?* with the famous text on the "ontology of the photographic image," follows the same argumentation: "unformed reality," which is understood as a literal *impression* on the film material and only secondarily as an *expression*, is declared the Archimedean point of the cinematic, and artificial intervention into the material through editing and montage is neglected as supplementary. In his detailed study on montage, Rudolf Kersting summarizes the positions of Bazin and Kracauer as follows: "The reality continually invoked by Kracauer and Bazin exists as a *factum* which precisely conceals what it literally is: made. The real for them is per se unconceived. Its substance is metaphysical."[19] However, their reasons for emphasizing film's attachment to concrete reality are quite different. With Bazin—and this is decisive for Jean-Luc Godard, whose thinking was influenced by the *Cahiers du cinéma* milieu of the 1950s—the real and the concrete are a dual opposition to both the illusory world of the studio and the illusionary political agendas prior to 1945. The significance of Italian neo-realism, which brought the real back into film as a morally purifying force, cannot be overestimated here. The much-quoted statement that a film shot also implies a moral attitude should be interpreted to mean that film regains credibility in its connection to unstaged social reality. Reality is thought of as an area that is resistant to ideologization and manipulation.

The emphatic embrace of film as the "art of the concrete" is older than the ideas of Bazin and Kracauer, who hold this to be the crux of film. In the 1920s, which saw the first wave of film theory, the referentiality of the technical medium of film was an important theoretical coordinate. In 1930, Béla Balázs, whose film theory is far from realistic, as it is primarily devoted to the formal and technical possibilities of the cinematic alteration

18 Ibid., 264.

19 Rudolf Kersting, *Wie die Sinne auf Montage gehen. Zur ästhetischen Theorie des Kinos/Films* (Basel, Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld 1989), 261.

of reality, comes to an initially similar conclusion. At the end of his second book, *The Spirit of Film*, whose very title contains a counter position to the realist view, he writes:

> Film is the art of seeing. It is therefore the art of the concrete. In obedience to its inner destiny it resists the murderous abstraction that has succumbed to the spirit of capitalism, turning objects into commodities, values into prices, and human beings into impersonal labor power. Despite everything the photographic technique of the close-up forces film to develop a realism of detail that situates us unflinchingly in present time.[20]

Balázs does not welcome film's enforced reification from an anti-theoretical position—his three books on film should themselves be read as artistically associative film theory—but from a materialist perspective: he finds abstraction "murderous" because it defines one of the key principles of capitalist economization. While goods, prices, and the workforce can only be produced through de-individualization and exchangeability (and themselves, as is intended, produce de-individualization and exchangeability), film relies on the visibility and proximity of every object recorded on camera. For this reason, according to Balázs's utopia, it resists all objectification.[21] Balázs, unlike Bazin and Kracauer, isn't opposed to intervention into the material through montage[22] but to the leveling-down brought about by an indiscriminate abstraction at the cost of the individual.

The constellation developed in the thinking and cinematic practices of Godard and Farocki is a different one. Both filmmakers, particularly Godard, were strongly influenced by André Bazin, whose reflections on films in their combination of concrete observation and abstraction took film discourse to a new level in postwar France. In 1951, he founded the *Cahiers du cinéma*—the world's most influential film journal to this day—which offered Godard and many other protagonists of the later New Wave a platform for their early texts on film. Bazin is therefore, alongside Henri Langlois, the director of the Paris Cinémathèque, the second founding figure of postwar French cinema—someone whom Godard describes as a

20 Béla Balázs, *Early Film Theory. Visible Man and The Spirit of Film*, ed. Erica Carter, trans. Rodney Livingstone (New York/Oxford: Berghahn Books 2010), 229.

21 This also applies when the resulting film itself can be sold as a product and is subject to the usual market laws.

22 At the Congress of Independent Filmmakers in La Sarraz (Switzerland) in 1929, Balázs had met Eisenstein, whose films he and many others had followed with interest and enthusiasm in Berlin.

"forefather," and who is the inspiration for Godard's type of filmmaking *through* text production.[23] "Bazin was a filmmaker who didn't make films, but made cinema by talking about it like a colporteur."[24] Godard's early interest in editing and montage can at least indirectly be understood as a reaction to Bazin's preference for the uncut long take, which contained more reality than the edited sequence. "Because of my education, I was always full of a spirit of contradiction. I said to myself, they say 'green,' but couldn't you say the opposite? Bazin said 'sequence shot,' but I asked myself whether ultimately the classical series of shots might not be good too."[25] For Farocki, who published a selection of Bazin's writings in German translation in 1975, the French critic and theoretician was more of a general impulse. "Bazin was above all an inspiration. His literacy and talent enabled him to place film within intellectual history without it becoming philistine."[26]

As far as their relationship to "realism" is concerned, the matter is more complicated with Farocki and Godard. Even if the work of both filmmakers has an affinity to "documentary" techniques, it is also informed by a profound doubt about the direct reproducibility of "reality" by the camera. In their shared belief in the research character of the medium and its ability to contribute decisively to the investigation of reality, they are certainly on Bazin's side. In their skepticism about cinematic methods, however, they are in disagreement with him and belong to a theoretical tradition that has subjected the medium of film to sharp criticism since the 1960s. A group of mainly French theoreticians turned against the essentialization of the cinematographic concept of reality, as primarily found in Siegfried Kracauer, and insistently pointed out the ideological implications of the *dispositif* and the pseudo-objective aspects of the technology (camera, projection), in which a particular, culturally given perspective is maintained.[27] According to this view, "reality" is in no way free of ideology. On the contrary, what is portrayed in film should rather be seen as an

23 For Bazin's importance to French film lovers during the 1950s, see Antoine de Baecque, "Un saint en casquette de velours," ibid., *La cinéphilie. Invention d'un regard, histoire d'une culture. 1944-1968* (Paris: Fayard 2003), 33-61.

24 Jean-Luc Godard, "L'art à partir de la vie. Entretien avec Jean-Luc Godard par Alain Bergala" [1985], *Godard par Godard I*, 9-24, 10.

25 Ibid.

26 Tilman Baumgärtel, Harun Farocki, "Aus Gesprächen," Tilman Baumgärtel, *Harun Farocki. Vom Guerillakino zum Essayfilm. Werkmonografie eines Autorenfilmers* (Berlin: b_books 1998), 204-228, 208.

27 The canonical texts of "apparatus theory" are the conversation between Marcelin Pleynet and Jean Thibaudeau, "Economical, Ideological, Formal..." trans. Elias Noujaim, *May '68 and Film Culture*, ed. Sylvia Harvey (London: BFI 1978) 149–160, and Jean-Louis Baudry, "Ideological

effect of the specific parameters of the apparatus. The space recorded by the camera and projected onto the screen should not be understood as a mere doubling of a "naturally" existing three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface but as the continuance and petrification of a perspectival code that was bindingly *set* during the Renaissance; that is, with the development of bourgeois society. It is a construction whose ideological presuppositions should be revealed.[28] The cinematic "apparatus" and its implications, criticized from a materialist position, were invoked against the idea of filmic realism: "The cinematographic apparatus is a strictly ideological apparatus; it disseminates bourgeois ideology before anything else. Before a film is produced, the technical construction of the camera already produces bourgeois ideology."[29] While these statements can be taken as a shared basis, the importance and interpretation of what should be understood in detail under "ideology" differs in the debate's various texts. Whereas for Marcelin Pleynet the film camera—via its precursors the camera obscura and the box camera—perpetuates the fixation of a standardizing bourgeois gaze, for Jean-Louis Baudry its constitution of a perceiving subject is decisive and should be questioned and subverted from a psychoanalytical perspective.[30]

No matter how great the differences between the "apparatus" theoreticians are in detail, their criticism and theory are clearly directed *against* the medium of film when they unmask its technical requirements as ideological. Film criticism thus also became an institutional critique focused beyond the individual film on the entire complex of "cinema." In this critique, which mainly appeared in the journal *Cinéthique* (founded in 1968) and in avid debate with Godard's polemical films from the Dziga Vertov Group, it is easy to identify the premises of the (literary) theory then current in Paris: critique of the apparently "natural" code of visual representation, an attack on the metaphysical prerequisites of all cinematographic identification, demystification of the "aura" of cinema, etc. This critique is primarily aimed at the negative effects of the cinematographic *dispositif*; it is essentially

Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus," *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology,* ed. Philip Rosen (New York: Columbia UP 1986), 286–298.

28 Apparatus theory would in fact be unthinkable without the concept of ideology propounded by Louis Althusser, as one of its primary aims was to attack the ideological premises of the cinema *dispositif*.

29 Pleynet, Thibaudeau, "Economical, Ideological, Formal ...", 158–159.

30 See *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology*, 219–298. Parts 2 ("Subject, Narrative, Cinema") and 3 ("Apparatus") introduce the positions of Baudry and others (Christian Metz, "The Imaginary Signifier").

inimical to the cinema. The Parisian "apparatus debate," which was more widely echoed in America than in Germany, may have been a theoretically versed examination of the cinema and the ideological aspects of its technical a priori, yet in its repudiation of cinema as a whole it is hardly compatible with a re-evaluation of film as a theoretical instrument.

A positive "utopia of film,"[31] on the other hand, which attempts to use the capacities of film as an instrument of research, was formulated in Germany in Alexander Kluge's films and texts of the 1960s. Unlike the objections raised in France, Kluge's critique is not directed against the technical apparatus but attempts to use it differently in order to reveal a reality that is always more than the merely visible. Where Pleynet and other writers involved in the "apparatus debate" attack the hidden manipulative aspects of camera and projection, Kluge discovers the constructive elements on the level of reality itself. For Kluge, who is as much a cinematically operating theoretician as Godard and Farocki, reality is always composed of various levels and "shots," containing as much so-called fiction as "plain" reality.[32] In both his film montages and his texts, Kluge repeatedly counters the simplifying view of reality with a sense of possibility inspired by Robert Musil.[33] A sense of possibility that, as I will show, can particularly be developed through the principles of *montage*.

The relationship between concrete material and abstract thought is also central to Kluge's reflections on the utopia of conceptual thinking in film. His premise, which he developed in his 1964 essay on the fundamentals of cultural and film politics, would be shared by Farocki and Godard, particularly as Kluge often refers to the latter: "The cinematic movement has great similarities to the brain's stream of thoughts and images; the main thing is to entrust oneself to this stream."[34] For Kluge, too, the equivalence of thought and image promotes the idea of film as an instrument of research; films are not—or at least not exclusively—after entertainment but "aimed

31 In 1964, Kluge published a text entitled "Die Utopie Film" in the journal *Merkur*, no. 201, reprinted in Alexander Kluge, *In Gefahr und größter Not bringt der Mittelweg den Tod. Texte zu Kino, Film, Politik*, ed. Christian Schulte (Berlin: Vorwerk 8 1999), 42–56.

32 See Alexander Kluge, "Die realistische Methode und das sog. 'Filmische'" and "Die schärfste Ideologie: daß die Realität sich auf ihren realistischen Charakter beruft," ibid., *Gelegenheitsarbeit einer Sklavin. Zur realistischen Methode* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1975), 201–211 and 215–222. In the second essay, Kluge brings fiction and reality together in the first sentence: "It must be possible to portray reality as the historical fiction that it is."

33 For Robert Musil's example, see Alexander Kluge's acceptance speech on receiving the Heinrich von Kleist Prize in 1985: Alexander Kluge, "Wächter der Differenz. Rede zur Verleihung des Kleist-Preises," *Kleist-Jahrbuch* 1986, ed. Hans Joachim Kreutzer (Berlin: Schmidt 1986), 25-37.

34 Kluge, "Die Utopie Film," 44.

at knowledge."[35] Kluge explained these ideas in more detail a year later, when he extended the principle of montage from the image alone to the relationship between image, sound, and language. "The coincidence of linguistic, acoustic, and visual forms and their integration into the montage enables films to make more complex statements than would be possible with one of these forms alone."[36] So from the very beginning, film has been less of a "medium" than a "multi-" or "inter-medium." From Kluge's perspective, what arises at the interface of the different levels in an equilibrium between the concrete aspects of the mise en scène and the abstract aspects of the montage should be described as a cinematic argument. Film theory in this sense occupies a middle position between intuition and concept:

> In film, radical intuition in the visual part and conceptual possibilities in the montage combine into an expressive form which, like language, enables a dialectical relationship between concept and intuition without the stability this has in language. This gives particular possibilities to the literary language adopted by film.[37]

With Kluge, this involves a clear deferral. The theoretical potential of film isn't something that directly expresses itself in the filmic material but rather something that needs to be synthesized and transformed by the viewer: "The expression is not materially concentrated in the film itself, but arises in the mind of the viewer in the cracks between the cinematic elements. This kind of film does not envisage a passive viewer who 'only wants to sit and watch'."[38] In Kluge's argument, this displacement of the utopian from the film itself to the challenged and active viewer becomes a social force through the accumulation of individual utopian moments. Potential for social change arises from supposedly individual audience responses, from "sensuousness," "imagination," "willful obstinacy," to name a few of Kluge's key terms.

Harun Farocki and Jean-Luc Godard are also coordinates on this map of theoretically oriented critique of a naive understanding of cinematic realism. For the films and texts of both directors formulate alternatives to Kracauer's dichotomy of reality and abstraction. In one of his early texts,

35 Ibid., 53.

36 Alexander Kluge, Edgar Reitz, Wilfried Reinke, "Wort und Film" [1965], Klaus Eder, Alexander Kluge, *Ulmer Dramaturgien. Reibungsverluste* (Munich: Hanser 1980) [*Arbeitshefte Film* 2/3], 9-27, 16.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid., 15.

"Defence and Illustration of Classical Construction,"[39] whose argumentation seems to be rooted in the classical poetics of the "invisible cut," Godard suggests that the apparent realism of film can only be thought of in terms of the tension between concrete elements and abstraction. Every depiction in a good film both transcends mimesis and indicates something more general: "[...] there is a look, posed so afresh on things at each instant that it pierces rather than solicits them, that it seizes in them what abstraction lies in wait for."[40] The cinematic perspective should accordingly be understood as a twofold gaze, directed to concrete reality (this is the mise en scène, the level of duplication) but identifying in it what points toward abstraction and "depicting" this through the montage.

> Two forms of gaze always coexist within them [cinematic images; author's note]: the technical camera eye and the human eye; an optical record, on the one hand the fact of never quite being able to ignore the concrete object in front of the camera, on the other an appropriation of this record, its integration into a history of images, and into stories told in (visible and invisible) images. The images are pictures ("object images": photographic records of camera realities on celluloid, polyester, or acetate) and they are "metapictures," images not of "things in themselves," but of society.[41]

Because they are part of a series of prior or future—potentially other—images, they point beyond the concrete depiction and carry the potential for abstraction within them. The work of Godard and Farocki shows a particular kind of emphasis on the connection between reification and abstraction. Rather than a fixed border, the relation between "concrete" and "abstract" in the medium of film should be seen as a smooth transition. What can be observed in both filmmakers is a reversal of the initial question: talking about reality in the medium of film doesn't necessarily mean asking about the degree of reality of the depicted world but above all about the reality effect of media images themselves. Film has equally to do with a reality of images and a secondary realism induced by the

39 Godard's title quotes Joachim du Bellay's "Défense et illustration de la langue française," from 1549, one of the programmatic documents that reevaluated the French language. Immodestly and ironically, Godard places himself within the tradition of advocacy for a new language—here, of the cinema.

40 Jean-Luc Godard, "Defence and Illustration of Classical Construction" [1952], *Godard on Godard*, ed. Tom Milne (New York: Da Capo 1986) 26-30, 27.

41 Kersting, *Wie die Sinne auf Montage gehen*, 268.

depiction itself. The realism of the medium should not be seen as its essence but as the *function* of a particular technically and culturally determined principle of representation. The films of Farocki or Godard should by no means be described as less "realistic"; rather, they attempt to devise a realism that doesn't play reification off against a possible theorization but discovers the one within the other. Even in the 1960s Richard Roud pointed out that the apparent opposition of realism and abstraction misses something in the case of Godard. As much as Godard's early films seek a direct access to reality in their abandonment of artificial lighting and preference for live sound, they are characterized by "the tensions created between the demands of reality and the demands of abstraction."[42]

This is why the films and texts of both authors have always been deeply rooted in their respective contemporary societies. The student movement, the Vietnam War, the Algerian War, but particularly the images these political events generated, were an important background to the production of images and texts during the 1960s. "Theory" was not something that ignored concrete reality but incorporated it into wider considerations. When Harun Farocki and other DFFB students forced the abandonment of the Knokke Experimental Film Festival in 1967 with a deliberate intervention in protest against the Vietnam War,[43] it was not without reason that this was accompanied by the slogan "Réalité! Réalité!" directed against the aloofness of the cinematic avant-garde. One had to take a stand on Vietnam, according to the protesters, and therefore purely aestheticizing formal experiments, as represented by some of the films shown, should be rejected. "Reality" was anything other than a neutral depiction of the status quo but a counter-reality of other, more reflected and theoretically informed images aimed against the inflationary television representations of war. Images that criticize other images, and in this critique delineate an alternative visual space. Godard's and Farocki's position is thus that of a specific realism in which filmmaking becomes a political act.

42 Richard Roud, *Jean-Luc Godard* (London: Secker & Warburg 1967), 82. In the same chapter, Roud gives a series of examples of the "double pull towards both reality and abstraction" (93) from Vivre sa vie, Contempt, and Masculin féminin. However, "abstraction" is very generally taken to mean any clearly recognizable *shaping* of the material.

43 See Baumgärtel, *Harun Farocki*, 13-17.

Film Theories / Film as Theory

A look back at more than a century of intellectual involvement with film shows that the problem of reification was interpreted very early on as an indication of the medium's unsuitability for theory. This naturally didn't limit the possibility of talking *about* film theoretically: the gradual recognition of film as an art form resulted in the necessity of setting it apart from the established arts and assigning it to a discursive field of its own. A lively debate, which attempted to define film in terms of its media similarities to and differences from the established narrative forms of literature and the theater, began in 1909 at the latest.[44] What has gone down in film history as the "Kino-Debatte" primarily refers to the growing visibility of film in contemporary aesthetic discussion. The attempts to emancipate film from the funfair and establish it as an art form in its own right were largely aimed at upgrading the *content* of the medium. It was hoped that the adaptation of traditional literary material and collaboration with well-known writers[45] would attract a bourgeois audience.[46] This development had two major consequences: film came to be largely identified with narration, while its medium-specific innovations were considered less important.

From the very beginning, however, attempts were made to see film less in its capacity to remediate content but to analyze it in terms of its *form* and the possibilities this offered, and to emphasize its differences from literature and theater. Early on, for example, Georg Lukács developed his

44 See Anton Kaes, ed. *Kino-Debatte. Literatur und Film 1909-1929* (Munich, Tübingen: dtv, Niemeyer 1978). I am aware of the unclarity of the subsumption of the theater under *narrative* forms, but I am less concerned here with a comparison between the dramatic and the epic than with the narrative element common to both. This should be seen in contrast to other forms of expression, such as music.

45 In 1913, the first "film d'auteur" movement culminated when the film industry tried to interest numerous authors in writing film texts. See Joachim Paech, "Autorenfilm," *Deutsche Literatur zwischen 1945 und 1995. Eine Sozialgeschichte*. ed. Horst Albert Glaser, (Stuttgart: UTB 1997), 693–712. See also Kaes, "Einführung," *Kino-Debatte. Literatur und Film* 1909-1929, 1–36. The year 1913 also saw the publication of Kurt Pinthus's *Kinobuch,* for which authors such as Else Lasker-Schüler, Max Brod, or Albert Ehrenstein wrote "film pieces": *Das Kinobuch,* ed. Kurt Pinthus [1913/14] (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer 1983).

46 "In the realm of cinema, all the non-narrative 'genres'—the documentary, the technical film, etc.—have become marginal provinces, steps, so to speak, while the *full-length novel-like feature film* (which is usually called a 'film' in a kind of succinct convention) is increasingly outlining the royal road to cinematic expression." Christian Metz, "Quelques points de sémiologie du cinéma," ibid., *Essais sur la signification au cinéma*, vol. 1 (Paris: Klincksieck 1971), 96.

"Thoughts toward an aesthetic of cinema,"[47] which attempted to distinguish the medium from bourgeois theatre through the concept of "the present." In the following years, until the introduction of the sound film, numerous literary figures from Thomas Mann to Bertolt Brecht participated in the sometimes polemic discussion in Germany on the contentious new art form. In the phase of early film theory, apart from the basic recognition of the artistic value of film, a distinction can be made between theories of acting, camera, and montage, which analyze film in terms of respectively individual elements.[48] Film was established at least as an *object* of theoretical reflection relatively soon after its invention, but there was also a restriction: film was now allocated an exactly delimited functional space, which can be described by the words "entertainment" and "distraction," and in exceptional cases by "aesthetic edification." Rudolf Arnheim's essay title *Film as Art*[49] can therefore be taken as a summing-up of the majority critical position. The title of this book, *Film as Theory*, is intended to set a different focus, attributing a cognitive potential to film alongside its function as art or entertainment[50] and identifying a space in which art, entertainment, and knowledge coincide.

The discipline of art history, which sought to gain a new competence as a general science of images during the 1990s, has particularly raised the question of a possible "self-awareness" of the image. In this context the various self-reflexive mechanisms of artworks have (once again) come under scrutiny.[51] William J. T. Mitchell's concept of the "metapicture" was particularly helpful for the present study. The metapicture is the central element of what Mitchell, who became interested in the relationship between text and image through his involvement with William Blake, calls "picture

47 Georg Lukács, "Thoughts toward an aesthetic of the cinema," *Polygraph: An International Journal of Culture and Politics*, no.13 (2001), 13–18.

48 See Helmut M. Diederichs, "Zur Entwicklung der formästhetischen Theorie des Films," *Geschichte der Filmtheorie*. ed. ibid., (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 2004), 9-27, particularly 12ff.

49 Rudolf Arnheim, *Film as Art* [1932] (Berkeley: Universtiy of California Press 2006).

50 A similar proposition, though weighted otherwise in relation to different material, is put forward by Thorsten Lorenz in his reading of the "cinema debate" literature: "The philosophy of the cinema needs be read as the switch from genitivus objectivus to genitivus subjektivus for this reason. [...] Philosophy is cinematographic. It sustains itself, zombie-like, on discursive life because it cunningly conceals the moment of its technical realization." Thorsten Lorenz, *Wissen ist Medium. Die Philosophie des Kinos* (Munich: Fink 1988), 19.

51 See Valeska von Rosen, *Mimesis und Selbstbezüglichkeit in Werken Tizians. Studien zum venezianischen Malereidiskurs* (Emsdetten, Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag 2001) and Victor I. Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting*, trans. Anne-Marie Glasheen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997).

theory."[52] Terminologically referring to the logical-philosophical relationship between meta-language and object language, and to the critical concept of "metafiction,"[53] Mitchell sees the metapicture as an image that is capable of reflecting "itself." Metapictures are by no means restricted to art—on the contrary, taking a "picture" in a broad sense to mean any conceivable image is essential to Mitchell's "iconology". This is why he finds many of his examples in cartoons, magazine illustrations, or caricatures. Although he sees Velazquez's *Las Meninas*, which Foucault declared an iconic "representation [...] of Classical representation,"[54] as an image that almost encyclopedically integrates self-reflective mechanisms—through motivic scaling, different viewing standpoints, reflections, and framings—the famous "duck rabbit"[55] picture puzzle, which works with the viewer's perceptive instability, is just as central to Mitchell's argument. In the context of such images, which he calls "dialectical pictures," he suggests a definition that can be applied to the films of Farocki and Godard: "Metapictures are pictures that show themselves in order to *know* themselves: they stage the 'self-knowledge' of pictures."[56] This definition implies two things: first, a trust in images that implicitly anthropomorphizes them. The metapicture is thought of as a "self-aware image," to which both autonomy and agency are attributed. Second, that the theoretical is not something that needs to be added to the image from the outside but exists in the references, ambivalences, and discontinuities within its surface. Mitchell develops his ideas in relation to still images—primarily drawings and paintings—but they can be productively applied to films.[57] Furthermore, it can be suggested that particularly

52 In the title, *Picture Theory*, the word "picture" can be read as both a noun and an imperative.

53 See Patricia Waugh, *Metafiction. The Theory and Practice of Self-conscious Fiction* (London u.a.: Routledge 1993).

54 Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things. An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* [1966] (New York: Vintage Books 1994), 15.

55 The "duck rabbit," whose epistemological implications also occupied Wittgenstein in his *Philosophical Investigations*, is an illustration that originated in the nineteenth-century humorous weekly *Fliegende Blätter*. The viewer sees either a duck with a long beak or a rabbit with long ears, depending on which of the picture's two images is seized upon by his or her cognitive apparatus. For a discussion of this image, see Mitchell, "Metapictures," ibid., *Picture Theory* (Chicago: Chicago UP 1994), 35– 82: 45–57.

56 Ibid., 48. See also the in-depth interview with William J. T. Mitchell in the journal *Mosaic*: "Essays into the Imagetext. An Interview with William J. T. Mitchell," *Mosaic* 33/22 (June 2000), 1-24.

57 Particularly since Mitchell, although in a different chapter, discusses Billy Wilder's Sunset Boulevard as a classic metafilm, being at once a reflection on the dying silent film and the love of the classic movie. See William J. T. Mitchell: "Beyond Comparison. Picture, Text, and Method," ibid., *Picture Theory* (Chicago: Chicago UP 1994), 83–107, 100ff.

in Godard's late works the puzzle picture's challenge to jump between two possible images is shifted from the cognitive apparatus of the viewer to the visual level whenever two images are not only cross-faded but merged in a flickering, pulsating alternation between two individual frames. This can occasionally be seen in his works from the 1970s—for example Comment ça va—but it becomes a major principle in his film-historical studies, such as Les enfants jouent à la Russie or Histoire(s) du cinéma.[58]

The identification of the theoretical in the image itself could be said to be an *autonomization* of the image. But this only describes one side of the model. For neither in Mitchell's theoretical deliberations nor in the practical work of Farocki or Godard does the constitution of a "self-aware image universe" lead to an abolition of the viewer but on the contrary to an activation. If every heterogeneous image, and all the more every combination of several images, is the place of a decision, then the projective space of this decision is predetermined by the material—although the decision itself as to the nature of the link between the images is always taken by the viewer. And even if the "theoretical" lies in the images themselves, it still needs to be translated in order to make this content explicit. Both Harun Farocki and Jean-Luc Godard have been carrying out such translations for several decades, and one of the tasks of this book its to translate and elucidate this work in turn. The point here is not so much that the active viewer completes an "open artwork" by filling in the gaps with his or her conceptual repertoire—this would be the idea that the viewer becomes co-author of the film to a certain extent. With Godard and Farocki, there is rather the opposing tendency that the author himself becomes the viewer. It is not only coquetry when Godard, in conversation with Woody Allen, claims to his interlocutor's amazement that he is glad to have an idea of the film *at the end of a film*, thus radically contradicting the idea of a set screenplay that just needs filming.[59] It is also an acknowledgement of being reader and viewer—in the first instance of his own films and in the work at the editing table— who imparts an interpretation to the film through the montage.

Kaja Silverman has detected in Godard's late works the "author as receiver": someone who, despite his productive presence in his films,[60] increasingly becomes their receiver through techniques of citation and

58 Comment ça va, F 1975, Les enfants jouent à la Russie, CH 1993, Histoire(s) du cinéma, F/CH 1988-1998, director: Jean-Luc Godard.

59 Meeting Woody Allen, F 1986, director: Jean-Luc Godard.

60 This particularly applies to Histoire(s) du cinéma and JLG/JLG.

dissociation. In order to distinguish this from Roland Barthes's much-quoted dictum of the death of the author, Silverman writes: "The Godard who lives on after his authorial death is not a scriptor but rather a receiver. What he receives is language itself, which now emerges as the veritable agent both of speech and writing."[61] And the numerous scenes in which Godard and Farocki appear as authors in their films do in fact show them as hinge and relay between production and reception. The editing table at which Farocki sits to view and comment on his films in the installation INTERFACE marks the same point of intersection between (seeing, intuitive) "theory" and (writing, filming) practice as Godard's place in HISTOIRE(S) DU CINÉMA: the sounds of the editing table winding back and forth and the rattle of the electronic typewriter dominate the soundtrack and identify Godard's film-historical project as the superimposition of seeing and writing, reception and production, practice and theory.

The formulation "film as theory" implies the question of what should be understood by "theory." One of the difficulties—although also a possibility—lies in the fact that the concept of theory underwent a redefinition in the 1960s. The classical model, which in empiricism and theory defines two different approaches to a problem, has—particularly in America—given way to a notion of theory as a specific form of writing and thus to a certain extent as a practice.[62] A form of writing that, as propagated by the early Romantics, thematizes "writing" and thus locates its own practice as much on the level of the described as that of describing. Theory in this sense takes part in what Richard Rorty has described as the "linguistic turn," in the course of which writing (*écriture*) became a broad term that establishes theory at the very moment in which it opens it up to the literary. The concept of "theory" is therefore in itself determined by the contradictory duality of terminological demarcation and dissolution.

Talking about theory today, however, one also needs to acknowledge the historical dimension of the term. In the early twenty-first century a look to the US, the country where French philosophy was transformed into "theory" in the 1970s, can convey the impression that the short era of theory is over. "The Latest Theory Is That Theory Doesn't Matter" was the heading of an article in *The New York Times* in April 2003. In it, Emily

61 Kaja Silverman, "The Author as Receiver," *October 96*, spring 2001, 17–34.

62 See, for example, Richard Rorty's suggestion of characterizing Derrida's project of deconstruction as a specific form of writing: Richard Rorty, "Philosophy as a Kind of Writing: An Essay on Derrida," *New Literary History*, vol. 10, fall 1978, 141–160.

Eakin reviews a conference of the journal *Critical Inquiry*, one of the most important publications on theory during the 1970s and 80s, and sums up:

> The era of big theory is over. The grand paradigms that swept through humanities departments in the 20th century—psychoanalysis, structuralism, Marxism, deconstruction, post-colonialism—have lost favor or been abandoned. Money is tight. And the leftist politics with which literary theorists have traditionally been associated have taken a beating.[63]

One reason for the symposium, entitled *The Futures of Criticism*, was a re-evaluation of the concept of theory after its zenith in the 1960s to the 1990s, described by William J. T. Mitchell as the "theory revolution of the late twentieth century." A second reason, however, was also the rebound of the "real," as the attacks of September 11, 2001 were perceived in the US. The short contributions from numerous participants, including Homi K. Bhabba, J. Hillis Miller, Fredric Jameson, and Teresa de Lauretis are helpful in determining—in this case often retrospectively and melancholically—what the concept of theory in the 1970s and 1980s entailed. Frederic Jameson outlines the origins of theory as follows: "I believe that theory begins to supplant philosophy (and other disciplines as well) at the moment it is realized that thought is linguistic or material and that concepts cannot exist independently of their linguistic expression."[64] According to Jameson, theory comes about at the moment in which the inseparability of thought and speech is acknowledged, and the insight into the linguistic character of knowledge is integrated into one's own writing practice. But the step Jameson goes on to describe seems to be even more important to this concept of theory:

> In a second moment—sometimes called poststructuralism—this discovery mutates as it were into a philosophical problem, namely that of representation, and its dilemmas, its dialectic, its failures, and its impossibility. Maybe this is the moment in which the problem shifts from words to sentences, from concepts to propositions. At any rate, it is a problem that has slowly come to subsume all other philosophical issues, revealing itself as an enormous structure that no one has ever

63 Emily Eakin, "The Latest Theory Is That Theory Doesn't Matter," *The New York Times*, April 19, 2003, p. A17.

64 Fredric Jameson, "Symptoms of Theory or Symptoms for Theory," *Critical Inquiry*, no. 30. vol. 2 (winter 2004), 403–408, 405.

> visited in its entirety, but from whose towers some have momentarily gazed and whose underground bunkers others have partially mapped out. Thus, the general issue of representation is still very much with us today and organizes so to speak the normal science of theory and its day-to-day practices and guides the writing of its innumerable reports, which we call articles.[65]

"Representation" can be said to have been the central concern of the work of both Jean-Luc Godard and Harun Farocki during the past forty years. Representation is an ambivalent term, and the interconnection of ambivalences has led both filmmakers to a political understanding of working with images. On the one hand, the medium of film is inevitably based on the principle of pictorial representation: the depiction seems to stand unequivocally for the depicted, which it substitutes. But this kind of claim to representation, whose validity was increasingly called into question in the 1960s, can also be found in the area of political processes: every act of speaking for someone else, any kind of advocacy, adheres to a model of representation that was also subject to redefinition and extension from the mid-1960s onwards. Against the background of the Vietnam War and the growing opposition to it, the question of political action was closely linked to the question of siding with America or North Vietnam. Vietnam and the problem of oppression and resistance represent central points of reference for both Farocki and Godard. Almost all the films that Farocki made during his time at the DFFB deal with the American war[66] and attempt to develop visual models that take the distance between Berlin and Vietnam seriously and do not rashly equate student protest with Vietnamese resistance. Godard's works since 1965 contain explicit references to the war in Southeast Asia. It seems crucial that with each filmmaker, both aspects of the concept of representation are linked: speaking for someone should not be separated from the *image* one has of him; that is, from his previously conveyed media image. The question of representation becomes decisive to a (visual) politics and the point at which the works of Farocki and Godard intersect with the field called "theory."

However, bringing film and theory as closely together as in the title of this book also draws attention to the discipline of film studies and its relationship to theory. Under the heading of "post-theory," David Bordwell

65 Ibid.

66 This particularly applies to WHITE CHRISTMAS (1968), in which Farocki sets Bing Crosby's hit against the bombing of Vietnam.

and Noël Carroll have called for a reconstruction of film studies that would dispense with the "Theory with a capital T" that they believe has especially defined American film studies since the 1970s and 80s. What they mean by theory is primarily an amalgam of structuralism, Lacanian psychoanalysis, post-structuralism, and Marxism:

> What we call Theory is an abstract body of thought which came into prominence in Anglo-American film studies during the 1970s. The most famous avatar of Theory was that aggregate of doctrines derived from Lacanian psychoanalysis, Structuralist semiotics, Post-Structuralist literary theory, and variants of Althusserian Marxism. Here, unabashedly, was Grand Theory—perhaps the first that cinema studies ever had. The Theory was put forth as the indispensable frame of reference for understanding all filmic phenomena: the activities of the film spectator, the construction of the film text, the social and political functions of cinema, and the development of film technology and the industry.[67]

What Bordwell and Carroll polemically wish to replace "Theory" with is in no way a new positivism limited to the production of shot lists, filmographies, and a naive, theory-free description of films. They are more concerned with maintaining close contact to the films themselves, from which the theoretical should be derived. In this respect, their strategic concept of "post-theory" is certainly in line with my own argumentation. However, the project of "post-theory" leaves the boundary between film and theory largely untouched: writing against the film theories of the 1970s continues to assume a clear distinction between the films on the one side and their analysis and theorization on the other.

To summarize how humanities and film studies "look back" at the age of theory, both positions agree that theory refers to a discursive space that consists entirely of texts. Images come into consideration as objects of investigation but do not themselves count as theoretical commentary. This limitation continues a long tradition of privileging the word, which as Logos appears to coincide with reason itself. "Logical" abstract thinking is by definition a thinking in language, which keeps images at bay in favor of sober and conceptual argumentation. It is not by chance that the critique of what Jacques Derrida describes as "logocentric" thinking is articulated at the same time and in the same place as Godard's re-evaluation

67 David Bordwell, Noël Carroll, "Introduction," *Post-Theory. Reconstructing Film Studies*, ed. ibid., (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press 1996), xiii.

of the image, and that the two projects overlap in both content and their protagonists.[68] However, it is noticeable that Derrida's numerous texts on the problem of logocentrism articulate this critique *intralinguistically* and simply counteract the dominance of a particular style of thinking and writing with different uses of language (association, repetition, deferral, etc.). The image only comes in figuratively here, when Derrida undermines discursive strategies through an elaborate use of metaphor and invokes the pictoriality of language against language itself. In 1993, the American historian Martin Jay presented a detailed study, entitled *Downcast Eyes*, that diagnosed a persistent denigration of the visual in twentieth-century French thought—including Derrida.[69] In his account of the status of the eye and visual perception in intellectual history, Jay comes to the conclusion that the equation of seeing and knowing, which fundamentally structures European thought, with numerous differentiations and nuances from ancient Greece to the French Enlightenment, went into a crisis during the nineteenth century. Partially responsible for this was the invention of photography, which delegated exact optical perception and reproduction to a machine for the first time. This technical fulfillment of the dream of exact optical representation can initially be judged a victory of the visual. However, photography also represents the disempowerment of the eye. Although liberated, the eye ironically no longer needs to look so closely, as photography is not responsible for the exact registration of reality.[70] In the words of Jean-Louis Comolli: "The photograph stands as at once the triumph and the grave of the eye."[71] Following this break, according to Jay, the eye (and by extension the image) was subject to a mistrust shared by all manner of twentieth-century philosophers, and particularly so in the French-speaking world.

This is not the place to retrace in detail Jay's reconstruction of the shifts and modifications of what he calls "anti-ocularcentric" discourse. What is primarily important in this context is his observation that since the 1960s

68 Godard tried to hire Roland Barthes as an actor in his film Une femme mariée (1964); Jean-Louis Comolli, one of the protagonists of the "apparatus debate," was an editor on the politicized *Cahiers du cinéma* and also appeared in Godard's The Carabineers and Alphaville (1965).

69 Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes. The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: California UP 1994).

70 This dialectic not only influences the relationship between photographs and the eye but can also be observed in the use of any external storage medium: if you save a telephone number in your cell phone, you don't need to remember it; if you copy a text, you increase the likelihood of not reading it.

71 Jean-Louis Comolli, "Machines of the Visible," *The Cinematic Apparatus*, eds. Teresa de Lauretis, Stephen Heath (New York: St. Martin's Press 1980), 121–142, 123.

there has been an intensification and radicalization of this discourse, which for many different reasons encounters the former "noblest of senses"[72] with reservations. In texts as different as those of Lacan, Althusser, Debord, Foucault, Barthes, and Metz, but also Derrida or Luce Irigary, a wariness about visual perception can be detected that Jay summarizes as a "denigration of vision": "Although definitions of visuality differ from thinker to thinker, it is clear that ocularcentrism aroused (and continues in many quarters to arouse) a widely shared distrust."[73] Jay's observation falls into line with a wide general interest in the image and the phenomena of visual representation since the 1990s. Particularly in the Anglo-American world, but also, with a delay, in Germany, the "image" has evolved into a central point of reference—a development for which J. T. Mitchell coined the term "pictorial turn," which has been widely taken up.

> Whatever the pictorial turn is, then, it should be clear that it is not a naïve return to mimetical theories of representation, or a renewed metaphysics of pictorial "presence": it is rather a postlinguistic, postsemiotic rediscovery of the picture as a complex interplay between visuality, apparatus, discourse, bodies, and figurality.[74]

Independent of whether Mitchell's diagnosis is held to be correct or incorrect, two things should be said here: The aspects of the revived interest in the image that Mitchell lists coincide exactly with the points from which Harun Farocki and Jean-Luc Godard attempt to analyze images. In order to be able to effectively describe and criticize how images are dealt with, the two directors subject both the filmic apparatus and film discourse to scrutiny but also their own bodies—the seeing subject—and the metaphoricity of discourse. Farocki's and Godard's texts and films participate in what Mitchell calls the "pictorial turn," but they are also skeptical about the ubiquitous distribution of images. This especially applies to the use of media images in military contexts and the coverage of such contexts. For Mitchell, the First Gulf War forms the background before which the

72 See Hans Jonas's influential text "The Nobility of Sight. A Study in the Phenomenology of Senses," *Philosophy and Phenomenologic Research* 54 /1953, 507–552). In conversation with Thomas Elsaesser, Harun Farocki expressly refers to Jonas's examination of the metaphoric descriptions of perception. See Thomas Elsaesser, "Making the World Superfluous: An Interview with Harun Farocki," *Harun Farocki. Working on the Sight-Lines*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2004), 177–189, 181.

73 Jay, *Downcast Eyes*, 588.

74 William J. T. Mitchell "The Pictorial Turn," *Artforum*, March 1992, 89–94, 90.

question of (technical) images and their functionality can be sharpened and posed anew.[75] Abstraction and cool distancing seem to have cut the direct connection between image and war reality.

The problematic aspect of a general concept that indiscriminately encompasses linguistic images, paintings, television, video, the cinema, and even mental images is obvious: "Asking about the image means asking about images, an inestimable variety that makes it almost impossible to point scientific curiosity in the right direction. What images do we mean: painted, thought, dreamt? Paintings, metaphors, gestures?"[76] One differentiation has been suggested by the French film critic and theoretician Serge Daney—like Mitchell against the background of the new kinds of television images from the Gulf War of 1991. Daney juxtaposes the emphatic concept of the "image," which prominently refers to the cinematic images also produced by Godard and Farocki, with the concept of the "visual," whose increasing power can primarily be observed in television and advertising. Both categories of images differ in their degree of self-containment and purported integrity:

> The visual would be the optical verification of a purely technical operation. The visual is without reverse shot, it lacks nothing, it is closed, looped, a little like the image of pornographic spectacle, which is only the ecstatic verification of the working of organs (and nothing more). As for the image – this image we loved in cinema to the point of obscenity – the situation would be rather the contrary. The image always takes place at the border of two force fields, it is meant to bear witness to a certain *otherness*; and although it always has a hard core, it always lacks something. The image is always *more and less than itself*.[77]

While the visual refers to the ubiquitous pictorial cosmos from advertising to television news coverage to the optically functioning targeting mechanics of rockets, the "image" in Daney's sense is a utopian place that resists the hegemony of the visual. Further on in the same text, Daney does in fact bring "image" and resistance into proximity: "So not only is the image becoming rare; it is also becoming a from of stubborn resistance, or a touching

75 Mitchell often refers to the technical images supplied to the American media by the army during the Gulf War of 1991.

76 Gottfried Boehm, "Die Wiederkehr der Bilder," *Was ist ein Bild?* ed. ibid. (Munich: Fink 1995), 11–38, 11.

77 Serge Daney, "Montage Obligatory. The War, the Gulf and the Small Screen," *Rouge* no. 8, 2006, accessed at www.rouge.com.au/8/montage.html, June 15, 2014.

Ill. 1

memory, within a universe of pure 'signalization'."[78] The works of Farocki and Godard should be understood as attempts to rescue the "image" in Daney's sense; as acts of confidence in the resistance of images to their cooption. However, this resistance is not articulated through an escapist retreat into the "ideal world" of the cinematic image but indeed in head-on critical debate with the "visual"—Farocki, in his analysis of images from the First Gulf War, for example. The three installations Eye/Machine and their television version War at a Distance are dedicated to precisely those non-images filmed by the intelligent cameras of the Gulf War that provoked Daney's differentiation.[79]

In the work of Farocki and Godard, the image is also confronted by a series of doubts that provoke thought about representation in the first place; in this respect, both positions can readily be included in the spectrum of "anti-ocularcentric discourse" identified by Martin Jay. The apparent evidence of the visible should be mistrusted; both Farocki and Godard encounter the equation of seeing and understanding with a skepticism whose roots will be more exactly described later, and which expresses itself in a broad sense as a critique of apparently unproblematic representational phenomena. In a text on Histoire(s) du cinéma, Michael Witt writes: "Godard's entire theory and practice constitutes a sustained reflection on vision, a relentless critique of the homogeneities inscribed in visual imagery and subjectivity complemented by a constant search for fresh expressive forms."[80] Farocki's work since the 1960s can also be understood as such a "sustained reflection on vision." However, unlike what Jay observes in French thought, this critique of images is not fundamentally directed at all images. The main impulse of both filmmakers is much more the search for other types of images that can incorporate a criticism and theorization of the image. This is why, differently from the

78 Ibid.

79 More on Farocki's analysis of the "visual" and of "operational images" in "Surveyed: Images of the World and the Inscription of War" in chapter five.

80 Michael Witt, "Montage, My Beautiful Care, or Histories of the Cinematograph," *The Cinema Alone. Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985–2000*, eds. Michael Temple, James S. Williams (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2001), 33–50, 45.

authors mustered by Jay, Godard's and Farocki's mistrust of images is expressed in images and visual sequences. Their skepticism is balanced by a trust in being able to criticize existing images and gazes by countering them with others. If their criticism of the visual is itself expressed visually, it is the complementary opposite of "anti-ocularcentric discourse."

Ill. 2

Inextinguishable Fire, from 1969, Farocki's first work after leaving film school, shows what such a critique can look like. Above and beyond a direct criticism of war and its horrors, the inextinguishable fire of the title, the flame produced through the use of napalm in Vietnam, provokes the question of whether such phenomena can be depicted at all. The assumption, always taken for granted by television, that it is a meaningful and educational act to show, for example, a body burnt in an attack, is called into question here.

We see Farocki sitting at a table wearing a suit and reading out a Vietnamese civilian's testimony of a napalm attack on his village. Then the director looks up from the text in front of him and, looking directly into the camera, continues with a thought about the impact of images (ill. 1):[81]

> If we show you pictures of napalm burns, you'll close your eyes. First you'll close your eyes to the pictures. Then you'll close your eyes to the memory. Then you'll close your eyes to the facts. Then you'll close your eyes to the entire context.[82]

So an act of representation linked to the simple depiction of napalm victims would come to nothing. Showing napalm wounds would assign this image to the realm of the "visual." It would, according to the commentary, lead to a negation of the image within the image itself, and beyond this would

81 A word about the illustrations: in most cases, it is immediately clear from the text which film they come from; captions are given where this is not so or a further explanation seems necessary.

82 Inextinguishable Fire, FRG 1969, director: Harun Farocki. The dialogue is included in Harun Farocki, *Diagrams*, ed. Benedikt Reichenbach (Cologne: Walther König 2014), 243-249, 244.

overlay memory and, finally, the perception of the facts themselves. The exposition and obliteration of the image would become one and the same.

Farocki takes a different course: instead of exposing napalm victims to the camera, he exposes the act of exposure—and not least himself, when he extinguishes a cigarette on his forearm and an off-screen voice states the comparatively low temperature of a burning cigarette (ill. 2). This too is a "metapicture," which speaks about the problem of representation by replacing the expected image with a different one. Through talking about napalm wounds, Farocki creates a linguistic image of them and at the same time disappoints the voyeuristic curiosity of the viewer. The scene should be read as a representation of the act of representation, which brings one's own body into play instead of the expected image. It is a shock to see an "authentic" wound, which, although minimal, has a far greater impact than the images of the Vietnam conflict and its wounded, to which we have become inured: a highly artificial, constructed injection of the "real" that activates thought about images of reality.

Difference and Theory

Theory, in the sense understood here, is an effect of difference. A cinematic discourse that can be described as theoretical only arises in the oscillation between single frame and moving image, between the visual media of painting, photography, film, and television, between filming subject and filmed objective world. In the potential nexus of different media—both as filmed material and as the accompanying discourse of various paratexts (reviews, analyses, interviews, etc.)—film is a central component of what Siegfried Zielinski calls the "audiovisual discourse."[83] The medium of film should be seen as one of the most important elements of this discourse because it most clearly extends the reservoir of media expression: it is easier to represent painting in film than to "portray" a film in a painting. But the difficulties that confront every intermedia transformation process also expose the boundaries and characteristics of every individual medium. Accordingly, the boundary is the point at which the individual medium itself becomes visible, which is why it is the preferred site of theoretical reflection and the setting for the films discussed here.

83 See Siegfried Zielinski, *Audiovisions. Cinema and Television as Entr'actes in History* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 1999).

Films that are a theoretical part of this discourse can be defined in various ways. On the one hand, they move between fact and fiction.[84] More exactly, they take up the two apparently fixed coordinates of "fact" and "fiction" in order to turn them into the subject of cinematic representation through translation and conversion. What happens when an image replaces the "real"? When the "real" no longer seems to shine through the image but needs to be grasped as an image? How should images be decoded? How do films and texts create the effect of "objective" narration, and what conventions of cinematic argumentation evolve here? As long as film studies continue to make a clear-cut distinction between documentary and feature film—albeit with a certain skepticism—this is difficult to account for. Jean-Luc Godard agrees with François Reichenbach's credo, expressed in an interview in 1958: "All the great films, I believe, tend at heart to the documentary."[85] Godard is therefore not concerned with an opposition of reality and invention but with an interrelationship implicitly dealt with in each of his films. This is a feature common to the projects of Farocki and Godard, and it applies despite or indeed because of their different points of departure: while Godard began in 1959 with the "feature film" Breathless, Harun Farocki approached the "theoretical" more from the direction of the documentary. However, the shared interest of both filmmakers seems to me to be more important than identifying their respective starting points. It is an interest in the mechanisms of image production and reception, in how images function, and in the possibilities of gleaning an (oppositional) visual theory from the images themselves.[86]

It is obvious that film-theoretical thought developed in the medium of film itself tends to the formation of self-referential structures. And as with every examination of self-referential phenomena, here too the question arises as to what should be understood by the prefix "self." For reflection, as the term implies, is only possible from a place that is not identical with

84 It is not by chance that Alexander Kluge gave the transcripts of his television magazines the title *Facts und Fakes* in a programmatic reference to an aesthetic understanding of documentation and fiction as equal parts of a complex concept of reality.

85 Jean-Luc Godard, "Jean-Luc Godard fait parler François Reichenbach" [1958], *Godard par Godard I*, 144–146, 144.

86 "The life that he wanted to save with cinema is what reveals itself in the moments between the images. Whereby the old distinction between 'fictive' and 'documentary' dissolve of their own accord. First and foremost, images are images. And for Godard, imaginings are prolonged 'images,' not inventions that first take place in the mind." Frieda Grafe, "Jean-Luc Godard: Die Rückseite der Berge filmen" [1981], ibid., "Beschriebener Film 1974-1985," *Die Republik* nos. 72–75, January 25, 1985, 179–184, 180.

oneself, in a dialectical movement which abandons the self in order to return again as a reflection—in other media, for example. What Hans-Jost Frey writes in general about the movement of reflection, in the context of idealistic and Romantic thought about the concept of the subject, also applies to media self-reflection:

> Reflection initially has no opposite number. It does not occur in that thinking confronts itself and makes itself the object of its thought. Self-reflective thinking does not stop thinking about something else in order to replace this with itself, but instead becomes aware of itself through thinking differently. [...] At the moment of reflection, thinking is simultaneously involved with something else and with itself. It gains self-assurance in its focusing on something else. But does it really do so? Doesn't the idea of accompanying oneself have something alarming about it? Isn't it confusing to be accompanied by oneself? Is the thinking that accompanies itself still in fact the thinking that is accompanied?[87]

Frey's condensed description of reflection as a paradoxical splitting process, in which convergence with the self is achieved through divergence from it, offers a useful model for thinking about the possibilities of reflexivity in film. Disregarding the anthropomorphization in talking about the "self-reflexivity of film," the mechanism of this reflection should be thought of as follows: as a movement away from the medium—perhaps through taking a different medium into account (photography, painting, literature)—which simultaneously leads towards it, as mirroring and reflection.

Godard's resistance to the cinema's conventions of production and exploitation are mirrored on the part of the viewers who find his films difficult to get into. Their resistance to Godard's films can only be partially explained by their confusing plethora of images and sounds. If the films are understood as part of a theoretical field, resistance to them can also be seen as what Paul de Man has called "resistance to theory." According to de Man, the reservations and defensive reactions to the field that have developed since the 1960s as literary theory, and have gradually come to be associated with the concept of "theory" in general, should primarily

87 Hans-Jost Frey, "Reflexion," ibid., *Lesen und Schreiben* (Basel/Weil am Rhein/Vienna: Urs Engeler 1998), 117–120, 117f.

be understood as "resistance to the use of language about language";[88] as a fear of the confusion of the meta and object levels. The resistance that the work of both Farocki and Godard is still met with may be similar in both cases:[89] the use of the cinematic medium backbends on the medium itself to generate numerous effects of reflection and multiplication. But de Man's formulation is also useful in sharpening the contours of the concept of theory and in describing its present coloration. According to de Man, theory arises "when the approach to literary texts is no longer based on non-linguistic, that is to say historical and aesthetic considerations or, to put it somewhat less crudely, when the object of discussion is no longer the meaning or the value but the modalities of production and of reception of meaning and of value prior to their establishment."[90] So the step from analytical description to theory should be seen—once again in the sense of Romanticism, which is a central reference for de Man—as a step in the direction of a transcendentalization of the production of meaning. Theoretical discourse in text or image would then be a form of expression that took account of the conditions of the production of meaning and turned them into the subject of this very production. Harun Farocki related this level of reflection, which in the course of the 1960s increasingly superimposed the narrative elements in Godard's films, to a general social climate in his deliberations on Le Gai Savoir, from 1968, and characterized the student movement as a politically motivated wave of self-reflection:

> In 1968 university students began asking: "What does my work mean politically? What purpose does it serve?" Once in the air, such questions sowed seeds of doubt everywhere; even bureaucrats began to ask questions about the companies for which they were working. Godard was ten years older than the student generation, but he participated in this reflexive turn. "What is cinema?" he asks in [*Le Gai Savoir*]. He poses this question not only with the discourse of his film, but also with its form.[91]

88 Paul de Man, "Resistance to Theory," ibid., *The Resistance to Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota 1986), 3–20, 12.

89 Since Nouvelle vague (1990), the films of Jean-Luc have no longer found a distributor in Germany.

90 Paul de Man, "Resistance to Theory," 7.

91 Harun Farocki, Kaja Silverman, "I Speak, Therefore I'm Not", ibid., *Speaking about Godard* (New York/London: New York UP 1998), 113

On the one hand, Le Gai Savoir represents a continuation and radicalization of the self-referential motifs that could already be found in Godard's short films of the late 1950s. On the other hand, it can illustrate how the issues of politics and education gain the upper hand and become the work's key question. There is almost no other film in which the three discursive fields of film, research, and politics are so emphatically mingled and linked to current events, and the resulting confusion so willingly accepted. The television studio in which Émile Rousseau (Jean-Pierre Léaud) and Patricia Lumumba (Juliet Berto) meet for seven nights in order to carry out their analyses of image and sound is declared a research lab for the collection, dissection, and reorganization of quotidian images. The insistence that a political revolution must be complemented by a revolution in representation has rarely been articulated so vehemently. For this reason, too, the work is difficult to gage against film-historical criteria and should be discussed in its implicit and explicit references to the contemporary theories of Foucault, Derrida, or Althusser. What can be read in these ideas as a critique of the mode of academic, linguistic, and economic representation, Godard transfers to the politics of images.

Theoretical, reflexive aspects have defined the cinema of Jean-Luc Godard since its beginnings; even in his first feature film, Breathless, in which Jean-Paul Belmondo as Michel Poiccard blatantly models himself on Humphrey Bogart, the film-historical references are very clear. Breathless, with its dedication to the American B-movie studio Monogram, almost parodies the desire to set itself apart from highbrow French cinema and hook up with American forms and genres. Its reflective aspect, which extends Godard's activity as a critic into film production, was recognized at the time. From the mid-1960s onwards—in Germany for the most part in the journal *Filmkritik*—commentators began to point out Godard's tendency towards using cinema as a research tool and his merging of aesthetic and epistemological questions. With Pierrot le fou[92] at the latest, it was realized that Godard was obviously concerned with something other than narration. His films, critics claimed, should be seen, to modify Kant's well-known phrase, as an examination of the conditions of the possibility of narration. Moreover, Godard's conscious or unconscious application of early Romantic theory was also noticed at the time. It is not by chance that Herbert Linder's extended essay on Godard appeared in the section "Theory and Practice"; the "and" should indeed be understood as one of simultaneity. What Linder describes is a direct translation of Novalis's and Friedrich

92 Pierrot le fou, F/I 1965, director: Jean-Luc Godard.

Schlegel's deliberations on transcendent poetics: "Godard's films contain their own analysis. They contain, as acting, the reflection of acting, portrayal, and seeing; the position of the viewer is no longer that of subject versus object."[93] Rephrasing early Romantic positions, a permeability of object language and meta-language, of artistic practice and aesthetic theory, is identified as Godard's method here. And if further proof were needed of his recourse to early Romantic theory, Godard delivered it in 1967 in La Chinoise.

Ill. 3 and ill. 4

Along with revolutionary slogans, the famous portrait of Novalis can be spotted on one of the walls of the apartment where the young Maoists work through the basics of Marxism-Leninism; in one scene, it is briefly shown in close-up (ill. 3 and 4).[94] We may not infer a strict updating of early Romantic ideas from this; Godard is notoriously eclectic,[95] and La Chinoise in particular can stand as an example of the excessive mixing of contemporary politics and historical references that even the names of the leading figures suggest. One of the young Maoists (played by Jean-Pierre Léaud), who are holding this conclave in a "comrade's" apartment in Nanterre in order to educate themselves politically, is called Guillaume Meister in a reference to Goethe's several-volumed novel, which played a central role for Friedrich

93 Herbert Linder, "Godard. Instinkt und Reflexion," *Filmkritik* 3/1966, 125–138, 125.

94 This scene should be analyzed more exactly, particularly as the portrait of Novalis hangs in immediate proximity to Descartes, a man in a Nazi uniform given the name of Kant, and newspaper cuttings about contemporary French politics. Novalis is not part of an altar of heroes but placed among a decidedly ambivalent set of figures.

95 "I love books tremendously, particularly paperbacks, because you can put them in your pocket (actually they put you in their pocket). But I don't read seriously. I rarely read a book, even a novel, from beginning to end." Jean-Luc Godard, "Quand j'ai commencé à faire des films, j'avais zéro an, Rencontre avec Jean-Luc Godard," *Libération*, May 14, 2004.

Schlegel and the theories of early Romanticism.[96] While the literary genre of the *Bildungsroman* is evoked here, a historical assertion is also being made. Together with the reference to Novalis, the choice of name can be interpreted as a superimposition of two time levels—albeit historically inexact and intentionally so. The student politicization of the mid-1960s, which Godard seismographically linked to violence and terror even in 1967, a year before the outbreak of open protest, is related back to the time "around 1800" and the epoch-making events of the French Revolution.[97] Here, too, there is a convergence of the two poles of reflection and politics that Harun Farocki has underlined in relation to Le Gai Savoir.

This force field, which can be outlined by the terms "revolution," "infinite reflection," and "shattering of illusion," not only results from particular relationships between images but can also be found on the level of the individual frame. For Godard's concept of the image is allied to the dialectic of finiteness and infinity that was central to early Romanticism:[98]

> [The image] shows something unlimited and at the same time limits a lot. Images and sounds are not quite enough. If our bodies were made only of our eyes and our ears, that wouldn't be enough. So it's very limited. At the same time, this 'very limited' gives the impression of being unlimited. It goes from zero to infinity without stopping.[99]

Here the image seems to be a paradoxical entity that is both incomplete and congested, limited and infinite. Similar to Eisenstein, Godard identifies these Romantic figures of thought primarily with the cinematic principle of montage. Exaggerating slightly, it could be argued that montage, which by

96 See Friedrich Schlegel, "On Goethe's Meister" [1798], *Classic and Romantic German Aesthetics*, ed. J. M. Bernstein (Cambridge: Cambridge UP 2003). Schlegel emphasizes the incommensurability of the novel: "For this book is absolutely new and unique. We can learn to understand it only on its own terms. To judge it according to an idea of genre drawn from custom and belief, accidental experiences, and arbitrary demands, is as if a child tried to clutch the stars and the moon in his hand and pack them in his satchel." (275)

97 This kind of "historicizing" montage will become more pronounced in some of the following films, particularly in Week End and Le Gai Savoir. For instance, when Jean-Pierre Léaud declaims Jacobin slogans in historical costume as St. Just (Week End), or when the media analyst experimenting "chemically" in Novalis's sense is named Émile Rousseau.

98 For the "paradox of interminability and the claim to universality," see Detlef Kremer, *Romantik*, 2nd edition (Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 2002), 92f.

99 Jean-Luc Godard, *Introduction to a True History of Cinema and Television*, ed., trans. Timothy Barnard (Montreal: Caboose 2014), 77.

definition relates two different images to one another, offers a convincing translation of the idea of difference into the medium of film. For every edit combines similarity and continuity with alterity and discontinuity: even in contrastive montage, the temporal continuum of the act of seeing remains intact. Furthermore, numerous concepts central to early Romantic thought—irony, criticism, transcendental poetics, fragment—lead back to the figure of thought of infinite reflection. The oscillation between two poles that can't be brought to a halt by a dialectical closure—the permanently reflexive element—directs the attention away from the product to the process of depiction.[100]

What characterizes both Godard's and Farocki's concepts was widely perceived in the 1920s: film provides a repertoire of forms whose intermedia condition engenders a complex structure that should be explored systematically from its form side. In such an exploration, the cinematic hardware (camera, editing table) is as important as its concrete operations (montage, shot combination) and effects on the viewer (psychophysics, impact).[101] A further criterion can be gained from the first flowering of theoretical thought in the 1920s, which wanted to revise the early reduction of film to narration and entertainment: apart from the theoretical orientation of the Russian filmmakers, a close connection could be seen to the other literary and art-theoretical developments in the Soviet Union. Parallel to Eisenstein's pre-semiotic attempts to understand the constructive forms of cinematic "language" and make them didactically useful within his theory of montage, Russian Formalism not only examined the construction of literary texts but also emphatically declared film worthy of examination as the most advanced artistic movement of the time. Some of the demands the Formalist school placed on the analysis of artworks—exposure of the procedure, indications of the artificiality of the text/image, even if this complicates the work's perception—can be applied as equally to the works of Godard and Farocki[102] as to Dziga Vertov's MAN WITH A MOVIE CAMERA.[103] One of the founding texts of Formalism, Viktor Shklovsky's "Art as Technique" from 1916, begins with sentences that not only point out

100 See Winfried Menninghaus, *Unendliche Verdopplung. Die frühromantische Grundlegung der Kunsttheorie im Begriff absoluter Selbstreflexion* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1987), 132ff.

101 See Ute Holl, *Kino, Trance und Kybernetik* (Berlin: Brinkmann & Bose 2002).

102 How close the personal and political overlap between theory and practice was in the USSR of the 1920s can be seen in someone like Viktor Shklovsky. Not only was he one of the most prominent representatives of Russian Formalism, he also worked on the screenplay for Lev Kuleshov's film BY THE LAW in 1926 and wrote a biographic novel about Eisenstein.

103 MAN WITH A MOVIE CAMERA, USSR 1929, director: Dziga Vertov.

the visual and metaphoric nature of thinking but also, and almost causally, shake the boundary between aesthetics and epistemology, and thus indirectly between theory and practice: "'Art is thinking in images.' This maxim, which even high-school students parrot, is nevertheless the starting point for the erudite philologist who is beginning to put together some kind of systematic literary theory."[104] This book suggests seeing Godard's and Farocki's films as "thinking in images," as contributions to a theory intrinsic to film.

Montage and Cinematic Thinking

"It's the film that thinks," said Jean-Luc Godard in conversation with Marguerite Duras in 1987, hyperbolizing the idea of an actually "thinking film" and provoking a mixture of dissent and concession in his interlocutor.[105] Though Duras may be right in her view that the thinking of film can't be separated entirely from the thinking of its maker—nor from the thinking of its viewer, whose additions occupy the gaps of the montage—Godard's statement should be taken seriously as a poetological maxim which can stand for his works since the late 1950s.

In Histoire(s) du cinéma, particularly in chapter 3A (La monnaie de l'absolu), which includes a crucial examination of the relationship between painting and cinema, Godard describes this through a contraposition of two forms of thinking. "Une pensée qui forme" is the compositional approach that idealistically proceeds from the *imagination* and visualizes a previously developed idea retrospectively. It is a method of illustration in which the image additionally conjoins with a preconceived thought. The other model, "une forme qui pense," for which Godard finds examples in the paintings of Edouard Manet but which equally determines the aims of his own work, operates in the opposite direction. Here, thought is delegated to the form and is seen as a possibility of creating ideas from tension—whether internal or between the images. The sociologist Dirk Baecker took up Godard's formula in a conversation with Alexander Kluge in an attempt to define more precisely what could be understood by such image-internal thinking:

104 Viktor Shklovsky, "Art as Technique" [1916], *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays*, trans. Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 1965), 5–24, 5.

105 "Don't talk nonsense. The film doesn't think on its own. Without you, there wouldn't be a film," replied Duras. Marguerite Duras, Jean-Luc Godard, "Entretien télévisé" [1987], *Godard par Godard II*, 140–147, 143.

> What do the images know about the next image? What does every individual shot know about the next shot, which is only possible if this or that has been shown before it? Godard is a sharp thinker, in the most precise sense of the word, who asks with every image he shoots which images will be expected next and how he can produce an image sequence that thwarts this expectation and replace it with another, for which the same perhaps applies. "The form thinks" means here that the form, which only ensues across the images, establishes a context that comes about from the separation of the images, from their contextual liberation.[106]

This definition is helpful because it relates the term *form*, which Baecker identifies as a "tight coupling" as opposed to the "loose coupling" of the *medium*, to a cross-image structure and thus once again to the concept of combining images and montage. At this point, it should indeed be asked whether Daney's ideas about the image's simultaneous deficiency and surplus can be applied to this "thinking form" called cinema. For deficiency and surplus establish structures of reference that go beyond the image and inherently require a further image onto which they then transfer these qualities. The visual flow demands reference, montage, difference. An image, even a single frame, is never alone.

How this kind of "film thinking," to take up the term Klaus Theweleit coined in relation to Godard,[107] might be adequately described is one main concern of this book. For if I have already described the boundary of a medium as the preferred site of theoretical reflection, this also means that talking about film as theory must go back and forth between description and interpretation, image and language. Jean-Luc Godard in particular has described the cinematic procedure of montage as a relational jumping, as the construction and reconstruction of relationships. Between "Montage my Fine Care," from 1956, and Histoire(s) du cinéma, from the 1990s, which quotes this phrase repeatedly, it was a core element of his poetics. The theoretical and creative act of combining two images to create an invisible third one has a striking appearance in the figure of the blind cutter Godard employs as an assistant editor in JLG/JLG. Godard has extended the concept of montage from his first theoretical deliberations to his description of it as a central intellectual act, a development that should be outlined here.

106 Alexander Kluge, Dirk Baecker, "Was wissen die Bilder?" ibid., *Vom Nutzen ungelöster Probleme* (Berlin: Merve 2003), 135–143, 141.

107 See Klaus Theweleit, *Deutschlandfilme. Filmdenken und Gewalt* (Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld 2003), 25–34.

"Montage my Fine Care" doesn't strictly contrast mise en scène and montage, as associated with the names of André Bazin and Sergei Eisenstein, but is interested in a dialectical conjunction of both concepts. Montage, as in one of his well-known phrases, is "an integral part of the mise en scène,"[108] a result of the way in which each shot is staged. For Godard, playing montage and mise en scène off against one another or separating them conceptually is nonsensical from the outset. One might just as well attempt—another of his comparisons—to separate the rhythm from a melody. Godard explains this notion with a simple example. In order to film how someone notices a girl and wonders whether to say something to her, the filmmaker needs to find a cinematic answer to two dramaturgical questions. The first, "How shall I approach her?" is answered by camera distance, focal length, and so on. The second is more general and strictly speaking cannot be answered from within the concrete situation: "Am I going to love her?" It is this jump into a hypothetical future that Godard assigns to montage. Despite the inseparability of montage and mise en scène, the step from a concrete situation onto a speculative, more abstract level is reserved here for montage. In "Montage my Fine Care," this step has primarily to do with giving the scene rhythm rather than the confrontation of shots—a principle that was to become important in Godard's own film work. If the montage needs to be kept in mind in the individual image and its staging, this also suggests that the opposition of concrete image and abstract concept is only an apparent one.

The contrast between the concept of montage that was still oriented to film and its later extension to a general intellectual principle can be illustrated by a jump to the late 1970s. In 1978, on the invitation of the director of the Cinémathèque in Montreal, Godard gave a series of film-historical lectures at the Conservatoire d'art cinématographique. They were an important preliminary to the later HISTOIRE(S) DU CINÉMA and according to the original plan should themselves have become a film project.[109] Godard took the place of Henri Langlois, who had died shortly before, and conceived the series as screenings with extensive commentary. His films were the springboard for a kind of retrospective and were combined with other, sometimes influential works in a communication about common themes or other connections. Even if the combination of individual images

108 Jean-Luc Godard, "Montage my Fine Care" [1956], *Godard on Godard*, ed. Tom Milne (New York: Da Capo 1986), 39–41, 39.

109 See Michael Witt's thorough account of the project: Michael Witt, "Archaeology of 'Histoire(s) du Cinéma'", Godard, *Introduction to a True History*, xv-lxix.

or sequences was not in the foreground here, Godard's procedure was a form of montage, with the difference that now entire films were brought into contact with one another. Henri Langlois's program for the Cinémathèque française was the model for this cinematic juxtaposition. In the long talks and discussions in Montreal, Godard developed the proposition to which he still adheres and that clearly goes back to the Russian cinema of the 1920s:

> The basic idea is that when it was invented cinema fostered, or impressed, as you have been able to see, a different way of seeing called editing, which is to put something in relation to someone in a different way than novels or paintings.[110]

What is innovative about montage, according to Godard, who like Pudovkin equates it with cinema as its genuine creative tool,[111] should not only be located on the production side but above all on the side of the viewer. The collision of different segments of the world leads to a new kind of seeing that could be described as relational or comparative: "Montage is relationship, and the relationship is there before the image occurs to which another is joined. It is the comparison not equation of things,"[112] as Frieda Grafe summarizes Godard's concept of montage. Only the combination of two images, of two perspectives on something, develops a relationship that can be seen as a flexible triangle in which the viewer defines the third point alongside the two images. "[W]hen people saw a film there was something that was at least double – and when someone watched it became triple. There was something different which in its technical form gradually came to be called editing, meaning there was a connection. It was something that filmed not things, but the connection between things, as I said about Pierrot le fou—the form of filming them. Meaning that people saw connections in them."[113] A political and moral aspect associated with the power of montage derives from this idea of it as relationship to self and other. Montage is not only the precondition of a cinematic grammar; it also establishes a specific visual rhetoric, and in this respect has often been rejected as tendentious, manipulative, and ideological by followers

110 Godard, *Introduction to a True History*, 217.

111 Pudovkin summarized this as follows: "Montage is the essence of cinema." Vsevolod Pudovkin, *Selected Essays*, trans. Richard Taylor and Evgeni Filippov (London/New York/Calcutta: Seagul 2006), 14.

112 Frieda Grafe, "Die tatsächliche Kinogeschichte. Godards Geschichtsbild" [2000], ibid., *Film/Geschichte. Wie Film Geschichte anders schreibt* (Berlin: Brinkmann & Bose 2004), 213–222, 219.

113 Godard: *Introduction to a True History*, 217/218.

of "realistic" theories. Godard is on the side of those who see a power in combination that should be explored and described, as it indeed establishes a new kind of thinking. In this respect, Godard's understanding of montage has remained surprisingly consistent over the years, even though since the 1980s he has developed an increased interest in sound and music, which again broadens his concept of montage, taking it beyond the immediate visual level. In 1995, on receiving the Adorno Prize, Godard once more referred to montage as a decisive tool for the analysis of history. In the "big struggle between the eyes and language," he ascribes the greater analytical power to the eyes and understands montage as a healing force:

> There is a big struggle between the eyes and language. The eyes are the people. Language is the government. When the government talks of what it sees and acts accordingly, it's good, because it's the language of medicine. It says, "This is sinusitis," and performs an act of montage, of convergence. [...] Cinema in particular was a new way—one that had never been seen before—of calling things by their own name. A way of seeing the large and small events that immediately became popular and was taken up by the entire world. In short, cinema was made for thinking, and therefore for curing illness.[114]

In order to apply this diagnostic instrument, there needs to be, as Godard says, a convergence, a *rapprochement*. In the films of Godard and Farocki this convergence repeatedly occurs between different types of images, from whose differences and similarities theoretical potential can be gained. An initial point at which the convergence of film and theory becomes practical with both directors is the confrontation of film with painting, to which the following chapter is devoted.

114 Jean-Luc Godard, "À propos de cinéma et d'histoire" [1996], *Godard par Godard II*, 401–407, 404.

2. The Camera as Brush—Film and Painting

"For the last hundred years (if we except the activities of specialists) art history has been the history of that which can be photographed."
André Malraux[1]

Based on the concept of theory developed in chapter one, Farocki's and Godard's interest can now be described more exactly: both filmmakers confront media in order to create abstraction. They develop thoughts about cinema and its representational logic through the collision of concrete film images. In the words of Eisenstein: from the impact of two visibilities, to obtain something invisible and render it visible. However, the colliding elements may be of different constitution; the images that in their combination express something about "the image" can belong to different media contexts.

An obvious method of thematizing a medium is its diegetic confrontation with another medium. What implicitly characterizes film as a complex assemblage of image, sound, and writing[2] can become an explicit theme if the cinematic framework contains different types of images: film and painting, film and photography, film and video. This possibility is not limited to a particular cinematic genre, such as the experimental film or the classical auteur film, even though it seems more likely to find an examination of media possibilities in these fields; the use of painted images in films is one of the most prominent areas in which the implicit affinity of Hollywood to theory can be demonstrated. Katharina Sykora has shown this to be the case for a series of films made within the framework of what David Bordwell and Janet Staiger have called the "Hollywood mode of production."[3] Despite all standardization, and within the seemingly rigid requirements of the individual genres, the films of Otto Preminger, Alfred Hitchcock, or Albert

1 André Malraux, "The Museum without Walls", ibid., *The Voices of Silence*, trans. Stuart Gilbert (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1978), 13–130, 30.

2 Although it has long since become commonplace, it should once again be said here that film "constitutes a privileged place in which the play of various modern discourses and media is staged." Jürgen E. Müller, *Intermedialität. Formen moderner kultureller Kommunikation* (Münster: Nodus 1996), 133.

3 See David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, Kristin Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema. Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960* (New York: Columbia UP 1987).

Lewin reflect the medium within their images in the way that film theory is understood here.[4] Through the inclusion of female portraits in various plots, the narrative splits into a literal thread oriented to the action and an allegorical one to do with image production and reception.

Yet there is a difference between the theoretical elements in a film like Hitchcock's Rebecca and Godard's Passion. Hitchcock's visual theory remains largely implicit and is closely interwoven with the narrative, and this is the strength of the film. The painting of Mrs. de Winter's late predecessor, with which she is often confronted in the course of the film, is—apart from its use to reflect cinematic means—also an important element of the crime story. It is therefore perfectly possible to see the film as an exciting thriller in which the painting could be substituted by something else. The film is an invitation to a "double reading," and Hitchcock's success with both the general public and in academic circles owes itself to this twofold readability, which enables his films to be seen as both a gripping narrative and as complex and abstract reflections on the medium of film. Farocki's Still Life or Godard's Passion pose the question of the representational character of film and painting in much more direct terms. The paintings they deal with are so central to these films that the structure would collapse if one attempted to replace the reference to painting with something else. Instead of the representation of reality, the reality of representation comes more sharply into focus; what is depicted is, more than anything else, a reality of images. Still Life and Passion mark two extremes—one in the form of the classical documentary, one bearing traces of a storyline—in that they not only focus on painting but also insist on and consist of paintings and, in cinematic repetition (Passion) and analysis (Still Life), contrast the different representational models of film and painting.

When film—in whatever form—encounters painting, or when painting attempts to operate cinematically, two media meet whose relationship to reality is as different as their respective modes of representation. Painting is an expressive medium: the artist applies the paint to the canvas, and the image seems to emerge "from nothing." To address the painter as the actual author of the image is less controversial than in the case of a film. Light-sensitive celluloid, by contrast, receives the impression of an image and can therefore be placed in a tradition of other imprinting techniques.[5] Stanley

4 See Katharina Sykora, *As you desire me. Das Bildnis im Film* (Cologne: Walther König 2003), particularly 16–25.

5 André Bazin implies this when he characterizes the Turin Shroud as a precursor of photography (and hence of film), and adds in a footnote: "There is room, nevertheless, for a study of the psychology of the lesser plastic arts, the molding of death masks, for example, which likewise involves a certain automatic process. One might consider photography, in this sense as a molding,

Cavell, one of the few philosophers to have given considerable thought to films and the forms of knowledge they articulate,[6] sharply contrasts these two forms of reference: "[T]he object has played a causal role in the taking of the photograph altogether other from its role in the making of the painting. A representation emphasizes the identity of its subject, hence it may be called a likeness; a photograph emphasizes the existence of its object, hence it may be called a transcription."[7] According to this model, film undoubtedly belongs to what Cavell calls "transcription." It is part of the "universe of technical images"[8] and attests to the continuum from photography to the Lumières' cinematograph. Film would not exist without the inventions of Niépce, Daguerre, and Talbot; neither could images have been set in motion without the movement studies of Muybridge and Marey.[9] Joseph Plateau's afterimage experiments, with which he examined the effect of an image on the retina and the functioning of optical perception—often at the risk of losing his own sight through continued staring at the sun—are as much a part of the emergence of the cinematic *dispositif* as Edison's idea of transferring consecutively shot images onto a flexible material such as celluloid, thus also allowing longer takes to be archived on a roll. So it seems that film is primarily a technical medium, and as Erwin Panofsky emphasized, the birth of the cinema is the only case in the history of art in which a particular technique didn't follow an artistic impulse, but rather that "a technical invention [...] gave rise to the discovery and gradual perfection of a new art."[10]

the taking of an impression, by the manipulation of light." André Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," trans. Hugh Gray, *Film Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 4. (summer, 1960), 4–9: 7.

6 See Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed. Reflections of the Ontology of Film*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP 1979).

7 Stanley Cavell, "What Photography calls Thinking," *Camera Austria* 19/20, 1985, 32–43. 33. Cavell's text is also interesting here because it similarly attempts to discern thought process *in photography itself*.

8 Vilém Flusser uses this term to describe the image world that has ruled our lives since the caesura of the invention of photography. See Vilém Flusser, *Into the Universe of Technical Images* [1985], trans. Nancy Ann Roth, (Minneapolis: Universtity of Minnesota Press 2011).

9 For a short overview of the technical precursors of film, and an interpretation less in terms of their material aspects than their idealistic desire for a victory over time and successful duplication, see André Bazin, "Le mythe du cinéma total" [1946] ibid., *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma*, vol. I, 21–26. A more unconventional derivation, which places Samuel Colt's invention of his revolver, with its round drum, and the fragmentation of processes into single moments at the beginning of cinema history, is proposed by Friedrich Kittler in his lecture on optical media: see Friedrich Kittler, *Optical Media: Berlin Lectures 1999*, trans. Anthony Enns (Cambridge: Polity Press 2010), 145–147.

10 Erwin Panofsky, "Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures" [1947], ibid., *Three Essays on Style*, ed. Irving Lavin (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press 1995), 91–126: 93.

The relationship between film and painting is less obvious—at least in terms of their technical histories: paintings don't seem to be a preferred reference point for the medium of film. Jacques Aumont remarks that few theorists have thought about the correlation between the two media, and if they have, then generally for the purpose of contrast: "As far as film theory is concerned, it seems to have linked film and painting together—rare as the case may be—solely for the purpose of being more able to contrast them and distinguish them from one another."[11] Aumont—not least in debate with Godard's film PASSION—suggests focusing on the differences between the two media and recognizing a common ground in the way in which they make use of the flexibility of perspective and perception. Aumont understands both media as manifestations of a shared configuration, which he calls the "variable eye" and sees as the decisive innovation of the nineteenth century. On the one hand, the term takes account of the painterly development around 1800—in the paintings of William Turner, for example—which departed from the ideal of accuracy in favor of elusiveness and liveliness.[12] In painting from then on, the relativity of the chosen perspective—and thus a subjectification of the standpoint—was more important than the timeless validity of the resulting image. According to Aumont, it is crucial that this development is linked to a shift in the function that painting and film can have. "What we have here is nothing less than the constitution of seeing, a new confidence in seeing as an instrument of knowledge."[13] Aumont argues not so much from the perspective of the media technology as that of the eye, which is not only modified by new, technical apparatuses—that is, film and photography—but also by a new approach to the old medium of painting. In this sense, the media caesura should not be set at 1900 (that is, with the invention of the cinematograph) but almost a century earlier, from which time the media should be seen as "diverse manifestations of common problems, or rather a common problem, namely the spatial and temporal variability of looking at what is accessible to our sight."[14]

Where Aumont tries to bring film and painting together in his concept of the "variable eye", filmmakers had always striven to model their work

11 Jacques Aumont, "Projektor und Pinsel. Zum Verhältnis von Malerei und Film," *montage/av* 1/1, 1992, 77–89: 78. The text offers a condensed version of arguments from Aumont's book *L'oeil intérminable* (1989), whose second chapter is available in English translation: Jacques Aumont, "The Variable Eye, or The Mobilization of the Gaze," *The Image in Dispute. Art and Cinema in the Age of Photography*, ed. Dudley Andrew (Austin: University of Texas Press 1997), 231–258.

12 See ibid., 80.

13 Ibid., 81.

14 Ibid., 87.

on older visual art in both form and content. Early films from the Lumière brothers' studio, such as La vie et la passion de Jésus-Christ (1898), are necessarily oriented to the long iconographic tradition and relate closely to paintings; the Passion film is particularly conceived as a sequence of clearly framed tableaux. But apart from such individual quotations, reference to art-historical tradition in later film history always went in two directions. On the one hand, it inspired the struggle for the "absolute film," as aspired to by Hans Richter, Walter Ruttmann, or Viking Eggeling in the 1920s. Here, the medium is released from its reproductive task and used for the dynamic depiction of surfaces, rhythms, and patterns. The crossover to both animated film and the abstract painting of Constructivism is evident in Ruttmann's Opus series or Richter's Rhythmus 21.[15] But painting, alongside the theater and the novel, was also interesting for the realistic schools. The early attempts to establish film as an art form, and later to untangle it from its industrial production context and open it up to more individual creative possibilities ("caméra stylo," "auteur film"[16]), are all indications of the desire to take the medium beyond its transcriptional function and transform it into one of expression and reflection. Michelangelo Antonioni, who came to film from painting, and—particularly in his first color film Red Desert—took the cinematic image in the direction of abstract painting through flatness and coloration,[17] can stand for this endeavor alongside Stanley Kubrick's reconstructed tableaux in Barry Lyndon or Peter Greenaway's art-historically charged productions.[18]

Jean-Luc Godard is part of this tradition, and since the 1980s he has repeatedly brought cinema and painting together. Passion is not the only example. A Letter to Freddy Buache, a short film that depicts the topography of Lausanne in its colors and forms and pushes the cinematic image towards abstract painting, is another, along with The Old Place, which was commissioned from Godard and Anne Marie-Miéville by the

15 Opus I–IV, D 1921–25, director: Walter Ruttmann; Rhythmus 21, D 1921, director: Hans Richter.

16 See Alexandre Astruc, "The Birth of a New Avant-Garde: La Caméra-Stylo," [1948], *The French New Wave. Critical Landmarks*, ed. Peter Graham (London: BFI 2009), 31–38.

17 For Antonioni, see also Roland Barthes, "Dear Antonioni," [1980], Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, *L'Avventura* (London: BFI 1997), 63–69., For the tradition of the flat, "planimetrical" image in the auteur film from 1960, see David Bordwell, *On the History of Film Style* (Cambridge: Harvard UP 1997), 168–170 and 262–267.

18 For a whole series of examples from both experimental and narrative cinema, see the catalogue *Hall of Mirrors: Art and Film since 1945*, ed. Kerry Brougher (New York: Monacelli Press 1996) [Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, March 17, 1996–July 28, 1996]. For Greenaway, see Detlef Kremer, *Peter Greenaways Filme. Vom Überleben der Bilder und Bücher* (Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 1995).

Museum of Modern Art in New York.[19] However, Godard's sensibility for the motifs and procedures of modern and classical painting can be traced back to his earlier films. In La Chinoise (1967), Godard proposes a divergent technological genealogy and characterizes film as a productive coincidence of various findings from optics, chemistry, and mechanics: "Lumière," announces the Maoist Guillaume Meister (Jean-Pierre Léaud), was the "last impressionist painter." That this should not be dismissed as the confused position of a misguided political sectarian but the director's own conviction becomes clear when we compare Meister's assertion with Godard's speech at the opening of the Lumière retrospective in 1966: "So Louis Lumière, by way of the Impressionists, was a descendant of Flaubert, and also of Stendhal, whose mirror he took on the road."[20] This sounds like a provocation: the apparent realist Lumière, whose name stands like no other for the documentary, objective aspects of cinema, is supposed to have been an Impressionist? Someone who wasn't familiar with the contemporary artists of his time and never picked up a paintbrush in his life? What function does such a coupling of painting and film have? Doesn't it eliminate the difference between the two media and their specificities?[21]

In the following, I will attempt to show that this convergence of film and painting, asserted in the unconventional reappraisal of Lumière, is part of an extensive involvement with painting—not only with Impressionist painting, but particularly so—through which Godard was repeatedly able to gain a new perspective on film. In its quality of being a genuinely visual medium, painting represents a reflective counterpart to film to which, via proximity and distance, similarities and differences, a system of reference is established that allows Godard to enter into a theoretical debate with his own image production. It is particularly revealing to analyze the interrelationship of both media, as this has characterized

19 A Letter to Freddy Buache, CH 1981, director: Jean-Luc Godard; The Old Place. Small Notes Regarding the Arts at Fall of 20th Century, F/USA 1998, directors: Jean-Luc Godard, Anne-Marie Miéville. For the origins of this film, see Colin MacCabe, *Godard. A Portrait of the Artist at Seventy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux 2003), 310–315.

20 Jean-Luc Godard, "Thanks to Henri Langlois" [1966], *Godard on Godard*, 234–237: 236.

21 Godard's suggestion of bringing together Impressionism and early cinematography was taken up in a exhibition in Lyon in 2005: *Impressionnisme et la naissance du cinématographe*, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, April 15–July 18 2005. A critical review in the *Cahiers du cinéma* points out the danger of eliminating media differences: "In short, Impressionism is a resemblance that is ending, cinema one that is beginning. Resemblance, their thin common dividing line, is also the boundary which irreconcilably divides them." Jean-Pierre Rehm, "Lumière au grand jour," *Cahiers du Cinéma* no. 603, July/August 2005, 68–71: 70.

the conceptual space of Godard's film work from the very beginning and is still one of his central means of argument. From Breathless to In Praise of Love, whose second half engulfs the viewer in an explosion of color and uses digital video technology to create distortions that take the cinematic image in the direction of painterly composition, Godard has often drawn on painting. More than just a motivic preference, painting serves as an important structural element that can reveal the contours of the cinematic medium.

Passion is without doubt the film in which Godard speaks most clearly and thoroughly about the relationship between painting and film, and in which he attempts to interweave them as closely as possible. It is one of the few films in the history of the cinema that actually would not exist without painting, as it literally consists of paintings from the history of art. The film is based on a conflation of two contexts that are also characterized as places of work. There is the factory, where Isabelle (Isabelle Huppert) works and comes into conflict with the management, and—not far away—there is the film team, which is reconstructing famous paintings as tableaux vivants for a television production. These re-enacted paintings are not simply a part of the cinematic diegesis—objects framed on another level by the plot—but constitute much of the narration by repeatedly collapsing the difference between frame and framed. So it is not surprising that Passion provoked a whole series of books and texts that celebrated the film as a complete redefinition of the relationship between film and painting.[22] Looking at Passion, however, should not obscure the fact that Godard's films prior to this climax were already full of allusions and references to art history and quotes from its imagery. Even in his early phase as a director,[23] Godard constantly, if casually, made reference to paintings and related them to his characters. Not only do all his films since Breathless engage with film and literary history, they also take a side glance at painting in order to reflect their own medium.

22 Jacques Aumont, *L'œil interminable. Cinéma et peinture* (Paris: Seghers 1989), Raymond Bellour, ed. *Cinéma et peinture. Approches* (Paris: PUF 1990), Jean-Louis Leutrat, *Des traces qui nous ressemblent* (Paris: Edition Comp'Act 1990). In Germany, the work of Joachim Paech should be emphasized. After his monograph on Passion (*Passion oder die Ein*bild*ungen des Jean-Luc Godard* [Frankfurt am Main: Filmmuseum 1989]), Paech wrote numerous articles about the work, which he sees as a paradigmatic example of the intermediality of film. See Joachim Paech, "Intermedialität des Films," *Moderne Film Theorie. Paradigmen, Positionen, Perspektiven*, ed. Jürgen Felix (Mainz: Bender 2002), 287–313.

23 This refers to the time until 1965, ending with Pierrot le fou.

Narrating with Images: Breathless

In Breathless (1959), paintings essentially play a role at two points in the narrative. In general, the film more obviously seeks to position itself in a particular film tradition. From the dedication ("This film is dedicated to Monogram Pictures"), via the iconic scene in which Belmondo tries to imitate Humphrey Bogart's facial expression as accurately as possible, to the interview conducted by Patricia (Jean Seberg) with the director Jean-Pierre Melville, the film is pervaded by clear allusions to *film noir* and American cinema. However, while it is in line with auteur politics that Godard sides with the low-budget Hollywood movie, his recourse to French modernist painting is just as precise as his film-historical allusions.[24]

Early on, we see a reproduction of Auguste Renoir's *Mlle. Irene Cahen d'Anvers*,[25] for which Patricia is looking for a suitable place in her room. The scene can easily be read as a characterization. Alongside the Picasso and Paul Klee posters, and together with Patricia's professed love of William Faulkner and Dylan Thomas, the painting establishes her as a young journalist interested in art and literature, and thus underlines the contrast between her and the philistine criminal Michel Poiccard (Jean-Paul Belmondo). Art versus life: this romantic opposition, from whose antagonism and attempted resolution the film derives much of its narrative motivation, is thus personified in the two protagonists. The polarity of interests marks both their attraction and incompatibility, which later leads to Patricia's betrayal and Michel's death. Yet even in this film, the use of painted images goes beyond conventional character drawing. When Michel brushes off Patricia's wish that they were Romeo and Juliet—a blatant connection to the epitome of romantic love—as naive, a postcard of Picasso's *Les Amoureux*[26] appears in close-up without any narrative preparation. If we had paid attention to the room during the long series of scenes, we would have seen the postcard above the bed. The montage, however, takes it out of the narrative context and isolates it *as an image*. Placing these shots together (ill. 5–7) reveals the ambivalent effect of this simple operation:

24 Gerd Bauer also examines the art-historical themes in Breathless. However, he doesn't discuss the materiality of the depictions and the internal relationships to other Godard films, which I will deal with later. See Gerd Bauer, "Jean-Luc Godard: Ausser Atem/À bout de souffle (Frankreich 1959)," *Kunst und Künstler im Film*, eds. Helmut Korte, Johannes Zahlten (Hameln: Niemeyer 1990), 111–119.
25 See Angela Dalle Vacche, "Jean Luc Godard's *Pierrot le Fou*. Cinema as Collage against Painting," *Literature-Film Quarterly* vol. 23 (1995), no. 1, 39–54: 46; Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *Mlle. Irène Cahen d'Anvers* (1880), oil on canvas, 65 x 54 cm, Bührle Collection, Zurich, Switzerland.
26 Pablo Picasso, *Les Amoureux* (1923), oil on canvas, 130.2 x 97.2 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

the interruption of the visual flow by a still image causes a sense of discontinuity, which is countered by a series of similarities between the images.

Godard not only mimics the spatial disposition of the Picasso by placing Patricia on the left and Michel on the right; through the close-up of the postcard he also causes the figures in the painting to appear almost as large as Michel and Patricia. The convergence of size alone produces comparability and relationship.[27] What are the consequences of this simple montage sequence? For one thing, the love story between Patricia and Michel is characterized as the adaptation of the literary and art-historical subject matter of Romeo and Juliet. The tragic end of the film is thus foreshadowed at this early stage in the film. For a fraction of a second, however, there is also a conspicuous synchronicity of film, painting, and literature. We immediately think of Shakespeare in connection with the names of Romeo and Juliet, but the visual level calls our attention to Picasso's treatment of the motif without substantially interrupting the cinematic flow. This gesture, which can also be understood as a homage to the painter, specifically relates film to its precursory medium of painting. In view of Godard's later films, the montage also suggests an autonomization

Ills. 5-7

27 According to André Malraux, proportional alteration is one of the reasons why photography revolutionized the history of art: "There is another, more insidious, effect of reproduction. In an album or art book the illustrations tend to be of much the same size. Thus works of art lose their relative proportions; a miniature bulks as large as a full-size picture, a tapestry or a stained-glass window." (Malraux, "The Museum without Walls," 21.)

Ills. 8-10

of the image which will become more pronounced in the films of the 1960s. However, even here image and narration tend to diverge, and numerous possibilities occur for the creation of theoretically productive tension from the gap between text and image.

One could ask whether the proximity of painting and film in Breathless implies a value judgment. Is film upgraded through the presence of a classic of modernist painting? In the context of Godard's first feature film, which plays out like an American gangster movie, the opposite is the case. For even though we seem to be confronted with canonical paintings, the images are shown as cheap reproductions, as posters and postcards. What we have here, although this can easily be forgotten considering the motifs,[28] is strictly speaking not a painting by Picasso but its often-reproduced representation. This is why the place in which Godard shows the art is not the museum, neither in Breathless nor in his following films of the 1960s.[29] On the contrary, he chooses banal everyday places like Patricia's bedroom and bathroom. As we will see, this notion of irreverently seeing painting (and much else) as material for a cinematic inquiry is central to Godard's work until well into the 1970s.

28 Gerd Bauer's above-cited analysis is also flawed in this respect: he unconditionally interprets the posters in Patricia's room as art. He doesn't consider the difference between work and reproduction, which in my opinion is central to Godard's use of art-historical sources.

29 Band of Outsiders, from 1964, is no exception to this: though Odile, Franz, and Arthur visit the Louvre to fill the time until the evening, they do so purely out of the sporting ambition of running a race through its hallowed halls.

Shortly after the Picasso sequence, there is a place for the Renoir reproduction, which is once again closely associated with Patricia in the following scene. In response to her question "Do you think she's prettier than me?", Michel describes Patricia rather than giving her an answer (ill. 8–10). "When you're frightened or astonished, or both at once, you have a strange reflection in your eyes." Patricia shyly asks a further question ("And now?") and earns the reply: "I'd like to sleep with you again." The mise en scène is more important here than the dialogue, which is further evidence of Michel and Patricia's talking at cross purposes and throughout the film sustains the oppositions of beauty and desire, of insecurity and macho mentality. Where the unexpected montage of the Picasso postcard produces an ambivalence of (diegetic) discontinuity and (linguistic) correlation, here the parallelization of film and painting takes place within a single shot. Patricia's head movement should be seen as a literal *convergence* of cinematic and painted image that relates both media to one another through iconic similarity. In Godard's film, Patricia and the girl portrayed by Renoir are both primarily *image* and thus occasion for questions of composition and pictorial representation.

There would be little reason to discuss these two sequences from Breathless in such detail if they weren't paradigmatic for the following films of the 1960s. The dialectical operation of establishing references to art as instances of rupture, but also of accentuating, sometimes exaggeratedly, what both media have in common, becomes a recurrent trope in Godard's coming works. In almost every film up to 1965, art history is not only featured as a second large reservoir of images alongside the history of cinema[30] but most notably acts as a reflective surface for the examination of questions of representation. For there is also a reference to the mediated character of visual representation in the approximation of Patricia and the motifs of Renoir and Picasso. Contrary to the direct, almost documentary aspects of film, which are usually emphasized as the decisive innovation of the New Wave, it is evident from the very beginning that Godard's films are in intimate dialogue with pre-existing images.

30 As in the short conversation about Paul Klee at the beginning of Le petit soldat—also based on a postcard, but this time at a newsstand. "It's a pretty Pau Klee," Bruno exclaims, to which his acquaintance Hugues laconically replies, "Not as pretty as the girl I'm on my way to meet."

Exploding the Museum: Pierrot le fou

"The commentary on the image forms part of the image."
Jean-Luc Godard[31]

Long before his films were shown in exhibitions or commissioned by museums, Godard had directed his attention to the visual regime of the museum and specifically to painting. The race around the Louvre by the three protagonists of Band of Outsiders attests as much to this interest as the reproductions of Renoir and Picasso on the walls of Patricia's room in Breathless. Here a profanation of the hallowed halls, there a translation of art into the profanity of everyday life. If Godard's embedding of classical modernist paintings into his films began selectively in Breathless, it culminated six years later in Pierrot le fou: a film that ends with the central character painting his face Yves Klein blue, tying a string of Pop Art red sticks of dynamite around his head, and blowing himself up in a bright yellow fireball says clearly that its director is as much interested in color and the explosive power of images as in "story."

> It is necessary to make the chains of images fly apart, to blow them up; it is necessary that the images no longer connect up seamlessly, as in a chain of cause and effect, that two images permit the insertion of a third, different image between them. Godard treats this third in-between image, this explosion, as a fact; in *Pierrot le fou* he is less interested in the endless transition from the one to the other via the respective third [...] than in the objectivity of this third.[32]

It is not without reason that Horst Bredekamp has claimed Pierrot le fou for art history, pointing out that Godard's film should be "analyzed like a painting."[33] The allusions to and quotations from painting in particular are not only more frequent here than in Breathless but also more complex and thus more challenging to the viewer. Pierrot le fou is often interpreted

31 Jean-Luc Godard, "Let's talk about Pierrot" [1965], *Godard on Godard*, trans. and ed. Tom Milne (New York/London: DaCapo 1972) 215–234: 230.

32 Lorenz Engell, "Pierrot le fou," ibid., *Bilder des Wandels* (Weimar: VDG 2003), 132–151: 132f..

33 "Kunstgeschichte im 'Iconic Turn.' Ein Interview mit Horst Bredekamp," *kritische berichte* 1/1998, 85–93: 86.

as the conclusion and sum of Godard's first, "Romantic" phase.[34] His first feature-length film begins in 1959 with Jean-Paul Belmondo's words "In the end, I'm a jerk," while PIERROT LE FOU ends with the same Belmondo shouting "In the end, I'm an idiot," before he blows himself up and the film slowly changes from the blue sky into the tabula rasa of a white screen.[35] Between these two almost identical sentences—they don't suggest much of an intellectual development in the figure, but they certainly represent a clear frame—come ten films within a mere six years,[36] from which numerous motifs and structural elements are recapitulated in PIERROT LE FOU: a short dance sequence recalls A WOMAN IS A WOMAN, Godard's first film in color, in 1962, in which the two protagonists Belmondo and Anna Karina had already appeared together; the love-on-the-run plot, which ends with betrayal and death, revisits elements from BREATHLESS; a short torture sequence, in which Belmondo is interrogated in the bath, similarly took place in LE PETIT SOLDAT; and references to the other films can also be enumerated.

Godard himself sustained the impression of PIERROT LE FOU as a compilation of his previous films in an ad text published in various magazines: "PIERROT LE FOU is a little soldier who discovers with contempt that he has to live his life, that a woman is a woman, and that in a new world you have to form a band of outsiders in order not to end up breathless."[37] Almost all of Godard's previous films are gathered together in this sentence. So, for the viewers who have followed him thus far, PIERROT LE FOU can be seen as a meta-reflection on his previous work as much as a new film. This brief description of the film contains an aesthetic program based on the combination of existing fragments rather than originality.

"*Pierrot le fou* must have been created in a feverish dream,"[38] writes Martin Schaub about the film's production phase. The film was shot in a very short time during the summer of 1965 and was first screened at the Venice Film Festival on August 29 of the same year. In a long interview with the *Cahiers du cinéma* that took place immediately after the premiere, Godard

34 In his Montreal lectures, Godard also situates the end of his "first phase" after PIERROT LE FOU. See Jean-Luc Godard, *Introduction to a True History of Cinema and Television*, trans. and ed. Timothy Barnard (Montreal: Caboose 2014), 194.

35 For further similarities that make PIERROT LE FOU look like a remake of BREATHLESS, see Alan Williams, "Pierrot in Context(s)," *Jean-Luc Godard's* Pierrot Le Fou, ed. David Wills (Cambridge: Cambridge UP 2000) [Cambridge Film Handbooks], 43–63.

36 This only takes into account the full-length feature films, not Godard's contributions to episode films.

37 Jean-Luc Godard, "Pierrot le fou" [1965], *L'Avant-scène cinéma*, 1976, no.171/172, 71–111: 108.

38 Peter W. Jansen, Wolfram Schütte, eds. *Jean-Luc Godard* (Munich: Hanser 1979) [Reihe Film 19], 135.

emphasizes the haste and perplexity that both impelled and obstructed the film:

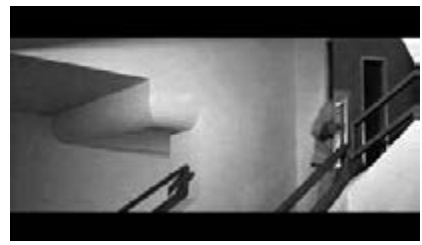
> I can't say I didn't work it out, but I didn't pre-think it. Everything happened at once: it is a film in which there was no writing, editing or mixing – well, one day! Bonfanti [the sound engineer] knew nothing of the film and he mixed the soundtrack without preparation. He reacted with his knobs like a pilot faced by airpockets. This was very much in key with the spirit of the film. So the construction came at the same time as the detail. It was a series of structures which immediately dovetailed one with another.[39]

It would be wrong to take Godard's statement at face value. But apart from whether the shoot really was as he describes, the remark can be taken as programmatic for the structure of the film: the interconnection of detail and overall construction, of action and the structural reflection of it, is once again guided by the ideal of an interpenetration of theory and practice, of providing a theorization of the aesthetic act along with the act itself. The recourse to this Romantic structural element doesn't occur by chance, and is supplemented with further references to early Romanticism. Godard himself sets up this relationship in his description of the story of Marianne Renoir and Ferdinand Griffon as that of the "last romantic couple," and he then goes on, somewhat imprecisely, to call them the "last descendants of *La nouvelle Héloïse, Werther*, and *Hermann and Dorothea*."[40] Alongside the idea of romantic love, which is only fulfilled in the death of both lovers, the motif of the journey (to the south, moreover out of the city to the seclusion of the coast), or the *Doppelgänger* (Pierrot/Ferdinand) can be ascribed to this historical pattern.

Apart from these narrative elements, the film is also affected by the legacy of the Romantic utopia at another level: in its permanent attempt to combine the individual arts—in this case, first and foremost, literature and visual art. The image of "combination" is misleading here, however, as more than in Godard's earlier works the film's interlinking of painting, literature, and film doesn't lead to a synthesis but is staged as a hard collision of different registers. This can be understood as an allegorical doubling of the narration: the interplay of film and painting remains as utopian as the relationship between Marianne and Ferdinand. Dissociation and

39 Godard, "Let's talk about Pierrot," *Godard par Godard I*, 217.
40 Ibid., 216.

rupture repeatedly take the place of reconciliation and unity. One of the most famous images from the film is a wide-angle shot of Anna Karina with a disproportionately large pair of scissors and summarizes two of the film's central motifs: the scissors as a murder weapon and as the prerequisite for cinematic montage.



Ills. 11-13

A reading of this sequence as an allegorical self-description brings out the different logics of correlation by which Godard—and his editing assistant Agnès Guillemot, who worked almost as closely with him as the cameraman Raoul Coutard[41]—relates his images to one another: on the plot level, the distorted view of the tower block is an indication of where Marianne is held captive by the gangsters; it is a conventional "establishing shot," which gives the viewer an orientation in the action. The image with the scissors follows a similarly wide-angled shot of a dwarf threatening her with a pistol. In the final shot we see Ferdinand hurrying to her aid pursued by two other gangsters (ill. 11–13). The image of Marianne is conspicuously out of line with the spatial logic of the sequence; for reasons of narrative flow, the usual convention of the "invisible cut" would demand a cut from the long shot of the building to Belmondo in the stairway. Godard, however, subverts the method of parallel montage, a familiar trope since Griffith, with which suspense could easily be created here—as in the classic "last minute rescue." And at the same time he ironizes his contravention of traditional editing by placing the motif of cutting at the exact point of the narrative break. "Cutting" can thus be

41 For Agnes Guillemot's collaboration with Godard, see the conversation with her in Jansen, Schütte, eds. *Jean-Luc Godard* (Munich:71–82). An anthology on Raoul Coutard appeared to mark his being awarded the Marburg Camera Prize in 2001: Michael Neubauer, Karl Prümm, Peter Riedel, eds. *Raoul Coutard – Kameramann der Moderne* (Marburg: Schüren 2004).

read on at least two levels: as a part of the narrative and as a metaphor for authorial intervention through montage. Anna Karina's frontal look into the camera also suggests that this cut is directed to the viewer's horizon of expectation.

Apart from this break with cinematic convention, the three shots also exemplify how much the composition and montage of the entire film are determined by criteria of coloration. The painterly principle of linking colors replaces a logic of narration here. The fact that the three images go together despite their apparent lack of connectedness lies not least in the recurrence of the primary colors of blue and red, which are attributed throughout the film to Ferdinand (blue) and Marianne (red), starting with the letters in the opening credits and ending with Belmondo painting himself before his character's suicide. The autonomy that Godard attributes to color turns film into a medium of expression rather than impression and brings it close to painting: "Godard never used color realistically or mechanically, but always as selectively as a painter, with a deliberately reduced palette," concludes Frieda Grafe.[42]

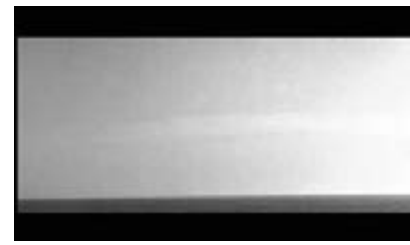
As in Breathless, Godard has two different characters collide against one another in Marianne and Ferdinand—but this time the roles are reversed:

> These two beings, in fact, want to be in two different sorts of art works. Marianne wants to live in a crime drama, a film noir in fact (with herself as the femme fatale). Ferdinand wants to be in a minimalist, modernist narrative (it is he who speaks to the film audience and initiates other Brechtian gestures of self-reflexivity). To place them in the broadest categories that emerge from the director's first period, she is an outlaw, while he is an intellectual.[43]

This contrast doesn't only take place on the level of the action; it is repeated in the media allocated to the two main characters. Marianne Renoir, whose name itself is a synthesis of painting (Pierre-Auguste Renoir) and film (Jean Renoir), is repeatedly associated with the female portraits of Renoir or Picasso. The name of Ferdinand, however, alludes among other things

42 Frieda Grafe, "Tomaten auf den Augen. Die Geschichte des Farbfilms ist die Geschichte einer Verdrängung. Gespräch mit Miklos Gimes" [1989], ibid., *Filmfarben* (Berlin: Brinkmann & Bose 2002), 47–68: 59

43 Alan Williams, "Pierrot in Context(s)," 49.



Ills. 14-16

to the narrator in Louis-Ferdinand Céline's novel *Guignol's band*,[44] from which Belmodo reads several times during the long sequence of scenes on the French Riviera. With some simplification, it can be said that Marianne is not only modeled on images from film and painting; she is also the one who looks (and is looked at). Ferdinand, on the other hand, whose origin is derived from a text, is the one who reads and writes. This antagonistic model doesn't head for a victory of one medium over the other and remains unresolved at the end of the film. At most, the existence of the film itself could be an indication of the cinematic medium as the victor in the *paragone* between image and text. For in PIERROT LE FOU, the final impression after the detonation (ill. 13–16) is of both an image and a poetic text: the blue sea; the slow and steady pan into the sun which blurs the line between sea and sky and causes the image to pale; and the voice-over dialogue of Rimbaud's poem *L'éternité*:

Marianne (*off*).	Elle est rétrouvée.
Ferdinand (*off*).	Quoi?
Marianne (*off*).	L'éternité.
Ferdinand (*off*).	C'est la mer allée
Marianne (*off*).	Avec le soleil.[45]

44 Louis-Ferdinand Céline, *Guignol's band* [1944], ibid. *Romans* III, ed. Henri Godard (Paris: Gallimard 1988) [Bibliothèque de la pléiade].

45 Godard, "Pierrot le fou," 108 ["Found again. What? / Eternity. / The sea gone / With the sun." Arthur Rimbaud, "Eternity", ibid. *Collected Poems*, trans. Martin Sorrell (Oxford: Oxford UP 2001), 183. Rimbaud's text is one of the four poems he published in 1886 under the title *Fêtes de la patience*. In a slightly modified form he took the poem into the "Alchemie du verbe" section of the collection *Saison en enfer*, a few pages after the famous correlation of the vowels to individual colors to which Godard alludes in the opening credits of his film. In this publication it reads:

What survives the film is a blank screen, a white canvas—the bases of film and painting—upon which the closing credits appear. The film ends with a gesture that is both destructive and constructive, and also silences the voices. Godard in fact gives his film a utopian ending, in which the three media of literature, film, and painting conjoin, with the loss of their respective specificities. The explosion not only destroys Ferdinand but also the visual regime of the museum that had provided the model for Breathless.[46]

But what does the film say about the relationship between film and painting before it ends in this media implosion? Certain paratexts, advertising copy written by Godard, and the trailer of the film also reflect the film's inherent collision of different media:

> PIERROT LE FOU is: – Stuart Heisler reworked by Raymond Queneau / – the last romantic film / – techniscope as the legacy of Renoir and Sisley / – the first modern film before Griffith / – the wanderings of a solitary dreamer / – the intrusion of the crime thriller into the tragedy of cinema painting.[47]

Two elements in this list—which show Godard's interest in advertising jargon[48] and his tendency to create friction and internal contradiction[49] rather than completeness through a catalogue-like series of allusive descriptions—are of particular interest here: "Techniscope as the legacy of Renoir and Sisley," and "the intrusion of the crime thriller into the tragedy of cinema painting." If Godard postulates a chain of inheritance that designates the technical procedure of wide-screen projection as the legitimate

"C'est la mer mêlée / Au soleil." See Arthur Rimbaud, *Poésies. Une saison en enfer. Illuminations* [1873/1886], preface by René Char, ed. Louis Forestier, 2nd. ed. (Paris: Gallimard 1984), 109 and 144f.

46 Antoine de Baecque points out that in Godard's films the museum was always the target of polemic: "[F]rom the outset, Godard has always entertained an initial polemical relationship with museums; to him, they are derisory sites of great learning, which is inherited, defunct, and conservative." Antoine de Baecque, "Godard in the Museum," *For Ever Godard*, eds. Michael Temple, James S. Williams, Michael Witt (London: Black Dog Publishing 2004), 118–125: 118.

47 Godard, "Pierrot le fou," 111.

48 In the second half of the 1950s, Godard worked in the PR department of Fox Studios and devised advertising campaigns for Hollywood films. See Colin MacCabe: Godard, 87f.

49 An early indication of Godard's interest in Jorge Luis Borges is the extended Borges quote that opens The Carabineers. Borges is also often mentioned in the long discussion with the *Cahiers du cinéma* to mark the release of Pierrot le fou. See Godard, "Let's talk about Pierrot," *Godard on Godard*, 224 and 230.

descendant of painting, this genealogical model is then immediately questioned in favor of the crime novel. Despite his emphatic subsumption of film into the canon of traditional painting, cinema is thought of as an impure form, as a reservoir of competing media and concepts. It isn't necessary for Godard to decide between painting and film because both can be integrated quite easily into his aesthetic system. "Everything should be put into a film"[50] was how he formulated his categorical imperative a little later.

The film's two-minute trailer[51] confirms this impression. Without explicitly referring to painting, the cinematic structure is presented as a debate between film and literature, the media allocated to Karina and Belmondo. "It was a love story," Karina's voice repeats to short clips that seem to be immediately identifiable as images from the film,[52] alternating with "It was an adventure story." The two phrases can be understood as an ironic reference to two common genres of American cinema, which Godard both takes up and undermines.[53] PIERROT LE FOU can be interpreted in terms of both, depending on whether the relationship between Ferdinand Griffon and Marianne Renoir is emphasized or their joint flight to the French Riviera.

In one of the first scenes in the film, Jean-Paul Belmondo lies in the bath and reads to his daughter (as we later find out) from a book. Moments in which characters read to one another occur in almost every one of Godard's

50 Jean-Luc Godard, "One Should Put Everything into a Film" [1967], Godard on Godard, 238–239: 239.

51 Unlike many other filmmakers, Godard puts his trailers together himself, making little "Godard films" out of them, as Vinzenz Hediger has explained: "As befits trailers which are also auteur films, Godard trailers are more than just trailers. Apart from announcements for coming attractions, they are usually also presentations of the poetics of the film. Furthermore, they can be read as a critique of the trailer; they are about what the trailer is about. And finally, and crucially, they are a laboratory for the aesthetics of the films." Vinzenz Hediger, "A Cinema of Memory in the Future Tense: Godard, Trailers, and Godard Trailers," *For Ever Godard*, eds. Temple, Williams, Witt (144–159: 149). Hediger gives Godard's updating of early Romantic poetics a surprising theoretical turn in his understanding of trailers as the fulfillment of the Romantic dream of a multiplication of possible beginnings: "Trailers are the only reliable manifestation of the Romantic idea of infinite beginnings within the commercial logic of cinema, a logic which Godard has, if not always closely adhered to, then certainly always been acutely aware of." ibid., 155.

52 In fact, many of the images shown don't come from the film but are outtakes or shots not used in the final cut. The film doesn't show Belmondo being hurled against the wall in the fight with the gangsters, nor does the picture by Paul Klee, accompanied by the words "Landscapes of winter," appear in the film.

53 It is also not difficult to spot the association of these genres with "male" and "female."

films and illustrate his technique of citation and appropriation of texts by other authors. At the presentation of the Adorno Award of the city of Frankfurt to Godard in 1995, Klaus Theweleit gave a deliberately exaggerated definition: "Godard's films are films in which people read to each other from books."[54] Different temporal systems collide at the resulting narrative breaks. Reading aloud opens up a parallel space, a diversion of the cinematic discourse that involves a change of level. To overstate the matter: the film carries on, but in the text; the cinematic progression continues, but in narrative stasis.

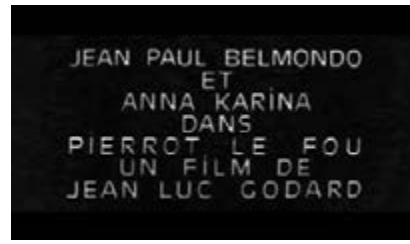
> In this sense, the repeated gesture of reading aloud that is so typical of Godard's films can perhaps be seen as a model: for the delayed, anachronous workings of perception (here of reading), for the interruption of the action and chain of events by something asynchronous, through a quotation, a look to the side, a cut to the page. Reading creates a distance, a separation from the time of the surroundings, an alienation from one's own perception in the moment, a gap and a slowing down, a contact (now, here)—at arm's length.[55]

Similar reading scenes, which are a structural interlacing of fictive levels, have occurred in Godard's films from the very beginning; one thinks of the postcards that Michel Ange and Ulysse send home from the war in The Carabineers, or the lengthy Faulkner passage in Breathless. But something more happens at the beginning of Pierrot le fou. For here, in contrast to the Faulkner quotation, it is a non-fictional text about painting that is read out, making the operation more complicated. The step from film to text is linked to the change in content from film to painting. The book Belmondo reads is Élie Faure's history of art, the first volume of which was published in 1909. The paperback edition, whose back cover can clearly be seen in the film, appeared in 1964. The reference to Velazquez is thus not—or not only—a gesture of return to the artistic past but one of the inclusion of the art historical present. As with Breathless, the scene has to do with the incorporation of art into everyday life (the bath, the rotating stand in the bookshop where Belmodo

54 Klaus Theweleit, *ONE + ONE. Rede für Jean-Luc Godard zum Adornopreis, Frankfurt, Paulskirche 17.9.95* (Berlin: Brinkmann & Bose 1995), 9.

55 Stefan Hesper, "Berührungen auf Distanz. Kommunikation und Kontakt in Jean-Luc Godards Détective," *Godard intermedial*, eds. Volker Roloff, Scarlett Winter (Tübingen: Stauffenburg 1997) [*Siegener Forschungen zur romanischen Literatur- und Medienwissenschaft*, vol. 3], 137–152: 139.

buys Faure's book), with a gesture of de-museification which makes it possible to integrate the painting into a heterogeneous series of images. This impression is underpinned by the previous sequence, which gives the bathroom scene a narrative motivation, but does so with a paradoxical temporal overlap. For the bathtub shot turns out to be a resolution of the enigmatic opening sequence, in which it is initially unclear what is being described and who is speaking. Towards the end of the film's first image—the black screen that fills up in alphabetical order with the red and blue letters of the opening credits, which then disappear (ill. 17) and leave a pair of Os behind[56]—an off-screen voice recites the following text:



Ills. 17-19

> Vélasquez, past the age of fifty, (ill. 18) no longer painted specific objects. He drifted around things like the air, like twilight, catching unawares in the shimmering shadows the nuances of color that he transformed into the invisible core of his silent symphony. Henceforth, he captured only (ill. 20) those mysterious interpenetrations that united shape and tone by means of a secret but unceasing progression that no convulsion or cataclysm could interrupt or impede. Space reigns supreme. (ill. 21) It's as if some ethereal wave over surfaces soaked up their visible emanations to shape them and give them form and then spread them like a perfume, like an echo of themselves, like some imperceptible dust, over every surrounding surface. (ill. 22) The world he lived in was a sad one.[57]

56 That this is a reference to Rimbaud and his programmatic statements on the coloration of vowels is confirmed later when a portrait of Rimbaud is inserted, and certainly by the already quoted end of the film.

57 Subtitles from PIERROT LE FOU, F 1965, director: Jean-Luc Godard.

Ills. 20-22

Only after several shots—of two tennis players, Belmondo choosing a book from a stand at a bookshop,[58] and a nighttime view of a river (probably the Seine)—during which the commentary continues, can the off-screen voice be associated with Belmondo reading in the bath.

In retrospect, the opening scene reveals itself as a flashback, since Ferdinand is already reading aloud from a book he has just bought. As frequently occurs in Godard's films, sound and image dissociate to create a gap and multiply the possible references between the two levels: Is Godard (with Velazquez) speaking about his film in a heterodiegetic discourse from "outside the film," or Belmondo (within the cinematic narrative) about Velazquez? Or is Faure's position on Velazquez being quoted in a detached and neutral manner? The answers to these questions will determine the level on which one interprets the commentary: as a self-referential statement about filmmaking, as a reference to Velazquez, as an homage to Faure, or as an allegorical description of the bourgeois society about to be introduced into the film. But these questions can only be posed with such exactitude at the end of the sequence. At the beginning of the film there is simply a voice to listen to and images to watch, to which—whether deliberately or not—the spoken text represents a commentary. The link between them is not causal or temporal but follows the logic of the AND which Gilles Deleuze has described as characteristic of Godard's method: "What counts with him is not two or three, or however many you like, it's AND, the conjunction

58 The ambivalence that Godard frequently brings into his films through the linkage of written words and images can also be seen here: The name of the shop, Le Meilleur des Mondes, and its address, Médicis, can be understood as a concrete reference to the opening setting of Paris. But the Voltaire quotation can also be read as an anticipatory interpretation of the pessimistically colored story of Marianne and Ferdinand, who, like Candide and Pangloss, go from adversity to adversity.

AND."[59] The AND, Deleuze goes on to say, shifts the focus from the essence of things to the relationship between them. The occasion for these remarks was the television series SIX FOIS DEUX, which Godard made for French television in 1976, but the loosening of causal montage towards that of an AND can essentially be seen in the opening sequence of PIERROT LE FOU.

Meaning can only be allocated in the back and forth between image and text, in the in-between, as an effect of intermediality. In this specific sense, Godard later maintained that Faure's distinctiveness as an art historian lay in veering away from art history to treat art in a literary manner: "If Elie Faure moves us, it's because he talks about a painting as if he were talking about a novel. Somebody should finally get around to translating the twenty volumes of Eisenstein that nobody's read: he'll have dealt with it all in very different terms."[60] The jump from Élie Faure to Sergei Eisenstein, from art historian to film practitioner and theorist, may surprise us, but it is consistent against the background of the later film PASSION. For here the Russian theorist takes on a mediating function between film and art history. "The twenty volumes of Eisenstein" is an allusion to their writer's extensive reflections on art history—including the cinematic in El Greco. Faure speaks here as an art historian who emphatically wishes to open up his subject to film.[61] Eisenstein is brought in as someone who schools the cinematic eye in its background in visual art.[62]

59 Gilles Deleuze, "Three Questions About SIX FOIS DEUX," [1976], *Jean-Luc Godard. Son+Image, 1974-1991*, eds. Raymond Bellour and Mary Lea Bandy (New York: Museum of Modern Art 1992), 35–41: 40.

60 Jean-Luc Godard, "Struggle on Two Fronts. A Conversation with Jean-Luc Godard," *Film Quarterly*, vol. 22, no. 2 (winter, 1968–1969), 20–35: 26–27.

61 In 1934, Faure wrote about the relationship of painting to film as follows: "Painting can pack its suitcase, at least as the dominant art. That there are still some real painters today I regret the less so because most of them love the cinema in particular, are influenced by it, and even help it on its way by what they are trying to do. Could one not say that by pursuing in flowing contours the continuity of projection and surface movement, the great masters of sculpture and painting—the Hindus, the Khmers, and the French sculptors of the Middle Ages, among others, and nearer to us Tintoretto, Michelangelo, Rubens, Goya, Delacroix—invented the cinema?" Élie Faure, "Introduction à la mystique du cinéma," *Fonction du cinéma. De la cinéplastique à son destin social* (Geneva: Gonthier 1963), 48–68: 52. For Faure as a "militant thinker of cinema," see Jean-Paul Morel, "Élie Faure, militant du septième art," *Les Cahiers de la Cinémathèque de Perpignan*, no. 70, October 1999, 33–42.

62 Some of Eisenstein's writings were indeed translated in the early 1980s and immediately became an important inspiration for PASSION. See Joachim Paech, *Passion oder die Ein*bild*ungen des Jean-Luc Godard,* 30–38.

If Élie Faure speaks about painting in the style of a novelist, Godard does so cinematically in Pierrot le fou. The logic implies that the filmmakers of the New Wave—apart from their references to film history—saw themselves more as the successors to the art critics than the artists of the nineteenth century. This becomes most explicit in Godard's Histoire(s) du cinéma but was formulated earlier:

> The only criticism of art that exists in the world was written by the French – Baudelaire, Malraux, etc., and we [i.e. the filmmakers of the New Wave] are the inheritors in the cinema – the art of our times – in other countries there are university teachers who speak of cinema and painting but there are no art critics like Élie Faure, who tells of the old age of Rembrandt or Malraux, critics who for all their exaggeration also convey a feeling of creating something.[63]

If we consider the names gathered here—Godard also includes Diderot elsewhere—it is striking that none of them are art critics in the usual sense of the word. The theoretical-critical deliberations of Didertot, Baudelaire, and Malraux go hand in hand with their extensive practical work as writers and cannot be separated from it. The genealogy invoked by Godard is one of an "in-between" of self-reflexive artistic creation. Pierrot le fou belongs in this tradition as a metafilm that reflects its own creation in images while also presenting this as a hybrid of various media:

> The film constantly mixes its forms of portrayal, which are familiar from crime movie, adventure film, musical, and newsreel. He quotes, without regard for classification, Élie Faure alongside the *Pieds Nickelés*—Faure from a cheap paperback, the *Pieds Nickelés* from a luxury volume. At every moment, the film performs the act of its creation by confronting its story's intuitive experience of reality with the empirical one from books, paintings, and advertising copy. This results in a position exactly in between objectivity and subjectivity that has the consciousness of its own rootedness in the world over a merely empirical observation of it.[64]

63 Jean-Luc Godard, "Sauve Qui Peut... Godard! (Fragments)," *Framework*, issue 13 (autumn 1980), 10–13: 12.

64 Frieda Grafe, "Pierrot le Fou," *Filmkritik* 10/1965, 588.

This mixing of different levels can lead to disorientation for the viewer. In theoretical terms, it marks a departure from the traditional concept of the work as an enclosed capsule towards a fragmented, porous form put together from individual parts. Roland Barthes, in his insistence on shifting from "work" to "text," has pointed out the convergence of reception and production that this involves: "This means that the text requires an attempt to abolish (or at least to diminish) the distance between writing and reading, not by intensifying the reader's projection into the work, but by linking the two together in one and the same signifying practice."[65] An example of such a linking together of reading and projection is Godard's use of images. With Godard, the production of images is always simultaneously their reception, which derives not only from painting but also from comics or advertising. In the course of Pierrot le fou, the moving image is repeatedly stopped in order to observe paintings from various historical eras. This mostly occurs without any obvious connection to the plot:

> *Pierrot le fou* was studded with elements such as colors, drawings, or paintings, which were not related to the plot but which could be linked together because they shared some similarities. Godard used them to suggest that many combinations, many texts dealing with various aspects of art, were to be found in a film.[66]

A closer look corrects the impression that the images are not related to the plot and enables a number of connections to be made. For one thing, Ferdinand, similarly to Patricia in Breathless, is introduced at the beginning of the film as someone who is interested in visual art; on this level, the use of painting is somewhat psychologically motivated in terms of the character. The images could be paintings Ferdinand remembers or that mean something to him. But in the rest of the film it is rare to find as clear a link to the character of Ferdinand as the opening scene implies. If the paintings were to be assigned to any kind of authority, it would have to be to a superordinate narrator who organizes the cinematic material, the music, and the images.

65 Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text" [1971], ibid., *The Rustle of Language*, trans. Richard Howard (Berkeley: University of California Press 1986), 56–64: 62.

66 Pierre Sorlin, *European Cinemas, European Societies 1939-1990* (New York: Routledge 1991), 187.

Ills. 23-25

The paintings[67] (or details of them) are generally filmed in close-up and fill the screen. They are more than a constituent of the film; they replace it (as at other points it is replaced by texts or individual panels from comics), bring it to a halt for a moment, and comment on the action. The cinematic medium reveals itself in this suspension of cinematic narrative: a shift from narration to the materiality of film can be observed. In this case, film and painting collide heavily; a diegetic integration usually only occurs on the soundtrack, as when Ferdinand's off-screen voice says the name "Marianne Renoir" and the painting *La petite fille à gerbe* (ill. 23–25) is cut in between two shots of Anna Karina on the word "Renoir."

This procedure can be seen as a further development of the parallelization of a visual motif and a protagonist already at work in Breathless. But there is a difference: While the paintings became part of the dialogue and were narratively embedded in the earlier film, they come abruptly and without warning in Pierrot le fou: Renoir's painting, in terms of its composition and Impressionistically blurred background, replaces Anna Karina, and Godard implicitly becomes Renoir—a Renoir, however, whose work is not filmed as a painting but as a consumer item, a postcard. Louis Aragon referred to this in his eulogistic review of the film: "And certainly the large number of Picassos on the wall does not manifest any desire on Godard's part to show off his talents as a connoisseur, certainly not when Picasso can be bought at your local

67 Some of the paintings shown are Henri Matisse, *La blouse roumaine* (1940); Pierre Auguste Renoir, *La petite fille à gerbe* (1888); Pablo Picasso, *Les Amoureux* (1923); Vincent Van Gogh, *Café de la Nuit* (1888); two further paintings by Picasso (*Jacqueline aux fleurs*, 1958, and *Portrait de Sylvette au fauteuil vert*, 1954).

neighborhood department store."[68] Picasso's images—like the Renoirs—have at least two functions, corresponding to two levels of value. They serve as icons of modern art, yet as such they can be purchased at any time as reproductions and are only one visual element among many.

The transposition of a painting into a film is a complex procedure involving changes of scale and framing. As André Bazin emphasized in his seminal text on "Cinema and Painting": "Finally and above all [...] space, as it applies to a painting, is radically destroyed by the screen."[69] Pictorial space is fundamentally different from that of the cinema, and the adaptation of a painting for the screen can be understood as an aggressive modification of this space. It is worth noting that PIERROT LE FOU—unlike Godard's films from the 1970s or the video production HISTOIRE(S) DU CINÉMA, is shot in wide-angle Techniscope. In comparison to the canvases of Van Gogh or Renoir, the size of the projected image is gigantic. In this case, cinema is an almost excessively exaggerated enlargement of the painting, which can have an equally emphatic or caricaturing effect. Bazin also pointed out the crucial difference that painting and film are characterized by two fundamentally different forms of demarcation. In painting, a frame ("cadre") has the function of isolating the image from its surroundings and has a centripetal effect in that it directs the concentration of the viewer inwards. In contrast, the cinema screen has no frame but simply a hidden covering ("cache"), so that the forces at work tend to be centrifugal:

> The outer edges of the screen are not, as the technical jargon would seem to imply, the frame of the film image. They are the edges of a piece of masking that shows only a portion of reality. The picture frame polarizes space inwards. On the contrary, what the screen shows us seems to be part of something prolonged indefinitely into the universe. A frame is centripetal, the screen centrifugal. [70]

Bazin made these observations on the release of a series of "artist films" from the 1950s. So there is still a step to be made from his concept of "cadre" and "cache" to PIERROT LE FOU. For the paintings in Godard's film have a different

68 Louis Aragon, "What is Art, Jean-Luc Godard" [1965], trans. Royal S. Brown, in: *Focus on Godard*, ed. Royal. S. Brown (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall 1972), 135–146: 144.
69 André Bazin, "Painting and Cinema," ibid., *What is Cinema?* trans. and ed. Hugh Gray, vol. 1 (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press 2004), 164–169: 165.
70 Ibid., 166.

Ills. 26-28

function from the ones in Alain Resnais's Van Gogh or Henri-Georges Clouzot's Le mystère de Picasso, for example. Obviously, Godard doesn't undertake a monographic approach to the work of a single artist. Instead, he selectively collages the work of different painters as one possible reference point among many other visual sources, which are granted the same status as the cinematic plot. Where Resnais skillfully uses film to explain painting, Godard uses painting to transform it into film. Where Resnais's film leaves the classical concept of the work intact, or even amplifies it by concentrating on a single painter, Godard seeks to dissolve it.

Bazin's proposition that the screen has an explosive outward potential is illustrated in Pierrot le fou by the fact that the film generally only shows details of paintings, which can evidently be extended beyond the edge of the screen and, the film implies, are narratively extended into the cinematic plot. If the screen is the place where the transition between painterly space (art) and cinematic space (life) is repeatedly depicted, this gesture is also extended into the auditorium.[71] Just as the gap between painting and cinematic diegiesis can be easily crossed in a single cut, the boundary between cinematic narrative and movie theater is permeable. This is particularly addressed when Ferdinand replies to Marianne's question about who he is speaking to with the words: "Au spectateur!"

The sequencing and repetition of some of the film's visual motifs links them without establishing a hierarchy of images. The Picasso painting

71 This too clearly goes back to Romantic patterns of thought; Ludwig Tieck made the most excessive play with the mutual reflection of stage and auditorium when he extended the number of interlocking levels into the potentially infinite in *The Land of Upside Down*. See Ludwig Tieck, *The Land of Upside Down* [1800], trans. Oscar Mandel (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press 1978).

familiar from Breathless (*Les Amoureux*) or a panel from a comic have the same validity as a Total sign in a gas station (ill. 26–28). Several aspects of Godard's concept of the image during the 1960s can be seen in this montage: if the word has taken on pictorial qualities (as in the way Ferdinand's handwriting is repeatedly used as a decorative motif in the scenes on the coast), it can also be understood as representative of the gesture of totalization with which Godard takes up the most diverse images and makes them suit his purposes.

Marjorie Perloff has described this type of paratactical co-subordination of individual fragments as a central element of collage: "In collage, hierarchy gives way to parataxis—one corner is as important as another corner. Which is to say that there is no longer a central ordering system."[72] While it is tempting to apply this concept, which Louis Aragon also emphasizes in his analysis of Pierrot le fou, to Godard's film, this risks disregarding the specific temporality of the medium. Film, in the end, can only present coexistence successively—unless it makes use of multiple exposure and other forms of superimposition, or redefines the relationship between image and sound—necessarily creating a narrative structure as it does so. Even the rupture of classical narrative patterns remains (or creates) narration. In this respect, what Perloff describes as a collage effect would more accurately have to be described as the result of montage, which levels hierarchies through the consecutive arrangement of shots of similar framing. Montage, it should be added here, is nothing but a temporalization of the collage principle that transfers the spatially organized individual items into a chronological sequence.

Such a leveling does not mean that Godard incorporates random material into his films, however. His quotations from art history reveal similarities and show how carefully he picks his references: On the one hand, the inserted images are almost without exception portraits, most of them of women, otherwise of couples. So it is easy to identify the two main characters of Ferdinand and Marianne in the depicted motifs; the film changes from a genuine narration into a commentary, a rearrangement of well-known visual topoi. On the other hand, in Picasso, Van Gogh, and Renoir, Godard chooses three painters who are representative of the innovations in modern painting since Impressionism. They invented new forms of abstraction and a new

72 Marjorie Perloff, "The Invention of Collage," *Collage*, ed. Jeanine Parisier Plottel (New York: New York Literary Forum 1983), 5–47: 42. In the context of his exhibition *Voyage(s) en Utopie* at the Centre Pompidou in 2006, Godard distanced himself from the concept of collage and associated it with his earlier films: "I'm not going to speak of collage any more. It was a beginning for me. We needed to bring things together that hadn't been seen together before and to find others that were opened up by this convergence." Jean-Luc Godard, "Le cinéma ne se joue pas à pile ou face: entretien avec Jean-Luc Godard," *L'Humanité*, May 20, 2004.)

kind of coloration but still retained the concrete object and did not—like Kasimir Malevich with his black square or Yves Klein with his monochrome paintings—abandon figuration for pure geometry or color. It is tempting—particularly against the background of the above-quoted homage to Lumières as the last of the Impressionists—to describe Godard's film-historical position as analogous to that of the Impressionists in the history of art. His break with conventional narrative doesn't turn away from narration, as with the abstract filmmakers of the 1920s (Ruttmann, Richter, Eggeling), but extends the plot through light, coloration, music, or text. This also entails a tendency to expose the method, as Enno Patalas has observed in PIERROT LE FOU: "Though Godard does not fully reproduce the mechanism of epic narration, he does not abandon it either; instead, it is opened up, turned outward, made visible, subverted."[73] The white screen that remains after this act of subversion and the final detonation prefigures a different white surface. It is both the result of an explosion and a precondition of the new approach to painting that Godard takes in PASSION; this is why SCÉNARIO DU FILM PASSION, the "visual screenplay" made after the film, begins with a white screen, which Godard links to a bright seaside beach and Mallarmé's white sheet of paper: "To see a script. See, and you find... I find myself... and I find myself seeking... You find yourself faced with the invisible. A vast, white surface, a blank page... like Mallarmé's blank page... A beach in a blinding sun..."[74]

Arranging Things: STILL LIFE

> "A commodity appears at first sight an extremely obvious, trivial thing. But its analysis brings out that it is a very strange thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties."
>
> Karl Marx[75]

Seen against the heterogeneous and often confusingly edited structure of PIERROT LE FOU, Harun Farocki's film STILL LIFE[76] is based on a simple and consistent montage strategy that not only juxtaposes two types of image but

73 Enno Patalas, "Elf Uhr nachts (Pierrot le Fou)," *Filmkritik* 2/1966, 83–85: 84.

74 SCÉNARIO DU FILM PASSION (1982), dir: Jean-Luc Godard.

75 Karl Marx, "The Fetishism of the Commodity and its Secret," [1867], ibid., Friedrich Engels, *Capital*, trans. Ben Fowkes, vol. I (London: Penguin Books 1976), 163.

76 STILL LIFE (FRG 1997), dir: Harun Farocki.

also two different times: classical still-life painting from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and contemporary commercial photography. At first glance, the two films seem to have little to do with one another, only sharing the reference to painting. PIERROT LE FOU is a fast-paced, collage-like story of a couple on the run, STILL LIFE a sober, almost cautious documentary of paintings and working with images. What both films share, however, is the theoretical concern.

STILL LIFE is one of the seven films commissioned by the *documenta X* in Kassel in 1997. After the installation INTERFACE,[77] it represents a further step away from Farocki's traditional context of film and television towards that of visual art, where he has become increasingly present ever since.[78] STILL LIFE therefore moves in the direction of art in two ways, even though it doesn't take the form of an installation but that of the classical (television) film.[79] One motivation for Farocki's involvement with still-life painting, as he emphasized in a discussion after the film's first broadcast,[80] was the similarity of this type of image to the documentary film. This initially applies in terms of content: still lifes, as the film's commentary underlines, can be read as historical documents and give precise information about the commodity world of their time. The commentary describes the painting of a market, in which various fruits and vegetables can be seen, as a historical source for research into seventeenth-century Dutch eating habits.[81] Because

77 INTERFACE will be dealt with later in this book. See "What an Editing Room Is: SCHNITTSTELLE" in chapter 4.

78 The major exhibitions in which Farocki has participated include Catherine David's group show *L'Etat des choses* in the Berliner *Kunst-Werke* (2000), a solo exhibition at the Kunstverein and Filmclub Münster (2001), *Things we don't understand* at the Vienna Generali Foundation (2001), and *CTRL SPACE. Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother* in the same year at the ZKM in Karlsruhe. For Harun Farocki's work in museums and galleries, see Christa Blümlinger's text on his installation I THOUGHT I WAS SEEING CONVICTS in the special issue of the journal *Texte zur Kunst*, "Was will die Kunst vom Film?" [What Does Art Want from Film?]: Christa Blümlinger, "Mediale Zugriffe," *Texte zur Kunst*, September 2001, 166–170. Since the publication of this book in German in 2006, Farocki's solo and group shows have become too numerous to list.

79 The film was co-produced by 3sat, ZDF, and other sources. It was first broadcast by 3sat on August 17, 1997.

80 "Arbeit mit Bildern," discussion between Harun Farocki and Christa Blümlinger, 3sat, August 17, 1997.

81 See Norbert Schneider, *Stilleben. Realität und Symbolik der Dinge. Die Stillebenmalerei der frühen Neuzeit* (Cologne: Taschen 1989). "Above and beyond the primary historico-cultural function of the depicted objects, still lifes are testimony to a change in consciousness and mentality" (p. 18). Here, Schneider takes up an idea he had developed in the catalogue for a large exhibition of still lifes in Münster in 1979/80. See Norbert Schneider, "Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichtliche

of the precision of its depiction, the painting is an informative document rather than just an autonomous aesthetic object. But the exactness of depiction can also elicit another reading that gives plausibility to Farocki's juxtaposition of painting and photography. In a controversial reinterpretation of art history, Svetlana Alpers has coined the term "art as description" to capture the distinctiveness of seventeenth-century Dutch art—in contrast to the "narrative" art of Italy and other southern countries. She not only emphasizes its technical precision but explains this exactness through the general use of optical apparatuses such as the camera obscura, which helped artists to delineate their motifs. Alpers writes, in relation to the paintings of Vermeer: "Instead of being tantamount to seeing the world, the camera obscura becomes a source of style. Further, the artist is seen attending not to the world and its replication in his image, but to copying the quirks of his device."[82] The realism of Dutch painting must therefore be understood as the effect of specific technical innovations. It is oriented as much to the apparatus used as to "reality." As Alpers argues, Dutch painting was already a "photographic" art:

> Many characteristics of photographs—those very characteristics that make them so real—are common also to the northern descriptive mode: fragmentariness; arbitrary frames; the immediacy that the first practitioners expressed by claiming that the photograph gave Nature the power to reproduce herself directly unaided by man. If we want historical precedence for the photographic image it is in the rich mixture of seeing, knowing, and picturing that manifested itself in seventeenth-century images.[83]

Alpers analyzes a very wide range of images going well beyond the still life,[84] but the paintings examined by Farocki are very convincing examples of an "art as description." In their general lack of human figures and their exact reproduction of the world of things, they are evidence of the particularly close connection between vision, recognition, and depiction.

Farocki's decision to bring together still-life painting and photography is only implicitly indebted to Svetlana Alpers' proposition. Working in the

Aspekte des Früchtestillebens," *Stilleben in Europa*, eds. Gerhard Langemeyer and Hans-Albert Peters (Münster: Aschendorff 1979), 266–292.

82 Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing. Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: Chicago UP 1983), 31.

83 Ibid., 43.

84 She elucidates and verifies her theory with particular reference to the work of Vermeer and Rembrandt.

medium of film, he is more interested in a similarity between the documentary and the still life that has to do with the marginalization of both genres in the official discourse: the documentary is overshadowed by the feature film, just as the still life has traditionally been marginalized by more prestigious kinds of painting. In 1753 William Hogarth expressed a now generally held view in his *Analysis of Beauty*: "Let us begin with a description of what is termed still life, a species of painting in the lowest esteem because it is in general the easyest to do and is least entertaining [...] Landskip painting, ship painting &c. must be rank(ed) with still life, also if only copied."[85] According to Hogarth, there are two reasons why the still life, together with animal painting and the landscape, rank behind historical painting and the portrait: on the production side, it is the lack of difficulty; the mastery of the artist in copying inanimate objects is less estimated than the representation of historical events or individual physiognomy. And Hogarth criticizes the still life—this time from the viewer's point of view—for its low entertainment value.

This critical neglect is offset in the 1980s at the latest by a theoretically oriented new interest in the still life.[86] In *Looking at the Overlooked*, a collection of essays on still-life painting, Norman Bryson argues against traditional reservations about the "least theorized of the genres." Since the remoteness from theory is not only typical of the critical discourse on the still life but also seems to characterize the genre itself, the connections between the still life's empiricism and the theoretical possibilities internal to the image seems particularly ambiguous. Farocki's film suggests an exploration of potential connections by unfolding the theoretical potential of the still life. Bryson points out a characteristic of the still life that can seem trivial but which has an analogy in one of the most far-reaching changes in cinema history. The still life is "at the furthest remove from narrative," and for this very reason it has continually evaded critical and theoretical discourse, which has largely been restricted to narration and

85 Reprinted in the commented source book Eberhard König, Christiane Schön, eds. *Stilleben* (Berlin: Reimer 1996) [= a history of the classical visual genres, vol. 5], 152. See also Joshua Reynold's proliferation of this position in his influential *Discourses on Art*, which concedes a limited status to the painter of still lifes owing to his accuracy, but warns students against turning to this genre before having studied the great works: Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses on Art* [1797], ed. Robert R. Wark (New Haven, London: Yale UP 1998), 52.

86 Two relevant books in this context are Norman Bryson's *Looking at the Overlooked. Four Essays on Still Life Painting* (London: Reaktion 1990) and Victor I. Stoichita's *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting* [1993], trans. Anne-Marie Glasheen (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge UP 1997).

character psychology.[87] This too can readily be applied to the medium of film, as "narration" became dominant early on, pushing aside other possible modes and procedures. In its recourse to narrative patterns that had characterized the literature of the nineteenth century, film not only limited itself to persons but also to particular themes and conflicts: "In complete contrast to their claim to represent the whole of society, the visual media have tied themselves to a relatively narrow range of themes—people, love, crime, and politics."[88] Attempts to extend and supplement this range were varied and numerous: the so-called *Querschnittfilme* (cross-section films) of the 1920s, with their objective interest in urban spaces and narrative interconnections;[89] experimental and avant-garde cinema, which was often conceived as an exploration of the specific possibilities of the medium; and it makes sense to include Farocki and Godard in this series, as they reveal at least as great an interest in the image and its possibilities and limitations as the cinematic narrative into which this is interwoven.

In contrast to Pierrot le fou, Still Life has no real protagonists[90] but relates objects and images to each other in multiple ways: images *of* objects, images *as* objects. The film revolves around art-historically and religiously loaded motifs—fish, glasses of wine, loaves of bread, and so on—both in their relationships to one another and in the symbolism attributed to the depicted objects. Farocki highlights the symbolic charge of the images (in the paintings) as well as the production of this symbolic value in the act of representation (through photography). Lasting just under an hour, the film contains four long passages devoted to still-life painting in which an off-screen commentary interprets and contextualizes details singled out by the camera. Still Life is thus an example of Farocki's technique of "reading from and speaking into the images," as he has explained elsewhere.[91] The central questions of the film are formulated in an early scene,

87 Bryson, *Looking at the Overlooked*, 9 and 60.

88 Hartmut Winkler, *Docuverse. Zur Medientheorie der Computer* (Munich: Boer 1997), 208.

89 This particularly applies to Walter Ruttmann's film Berlin. Die Sinfonie der Grossstadt (D 1927) and comparable urban films, and also on a small scale to the lost film Adventures of a Ten Mark Note (director: Berthold Viertel, D 1926), for which Béla Balázs wrote the screenplay.

90 In 1929, Sergei Tretjakov—in a radical dismissal of the classic person-centered fable—called for a "biography of the thing": "Thus: not the individual person moving through a system of objects, but the object proceeding through the system of people—for literature this is the methodological device that seems to us more progressive than those of classical belles lettres." Sergei Tretjakov, "The Biography of the Object" [1929], *October* 118, fall 2006, 57–62: 62.

91 In the German version, the commentary is spoken by Hanns Zischler, with whom Farocki has collaborated since the 1970s (in 1978, for example, on a joint production of two plays by Heiner

about Pieter Aertsen's *Market Woman at a Vegetable Stall*: "What is involved when inanimate objects become the focus of a painting? Does it have to do with the objects themselves, in a first reading at least?"[92] This poses the question of representation: Do things stand for themselves, or should they be understood as representatives, as references to something else, something abstract? How much transcendence do the depictions contain? How magically, metaphysically, religiously charged are they? Or are they conversely a painterly attestation to the renunciation of transcendental ideas? The commentary seems to suggest this:

> The grand era of the still life, the seventeenth century, saw the rise of modern natural science. It eschewed the symbolic and allegorical modes of expression previously cultivated by the alchemists. It is difficult for the art of depiction to avoid allegorical and symbolic expression—or such interpretation. Centuries later, the objects in these paintings are scrutinized as if they were ciphers of a secret writing. Like ciphers of a hidden code, a code which doesn't wish to be recognized as such, and whose signs are meant to appear as non-signs. A drinking vessel qua drinking vessel. A loaf of bread qua loaf of bread.[93]

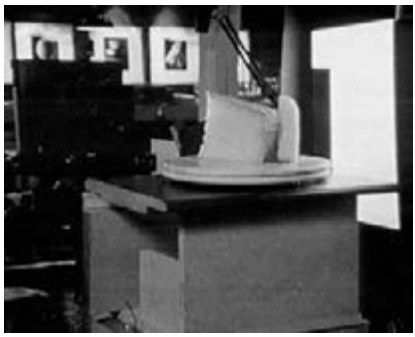
The situation is complex: the profanity of the objects, their refusal to stand for anything but themselves, can be seen as a red herring if the non-sign is interpreted as a sign. Meaning—above and beyond symbolic, iconographic determinations—is always negotiated between image and eye, and even the most representational depiction cannot prevent its allegorization by the viewer.

If natural science and art history are directly related to one another in Farocki's film, this also makes sense since both deal with the same questions. As different as the discourses and operations are, they are concerned with an understanding of the world of things; they recreate the world in formulae, texts, and images. Cinema, which follows up on both disciplines as a further representational technique, adds one more element to this conceptual parallelization. On a basic level, cinema is inconceivable without scientific knowledge; it is the direct result of discoveries in optics, physics, and chemistry. But filmmaking is also intimately linked to the tradition

Müller in Basel) and who is a further link to Godard as one of the two leads in Allemagne Neuf Zéro.

92 Harun Farocki, "Still Life," ibid., *Diagrams*, ed. Benedikt Reichenbach (Cologne: Walther König 2014), 333–343: 334.

93 Ibid., 334/335.



Ill. 29 and ill. 30

of painting—and not least to its alchemical aspects—via the concept of the "image." That image production (and contemplation) continues to be an enchanting process is evident in both the still life and commercial photography, although the magical charging of the images follows different considerations in each case. Where Farocki reveals the theoretical aspects of the image, the aim of the commercial photographers is to point the eye in a single direction—that of the purchase. Contemplation of the image is not the focus here, but its translation into desire and consumption.

Farocki's film can be read theoretically on several levels. As in other films of his, it provides an explicit interpretation and analysis of the images in the commentary, a method that has repeatedly provoked the description "essay film."[94] The analytical potential of the images is taken up by a text that makes suggestions, directs the viewer's eye, and, always proceeding from concrete observation, arrives at general statements about the relationship between image and reality. Moreover, the decision to partner the still lifes with a contemporary image practice should be understood as a catalytic act that releases theoretical potential on both sides of the cut.

Farocki observes four photographers at work in their studios: a banknote, cheese, beer, and a watch are elaborately staged and prepared for shooting in lengthy and patiently documented scenes. While the still lifes are shown as finished products (which themselves portray produced goods), the contemporary scenes focus on the production of images. The two levels, which span four centuries of culture and history, are linked by the depicted objects themselves. The aim in the photographic studios is also to represent commodities or the abstract dimension of "time"—here in the form of a Cartier watch. The similarity between the items portrayed enables match cuts to

94 For a discussion of this concept, see chapter 3 ("Deviation as Norm—Notes on the Essay Film").

bridge the centuries between two images: a cut from a cheese painstakingly draped in a Paris studio for an advertisement to Hans van Essen's painting *A Laid Table*[95] (ill. 29–30) feels like a small step. The sequence of the photo shoot still reverberates when we see the painting, just as two images might superimpose in a slow dissolve.

Farocki's montage inevitably provokes questions about the relationship between the two systems of representation: If the still life lives on in the commercial photographers' studios, does it do so as its counterimage? As its continuation or negation? When the voice-over gives way to live sound (and thus to the pragmatic and banal conversations between photographer and assistant), the ideas developed in relation to the still lifes echo into the present-day sequences:

> These blocks of documentary scenes stand uncommented opposite [the still lifes], and the hope is that one projects the art-historical ideas onto the advertising and notices the differences. And conversely that one can see such still lifes differently when the peculiar cultic effort put into these productions is transferred to the sacred act of art realization.[96]

Two conflicting theories may be read out of the juxtaposition of these two spheres: commercial photography, in the vanishing line of still-life painting, could be thought of as the apogee of profanation. It carries what began in sixteenth-century painting to an extreme: the product is entirely separated from its religious context. On the other hand, this apparent profanation can equally be described as a form of re-sacralization, only that the sacred has changed places and now appears in a new religion of consumerism. Farocki's film follows these two lines of interpretation without opting for the one or the other. It keeps the space between them open.

A third theoretical level, aside from the commentary and the conceptual division into two, becomes apparent with a more exact analysis of the paintings Farocki discusses, when it can be seen that the selection and arrangement of the images sets a precise art-historical framework. The film opens with two paintings by Pieter Aertsen that also stand for two different aspects of what interests Farocki in still-life painting. *Market Woman at a*

95 Hans van Essen, *A Laid Table* (*Still Life with Herrings*), oil on wood, 56 x 67 cm, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. The authorship of Hans van Essen has since been contested and the painting declared "anonymous."

96 Harun Farocki, material from the film Still Life, at www.farocki-film.de [accessed Feb. 1, 2006].

Ill. 31

Vegetable Stall,[97] from 1567 (ill. 31), is a sumptuous display of the fruits and groceries that became available to Dutch society in the second half of the sixteenth century thanks to new methods of cultivation; the painting, as the commentary acknowledges, isn't a still life in the strict sense but a precursor of the genre, yet it is evidence of the economic boom and the prosperity of the time. The cosmos of things is exhibited in excessive abundance, and pushes two smaller scenes of activity—a farmhand with a cow and a kissing couple—literally into the background. The painting bears witness to an excessive expansion of commodities, which replace people on the center stage. The world of consumer goods, whose distribution and commercial exploitation is the work of the twentieth-century photographers, is visually glorified here at an early point in time.

A stronger structural argument is connected to the second painting shown, also by Pieter Aertsen. *Butcher's Stall*,[98] from 1551 (ill. 32), is regarded as a founding work of the Flemish still life and thus opens Farocki's investigation together with the market scene. More important than its chronology, however, is its theoretical potential, which unfolds within the image as a commentary on different visual levels. The painting is an example of the so-called "inverted still life" in which the portrayal of a Christian scene is combined with the depiction of inanimate objects. The "inversion" occurs through the objects pushing into the foreground at the expense of the religious iconography—a hierarchic reversal that together with the painting's almost grotesque abundance and voluptuousness recalls Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, written at more or less the same time.[99]

Butcher's Stall is not only one of the founding works of still-life painting. Together with other similarly structured canvases, it stands at the beginning

97 Farocki never gives the titles of the paintings discussed or their painters, and the final credits only list where they were filmed. Farocki's intention is not an examination of painterly style or a precise art-historical interpretation but a reading of the images *as* images.

98 Pieter Aertsen, *Butcher's Stall* (1551), oil on wood, 124 x 169 cm, Uppsala, University Art Collection.

99 See Michail Backtin's influential reading of Rabelais's text: Michail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* [1965], trans. Hélène Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana UP 1984).

Ill. 32

of a theoretical development that Victor I. Stoichita has called the "self-aware image." For Stoichita, a self-aware image—a concept based on the same anthropomorphization as Godard's credo that it is the film itself that "thinks"—is one that through an accretion of different visual spaces creates complex internal levels of commentary that turn the image into a "theoretical object": "Appraising them today, over four centuries later, from a position where we can appreciate exactly how they conflicted with the norm, we see the paradigmatic value of these works. They are genuine 'theoretical objects,' paintings whose theme is *painting*."[100] Stoichita describes this transformation of an image into a theoretical object in a detailed analysis of *Christ with Martha and Mary*,[101] whose structure is identical to *Butcher's Stall*. He sees in it a "realization of the role, power, and language of image and its impact."[102] The reflection inherent in the image is set in motion through its division into several clearly demarcated visual spaces that comment on one another and recall William J. T. Mitchell's ideas about the metapicture and Farocki's concept of "soft montage."[103]

Just as in "soft montage," we are confronted with a simultaneity of several images, none of which replaces or negates another in the sequence but initiates an interaction. To elucidate this in relation to *Butcher's Stall*: a richly draped table can be seen in the foreground with a bloody ox's head as an eye-catcher. Individual motifs can be discerned in the background, each framed by beams and views through the roofed stall: a farmhand pouring water into a pitcher, and, as if distorted in a concave mirror, the biblical scene of the flight into Egypt. This composition displays a confusing relationship between the sausages, fish, partridges, pig's trotters, and all the other victuals and the small scene in the background. The contradiction between the two levels is further accentuated

100 Victor I. Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image. An Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting* [1993], trans. Anne-Marie Glasheen (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge UP 1997), 3. Stoichita writes in general here about the *inverted still life*.

101 Pieter Aertsen, *Christ with Martha and Mary* (1552), oil on wood, 60 x 101.5 cm, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.

102 Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image*, 10.

103 Harun Farocki, "Cross Influence/Soft Montage" trans. Cynthia Beatt, *Against What? Against Whom?* eds. Antje Ehmann and Kodwo Eshun (London: Koenig Books 2009), 69–74. More on this type of montage in chapter 4 ("Cut—Interlude in the Editing Room").

not only by a contrast between the animate and inanimate worlds but also by a sharp collision between the sacred and the profane. In Farocki's interpretation of the painting, the reorganization of the visual priorities indicates a fundamental shift in the relationship between religious and secular discourse:

> This framing demonstrates how, in laying claim to the foreground, commodities press the religious manifestations into the background. If we read this image the way we read advertising today, we are given to understand that commodities obstruct our view of the religious scene. There, the flight to Egypt—in front of it, pig's ears. In another reading, although the produce claims the principal space, still it leaves open a window onto the religious background.[104]

In the still life, Farocki discovers the germ of an aesthetic of commodities that doesn't negate the religious pictorial space but rather displaces and recodes it. Where the religious motif moves into the background,[105] the religious and symbolic charge is transferred to the goods in the foreground. This evokes a kind of misdirected and epidemic transubstantiation that affects *every* commodity, not only bread and wine. At this point, the film looks at the consequences that could arise from this recoding of the relationship between the sacred and the profane:

> Painting, first in Flanders and the Netherlands, turns away from religious motifs in order not to degrade the lofty things. Painting seeks not to degrade the sublime, yet can hardly avoid elevating the quotidian. Painting seeks not to anthropomorphize the divine, yet it can find itself deifying man-made objects. The unimaginable shall not be posited in false images, yet it can happen that products of human beings are lifted into the unimaginable.[106]

104 Farocki: "Still Life", 334.

105 Here, Farocki is in agreement with art-historical arguments: "For the dominance of the trivially representational over the grand motifs charged with meaning can only be understood in the context of the outlined social and economic upheaval. In his book about Mannerism, Arnold Hauser has rightly emphasized the aspect of defamiliarization. One could go a step further and—with Georg Lukács—speak of 'reification,' meaning that the relationship between people takes on the character of a 'materiality,' that things, that is commodities, fetish-like, determine the 'metabolism' of society and all its manifestations of life and forms of consciousness. To the extent that a 'demystification' (Max Weber) of religion first began to take place in Western society, commodities took on a particular aura; they became almost (and sometimes indeed actual) libidinously charged fetishes that seemed to have a magical effect." Norbert Schneider, *Stilleben*, 27f.

106 Farocki: "Still Life", 334.

The concept of deification also brings an aspect into the discussion for which the film later introduces the word "fetish." The production of an image—through painting or photography—itself contains the danger of fetishization, of giving the depiction a quasi-religious charge. This not only applies to the things that are aesthetically glamorized in the image but also to the painting itself, whose exchange value can spectacularly exceed its utility value. Especially in regard to Godard's staging of the paintings as the consumer detritus of a blown-up museum in PIERROT LE FOU, it is important to note that Farocki doesn't show the still lifes as reproductions but visits the museums to film the paintings where they hang. This decision brings a symmetry into the work. The film STILL LIFE, which was produced for exhibition in a museum in Kassel, likewise finds its motifs in museums. It is not only a film about paintings or (implicitly) about filmmaking but also about the fetishization of the image through its exhibition in a museum.

Comparing the two levels of STILL LIFE, we find that in formal terms they are characterized by as many differences as similarities. While Farocki always shows the finished paintings in the still-life sequences, in the photographic studios he films the painstaking and minutely detailed act of bringing about the fetish through image production. Furthermore, the product aimed for in the studio work (the photograph being produced) is not shown to the viewer in its final form.[107] The complexity of the relationship, which goes beyond simple ideas of "equation" or "contrast," is also reflected in the formal decisions in STILL LIFE. Though the similarities predominate in terms of content (representation of things, upvaluation of the commodity, fetishization of the object), in the studio scenes the stasis of the paintings, whose details are rendered in close-ups, is replaced by various camera positions. The flexibility of the voice-over commentary is translated into the camera movements. The dialogues between the photographers, assistants, and studio staff are determined by a sober pragmatism that rules out theoretical deliberations. What a photograph should look like seems to be self-evident, and its success or failure are decided by purely strategic considerations. Whether something "functions" or not is a question of evidence, not of argument or discussion.

107 In this respect, the film recalls Godard's ONE PLUS ONE (1968), which principally consists of studio footage of the Rolling Stones recording their song *Sympathy for the Devil*. Godard also concentrates on the difficult rehearsals with all their interruptions, and omits the complete song. This scandalized the producer so much that he put it into the film for its American release and earned himself a slap in the face from Godard.

In these sequences, Still Life evokes a film Farocki made in the early 1980s with the sober title of An Image.[108] The title refers to the shooting of a photo series for the magazine *Playboy*. For just under half an hour, the film shows the model being moved into new poses, adjusted, differently lit, re-draped, and made up again. Farocki has emphasized that he was not interested in denouncing the work of the *Playboy* editors. Rather, he was fascinated by the way in which "self-reflection becomes possible through this prolonged, almost symbolic act of work."[109] What applies to the nude photographers is also shown in Farocki's observation of the food photographers:[110] continuously sidling around the object, gradually approaching the photographic act, the photographers act as if they were performing a ritual. What Marx said about the commodity "reflecting back" to people the social character of their labor applies here to the images:

> The mysterious character of the commodity-form consists therefore simply in the fact that the commodity reflects the social characteristics of men's own labor as objective characteristics of the products of labor themselves, as the socio-natural properties of these things. Hence it also reflects the social relation of the producers to the sum total of labor as a social relation between objects, a relation which exists apart from and outside the producers.[111]

The sequences that take place in the advertising agencies have particularly to do with this correlation of image and work. What we see is the grotesque imbalance between the high degree of artificiality and the desire to create as simple and spontaneous an image as possible—of a glass of beer, for example. Creating an image that awakens the desire to consume and turns the depicted product into a desirable object has become the sole occupation of an entire industry of "image makers," who have shifted from the production of goods themselves to the production of representations of them.

The birth of the still life, however, also represents a historical point in time in which the commodity in the modern sense was to a certain extent "born"—as something that can be moved, exchanged, converted into money,

108 An Image, BRD 1983, director: Harun Farocki.

109 Tilman Baumgärtel, Harun Farocki, "Aus Gesprächen," Tilman Baumgärtel, *Harun Farocki. Vom Guerillakino zum Essayfilm. Werkmonografie eines Autorenfilmers* (Berlin: b_books 1998), 204–228, 219.

110 In photographic agencies, it is common to distinguish between the motifs the photographers specialize in: food, people, architecture, still life, automobiles, etc.

111 Marx, "Fetishism of the Commodity", 164/165.

and removed from the religious context on a global scale; something that becomes a *sign* and circulates as words do. In Farocki's film, this context is addressed via the concept "fetish":

> The word fetish, a Portuguese coinage, came to the Netherlands in the 17th century, during the grand era of the still life. Sailors returning from the coasts of Africa told of cults in which randomly chosen objects were worshiped as deities. Fetishes. Objects which are something divine—and do not just signify. Three centuries later, in 1906, Marcel Mauss writes: "The concept fetish must finally be abandoned; it correlates with nothing determinate." Thus it would seem that the Europeans invented a religious practice, one which they immediately cast away, as far as the farthest reaches of their trading world. But the word *fetish* has returned and can now haunt any object.[112]

Although Farocki refers to an anthropological text by Marcel Mauss instead of the economic deliberations of Karl Marx on the "fetishism of the commodity" or Freud's text on fetishism, a third point in history is introduced here along with the image of a "return of the suppressed." Between the world of the painting (the seventeenth century) and that of commercial photography (the late twentieth century), the concept of fetishism provides a terminological hinge that casually slips the nineteenth century into the argumentation as the genesis of the "system of things."[113] Harmut Böhme has analyzed the career of the fetishism concept as a key to the nineteenth century, tracing its pathway from theology and anthropology to the discursive center of European society. In the nineteenth century, the term broadened from the colonial and anthropological discourse to that of a more general cultural relationship that could potentially describe everything: "*Everything* could be suspected of being a fetish and *everyone* of being a fetishist, irrespective of whether they were religious believers, sexual perverts, psychopaths, collectors of all kinds, mindless consumers, obsessive artists, children [...], tyrannical factory owners, dandies, sons of the middle class, or housemaids."[114] The reason for this astonishing exten-

112 Farocki: "Still Life," 341.

113 See Jean Baudrillard, *The System of Objects* [1968], trans. James Benedict (London: Verso 2006).

114 Hartmut Böhme, "Fetischismus im 19. Jahrhundert. Wissenschaftshistorische Analysen zur Karriere eines Konzepts," *Das schwierige neunzehnte Jahrhundert. Festschrift für Eda Sagarra,* eds. Jürgen Barkhoff, Gilbert Carr, Roger Paulin (Tübingen: Niemeyer 2000), 445–465: 447.

sion of the term is the fact that "fetish" potentially become a synonym for "sign":

> "Fetish" is the formula for the sum of all semiotic processes articulating and portraying the process of capital. Fetishism is the garment of signs which the capital process wraps around the naked materiality of the exploitative labor process. The "fetish" is the formula of the quid pro quo, the transformation of everything into something other and yet the same, the formula of a universal metamorphosis and metamorphotics.[115]

The hegemonization of the fetish concept took place in the nineteenth century, during which industrialization caused a rapid increase in both commodities and images. The photographic studios and still lifes in Farocki's film thus mark the beginning and potential end of this historical line.

There is yet another aspect to the development Farocki shows us. For what took place in the four centuries between classical still-life painting and commercial photography also has consequences for the concept of exchange. Just as commodities increasingly became separated from a concrete practice of barter and were exchanged via the neutral, a-semantic conversion medium of money, the signs themselves were detached from ritual and religious practices. The term "fetish," which no longer denotes a particular practice but interchangeable economic, sexual, or pathological conditions, evokes the decontextualizations to which commodities and speech acts are equally subject and that demand continual reinterpretation. "The abstraction of exchange value, just like the arbitrariness of signs, is not simply given. It is the result of a historical process that takes hold of both signs and acts of exchange/commodities and releases them to context and overdetermination."[116]

Although commodities and speech acts are equally floating within the economic system, as Hartmut Winkler describes, this doesn't mean that they are randomly produced and distributed. On the contrary, the photo shootings that interrupt the still-life sequences show the time-consuming and precise work that goes into producing the fetish called the commodity. A banknote is ironed, a piece of cheese cut into shape, a watch polished; the lighting needs to be adjusted, muted, brightened; a huge camera is aimed at the object through a cardboard sheathing. In these sequences, it

115 Ibid., 461.

116 Hartmut Winkler, *Diskursökonomie. Versuch über die innnere Ökonomie der Medien* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 2004), 88.

becomes clear why Farocki resorts to the anthropological context of the fetish concept and allows its economic and psychological elements to resonate implicitly. For these preparations do in fact remind one of archaic rituals, and the matter-of-fact camera eye echoes the "participatory observation" of anthropology. If the photographs are meant to establish a psychological bond between the customer and the object, and if in the end they are subject to the diktat of the central fetish of capital, their act of production initially follows that of a religious ritual, in which the photographed object is laid out on a kind of altar and prepared for the redemptive photograph through various liturgical measures—cleansing, dusting with a tiny brush, and so on. Alchemy, superseded by rational science in the seventeenth century, returns here on the level of image production: "The new natural science abandoned the attempt to produce gold. The art of depiction—not. It seeks truth in appearance," says the voiceover to a series of details of paintings showing the golden hue of flame, before the film cuts to experiments of a modern, enlightened alchemy in the service of photographing beer (ill. 33–35)

Ills. 33-35

A tilted beer glass and a filler are held in a metal frame like the structures used in teaching chemistry or physics. A yellow-gold solution, the "beer," is blended tediously often; the beer glass is repeatedly moistened with water in order to look fresh and cool, until the liquid can at last flow and the shutter release clicks. An image is made, a central link in the chain between production and consumption.

In the course of the working process, the interim results are regularly checked for sharpness and the cropping is modified. This "work with images" recalls the numerous and ambivalent other examinations of images Farocki has shown in earlier films. Images of the World and the Inscription of War is about a military expert who checks aerial photographs for camouflage. Here, the landscape itself is an image that can be altered and encoded: an airplane hangar becomes a field; the world becomes a *trompe l'œi*. But we also often see Farocki himself bent over photographs with a magnifying glass, examining and deciphering aerial views of Auschwitz taken unknowingly by the Allies in 1944. Although these types of "work on the image" look similar, they pursue quite different aims. The gesture is the same, but it can be made in service of clarification and experimental research or of destruction.

Image production against this background becomes an ambiguous act that is always at risk of exploitative appropriation. The sphere of art, into which context Farocki enters as participant in the *documenta* and by taking up the tradition of the classical still life, is as much affected by this as commerce. However, it makes a decisive difference to know about this limitation and have the film reflect it.

Processing Images: Passion

> "The rendering of movement, light and texture had been mastered; the technique of foreshortening (like that of chiaroscuro and painting velvet) had been discovered, and each successive discovery had promptly been incorporated in the common stock of knowledge—as in our time the device of *montage* and the tracking shot have become the stock-in-trade of film directors."
>
> André Malraux[117]

It is quite possible that Farocki thought of Godard's film Passion when he made Still Life.[118] Though the distance between the two films is great in

117 Malraux, "The Museum without Walls," 105.

118 In 1993, a discussion about Passion between Harun Farocki and Kaja Silverman appeared in the American journal *Discourse*. It differs from the one published later in *Speaking about Godard*. At one point, Farocki describes Godard's treatment of paintings and compares it with the way an artist would paint a still life: "The plot is not important, but rather the gesture, the way it is handled, just as in a *nature morte* painting it is not important if the tin can lying on a table contains sardines or some other kind of fish. What matters is how it is painted and how

terms of content and concept, their basic structure and interest in analyzing painting and translating into an act of cinematic theory are very close.

In bringing together a film production and factory work, PASSION also juxtaposes two spheres whose relationship only becomes clear in the course of the film. Here, too, it would be possible—as in Farocki's film—to describe both with the terms "work" and "art"; in PASSION, the place of the still lifes is taken by the reconstructed paintings in the film studio, that of the commercial photographers by the factory. However, this superficial analogy doesn't take us very far, as the art-historical material and the labor in both films are very different. PASSION—as the title indicates—is not devoted to the world of things but to the relationship between people and images, to the productive and destructive forces ("passion" in its sense of enthusiasm and suffering) that are generated in the intervals between the images themselves and between images and their viewers. The paintings on which PASSION is based therefore come from a different art-historical tradition—primarily from Romanticism and the Baroque—and without exception focus on human figures. They are, to take up Svetlana Alpers' differentiation, examples of an Italian-influenced "narrative art"[119]—and the problem of cinematic narrative is indeed at the film's core.

PASSION is two films. It is the one Godard produced in Switzerland in 1982 and can be seen in the cinema. But *Passion* is also the title of the film-in-film that the Polish director Jerzy (Jerzy Radzilwilowicz) is trying to make at the same time and place, and which is the subject of Godard's film. The theme of doubling is therefore part of the structure; a doubling that cannot be conceived as a dichotomy or as a dialectic relationship of thesis and antithesis but which in many ways is a contemplation of gaps and superimpositions. Both films, Jerzy's and Godard's, are difficult to distinguish from the very beginning. They converge, at times almost merging into one, but are by no means identical. Jerzy's discussions with the team and the factory worker Isabelle (Isabelle Huppert), for example, and the love story between him and Hana (Hanna Schygulla), belong to Godard's film, but they take place on the periphery of Jerzy's television production, which strictly speaking we almost never see, except on the second level of observation. There are overlaps between the teams—Raoul Coutard, for example, is obviously the cameraman for both productions (and bears his own name, like most of the other "actors")—but

it is positioned on the table." Farocki, Silverman, "To Love to Work and To Work to Love. A Conversation about 'Passion'," *Discourse*, vol. 15, no. 3, spring, 1993, 57–75: 59.

119 See Alpers, *The Art of Describing*, xxf.

the filmed paintings that make up half of the film are not seen through the television camera but through the one assigned to Godard's film.

The basic construction, within which the film develops a wide range of entanglements and complications, is simple, even though its retelling is radically beside the point, as PASSION is a "picture film," which only presents narrative by continually failing to do so.[120] Despite this, as inappropriate as it may seem, a few words of orientation as to content and structure: Jerzy, a Polish director who, as must be supposed, has had to go into exile because of the political situation in his country,[121] is working near an unspectacular, sleepy Swiss village on a film that literally consists of paintings. Whether these images are linked by a conventional plot is one of the film's central issues from the beginning and is a question Jerzy tries to ignore in favor of working on the images themselves. Some of the most famous paintings in European art—including (in order of appearance) Rembrandt's *The Night Watch*, Goya's *The 3rd of May in Madrid* and three further paintings by him, Ingres's *The Little Bather*, Delacroix's *The Taking of Constantinople by the Crusaders* and *The Struggle with the Angel*, El Greco's *The Assumption of the Virgin*, and finally, only fragmentarily and outside the studio, Watteau's *The Embarcation for Cythera*—are reconstructed and filmed as tableaux vivants using numerous actors and extras. The overall framework into which these individual sequences will be placed, and whether there is such a framework at all, remains unclear at first, but it soon emerges that "narration/story" are understood here more as the effect of the images in sequence than as a written starting point.

The production context in which Jerzy's staged paintings take place is filmed by Godard's camera. None of the paintings are seen in pure form, however, but always in conjunction with other images or framed by the paraphernalia of the television production. And the point at which we see the paintings (as in the photographic studios observed by Farocki) is never that of the "finished canvas": they are usually being assembled or disassembled, different lighting is tried out, and there is often little distinction between rehearsal and shot. An initial observation can be made that the (re)production of the paintings, the process involved, is obviously more important than the end result. It is never clear when a tableau is ready to be filmed; the camera

120 One must agree here with Joachim Paech in his reference to the inseparability of image and narrative: "The film *Passion* cannot be introduced independently of the fact that it is a 'film', because it only exists as this film." Joachim Paech, Passion *oder die Ein*bild*ungen des Jean-Luc Godard* (7.)

121 The film takes place during the time of the Solidarnosc movement, which is continually alluded to, for example through the motif of "oppression" (in the factory, in Goya's execution painting, etc.).

movements, individual props, or actors never come to a complete standstill. So the title "Moving Pictures," which Harun Farocki and Kaja Silverman gave to their discussion of PASSION,[122] is less trivial than it sounds, as it describes one of the decisive elements that Godard introduces into his historical models. Pascal Bonitzer has also emphasized the aspect of movement:

> In Godard's *Passion*, for example, the great Romantic or Baroque tableaux are partially reconstructed in the form of tableaux vivants. They are shaken up, penetrated, dislocated by the vigorous movements of the camera or the models themselves (who are unable to remain in place, who shake or rebel against their enforced immobility). It is as if a struggle were taking place within the film between the cinema and painting.[123]

Asking, as in PIERROT LE FOU, which of the two media might be the victor of this struggle, the answer seems likely to be film, as a framing discourse that can incorporate both painting and music. In the agonal structure of PASSION, Fredric Jameson particularly sees a means to strengthen the medium of film: "Godard's strategy is to raise the strongest objections to the medium—to foreground its most urgent problems and crises, beginning with that of financing itself, omnipresent in these later films and above all here—in order the more triumphantly to surmount them."[124] For this reason, the conflictive search for a link between the film's various themes is central here too: factory work and art, love and labor, film and painting. The aim is "to keep them [the artworks] alive as efforts and experiments that fall into the world and the past when they succeed, but stand out with something of their agency still warm and palpable in them in their very failure."[125]

The fact that the paintings are only shown in the process of being staged and not as a product automatically leads to the problem of narration as a succession of cinematic images. The producer in particular, and not without alarm, demands a "story" with increasing urgency: "Mademoiselle Loucachevsky, what kind of a story is this?" is one of the film's first lines of dialogue.[126] Is a story being told here? And if so, what? Is a story indispensable

122 Farocki, Silverman, "Moving Pictures," ibid., *Speaking about Godard* (New York: New York UP 1998), 170–196.

123 Pascal Bonitzer, *Décadrages. Peinture et Cinéma* (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma 1985), 30.

124 Fredric Jameson, "High-Tech Collectives in late Godard," ibid., *The Geopolitical Aesthetic. Cinema and Space in the World System* [1992] (Indiana: Indiana UP 1995), 158–185: 159.

125 Ibid., 163.

126 The film script to which I refer in the following appears in *L'Avant-scène cinéma*, 1989, no. 380, 6–82: 10.

to the making of a film? What do the paintings themselves "narrate"? Can "story" also be understood historically, as the history of the paintings? As art history? What is the relationship between story and painting? Does a painting illustrate a particular narrative sequence, or does narration emerge from the linking of two paintings? Godard's approach—just like Eisenstein's—is without doubt to take the image as the starting point and to conceive the narration from this image (and counter-image).[127] In this, PASSION is a further example of Godard's insistence on doubling, which contains the seed of endless multiplication. As he succinctly put it in 1980 during the preparatory phase of PASSION: "Cinema is not one image after another, it's one image *plus* another out of which is formed a third."[128] This view, which for Eisenstein and Godard represents the pivotal axiom of their understanding of cinema, is also shared by Harun Farocki. In BETWEEN TWO WARS, a few years before PASSION, he put the following credo into the mouth of one of his characters, who could be described as an "image researcher":

> I've started taking photographs. But *one* photograph isn't enough. You need to take *two* pictures of everything. Things are so much in motion that you need at least two pictures to establish the direction in which things are moving.[129]

In Farocki's film, this necessity of basing an analysis on *two* images arises from the mutability and ephemerality of the analyzed conditions themselves. Despite this difference, the essential idea—that critique (in the sense of differentiation) and theoretical opinion can only be gained from the difference between two elements—is equally true for Godard. There is, however, a difference in scope, for Godard's concept of the image tends to encompass the entire process of film production and to aim beyond the cinematic image in a narrow sense. For Godard, "image" can also mean "image and sound"; the concept is more strongly associated with the aspect of doubling than with the strictly visual:

> Jerzy is looking for his art. There is a kind of double image here. Cinema is two images: sound and image; the two belong together. They are always

127 Godard did in fact proceed from individual paintings and initially tried to "see" the film instead of writing it as a screenplay.

128 Godard, "Sauve Qui Peut... Godard! (Fragments)," 10.

129 *Zwischen zwei Kriegen. Film von Harun Farocki. Beschrieben und Protokolliert von Peter Nau. Mit 68 Abbildungen* (Munich: Verlag der Filmkritik 1978), 41.

> together [...] But in fact Jerzy is looking for himself. He is double. The whole film consists of double images: passion, the factory, the house, work, love, work. He struggles with himself, but actually struggling with oneself means struggling with the angel.[130]

If it is possible to refer this "double image" to the two film productions within the film Passion, the tableaux vivants that are created for the television film are themselves already assembled, doubled images. Their meaning doesn't reside in the image itself but derives from its divergence from the original. In many respects, the image is staged as a place of conflict and friction.

In Passion, the lines of confrontation can be found on many different levels. To start with the film's basic division into two: near the hall containing the improvised and "most expensive studio in Europe," as it is once described in the film, there is a factory in which a strike is being planned. Jerzy hires a number of its workers as extras for his film. Isabelle is also a possible actress. Numerous connections arise between both areas of work but also between the characters in the plot, between diegetic "reality" and the reality of the paintings, which continually open up the respective framework and cause the world of work to merge into that of art: Goya's *Tres de Maio*,[131] for example, with its central figure of the rebel being executed, becomes linked via the concept of oppression to the hierarchical situation in the factory, where a patriarchal boss dictates the working conditions to his female workforce. Harun Farocki has compared the conjunction of these two spheres to a nautical knot, which looks lightly bound but is in fact extremely tight.[132]

Apart from these analogies, the two locations in Passion can be associated with the poles of "practice" and "theory." If the factory is the place of practical work and political action in which a strike and other measures to improve the situation need to be organized, the realm of the film production—that is, art—is apparently set against it as a place of visual perception and reflection. But this opposition is blurred by interlinking characters and a shared concern with economic constraints. Much as echo and feedback effects come about between the photographic studios and the paintings in Still Life, here too the factory conflicts continue in the film studio—and vice versa.

130 Godard, "Scénario du film Passion," 86. Here Godard refers to the scene in which Jerzy fights with an extra dressed as an angel in an echo of Delacroix's *Jacob's Struggle with the Angel* (1856–1861).

131 Francisco de Goya: *The Third of May 1808* (1810), oil on canvas, 345 cm x 265 cm, Prado, Madrid.

132 See Harun Farocki, "Passion," *Filmkritik* 7/1983, 317–328: 320.

In Passion, the romantic utopia of a crossover between life and art is both taken literally and linked to the realms of labor and life: art *as* labor. The basic question, which Passion raises more than it answers, is whether—and if so, how—painting can be transferred to the medium of film at all. The television studio is a research laboratory in which visual relationships are tested, discarded, and reconceived without coming to any real conclusion. There is no explosion at the end of Passion, as in Pierrot le fou, but a temporarily or perhaps finally discontinued television production, whose personnel take leave of one another and drive off in different directions.

What happens in this contradictory progression, which initially reconstructs and "vivifies" a static painting as a tableau vivant, only to be frozen on the level of the motif and translated into a camera movement? What (theoretical) statement is made about the medium of film in this multiple process of translation? These questions imply that here—more than in other films by Godard—the "in between" has become a decisive principle to which the individual shot is subordinate. This applies to the space between film and painting as well as to the gap between the factory and the film production. And here too is one of the lines that connects Passion to Pierrot le fou. If Godard had quoted Elie Faure's interpretation of Velazquez as a painter of the "in between" in 1965, in Passion he takes this relationship as his actual theme. Ironically, this leads to a destruction of the paintings in the moment of their reconstruction. In Godard's own words: "I make films in which the shots no longer exist, in which only the combination of shots exists, where the connections as such become the shots. The subject of *Passion* was relationship."[133] The French word *liaison* has as many different meanings as the English "relationship," and in fact relationships between the two locations develop that are as close as those between the people involved with producing the images. Jerzy stands between Hana and Isabelle; Hana between her husband, the factory owner Michel (Michel Piccoli) and Jerzy; Jerzy is undecided about Switzerland or his home country of Poland; and one of the places where these "in betweens" come together is the hotel in which the film personnel are accommodated.

Beyond these "interstices" within the film, Passion as a whole is temporally situated between two image productions: there are the paintings on which the diegesis of Jerzy's film of the same title is based; and there is the video film entitled Scénario du film Passion, which can be described as an "after image" and was produced by Godard for television a year later. This temporal sequence is associated with a series of quite different types of image: from *painting* to the *television* production, which Godard deals with in the medium

133 Jean-Luc Godard, in Leutrat, *Des traces qui nous ressemblent*, 60.

of the *cinema* film, to the *video* version produced for television. In this sense, PASSION makes an extensive survey of the cosmos of image production. With all this heterogeneity, it will be seen that an aim of the film is an examination of filmmaking itself. Here, too, the medium of film is refracted in the different visual levels and to a certain extent only becomes visible in the various processes of translation. Jean-Louis Leutrat outlines this as follows:

> Because of this subtlety it is preferable to speak of translation: a gap between two "languages" is measured, and the effect of similarity can be said to be incidental, as Godard uses painting to demonstrate the innate strengths of cinema. The reconstruction of the paintings is a pretext for displaying what cinema can do.[134]

If PASSION is "really" talking about cinema, the question remains as to how this reflection on the possibilities of cinema functions. An initial point can be made that PASSION redefines the concept of narration, displacing it from told (and tellable) story to seen (and visible) art history. In PIERROT LE FOU, cinematic image and narration had been recurrently interrupted and suspended by shots of reproduced paintings, and in PASSION the paintings have a similar function. The shift from moving to unmoving image is linked to a breach of the illusionistic principle, according to which fictive and "real" action can easily be set off against one another. This breach can be linked to Brecht's concept of alienation and his concept of epic theater as a series of "images" or "tableaux." Roland Barthes placed Brecht's praxis and Eisenstein's film theory in a line with Diderot's theory of theater, and considered all three concepts in the light of what can be called the reflexive, "theoretical" image:

> The tableau (pictorial, theatrical, literary) is a pure cut-out segment with clearly defined edges, irreversible, and incorruptible; everything that surrounds it is banished into nothingness, remains unnamed, while everything that it admits within its field is promoted into essence, into light, into view. Such demiurgic discrimination implies a high quality of thought: the tableau is intellectual, it has something to say (something moral, social) but it also says that it knows how this must be done; it is simultaneously significant and propaedeutical, impressive and reflexive, moving and conscious of the channels of emotion.[135]

134 Ibid., 23.

135 Roland Barthes, "Diderot, Brecht, Eisenstein" [1973], ibid., *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang 1977), 69–78: 70

The concept of the "intellectual image" reframes Eisenstein's idea of "intellectual montage" into a process within the individual image. In order to embed this tradition into PASSION, however, it should be said that strictly speaking the film has no individual images. The tableaux, at least—as quoted images—already consist of an identifiable original painting and its sometimes more, sometimes less divergent re-enactment in the television studio. They are in a sense "internally" edited and bring two different levels together. What appears to be self-evident, namely that every film consists of a sequence of images, is taken literally here, in that these images are exhibited and continually called into question. Much of the discussion Jerzy has with his team relates to basic issues: questions of lighting and composition. The confusing thing about PASSION is the consistency with which Godard proceeds from the paintings and only considers the story as an effect of them; as something that would have to emerge from them. This is a complete reversal of the usual film production process, which generally proceeds from a written screenplay. The story which is "told" here cannot be conceived of without its painted models, and what story there is unfolds between these models and in their interaction with the world of work.

It is possible to uncover the singularity of PASSION by distinguishing it both from PIERROT LE FOU and Farocki's STILL LIFE. In PIERROT LE FOU, Godard has the paintings of Renoir and Picasso flash up as short splinters of everyday life. The paintings—or rather their reproductions—both interrupt the story and continue it through correspondences of form and content. Both cinematic levels—film and painting—thus come into focus as elements of a more extensive cosmos of images, to which any kind of image—including printed texts and comics—belongs. The film propagates an equalization of these levels, which are indiscriminately utilized and related to one another as "material." The utopia of PIERROT LE FOU is that the film is able, despite its heterogeneity, to keep its different levels together, albeit no longer within a consistent narrative. The development inherent in PIERROT LE FOU is that of replacing the principle of narrative with that of the image; not finding images to illustrate the written word but to tell a story *from* images. The inserted paintings, in particular, are like a wrench thrown into the normally smoothly running works of narration and regularly knock the action off course. PASSION, by contrast, no longer has a primary narrative needing to be irritated and diverted by inserted images. The relationship between image and narrative has been reversed.

PIERROT LE FOU also deals with the problem of framing differently from PASSION. It is in the nature of the tableau vivant to transcend the boundary between the artwork and its surroundings. It is only possible to reconstruct

the painting for the camera by "de-framing" it. The tableau vivant therefore has as much affinity to the theater as to film and painting.[136] The centripetal force that Bazin ascribed to the frame in painting, and which turned outwards in PIERROT LE FOU to break through the boundary between image and (filmic) life, takes yet another direction here. For the programmatic dissolution of the frame, which causes the individual paintings in PASSION to merge into one another, leads to an act of reconstruction by the viewer, who is continually involved with reformulating potential frames:

> This continual isolation of the paintings from their surroundings is particularly important because the scenes with the tableaux vivants and the film production in the studio, in the end the entire pre-film reality as opposed to the film camera, are on the same level, which often leads to such a strong interpenetration of the different areas that they can hardly be distinguished.[137]

This is quite different in STILL LIFE. Here, the unnamed paintings that Farocki visits in museums give rise to thoughts about the order to which the objects in the painting are ascribed, and they are the background for an analysis of contemporary practices of image production in the advertising industry. In the museum, the central question is how the paintings should be read and understood; in the photographic studios, the main considerations are what is put into the photographs.

PASSION is also interested in a complicated mixture of everyday life and the visual realm, though not through liberating the paintings from the museum and transferring them to everyday life but by reconstructing the museum space in the studio and having the paintings literally communicate with one another. The fact that the tableaux vivants are staged by actors who have been recruited from a nearby factory turns the realm of art into one of work. The television studio and the factory are mutually exclusive, but each continues the other within it. If we take Godard's general statement about the primacy of montage, connection, and relationship seriously, then these conditions should be able to be found and described on many different levels. The decisive thing is that here—unlike in PIERROT LE FOU—the montage is often shifted to the individual shot and in this respect can only be described as the superimposition of several images in the mise en scène. The utopia of bringing two images together in such a way as to produce a

136 See Paech, *Passion oder die Ein*bild*ungen des Jean-Luc Godard*, 45.
137 Ibid., 46.

third, invisible image is joined by another ideal: that of actually "being in the picture." Apart from the phase in the early 1970s, in which he took his leave of the cinema and turned to video, Godard has always aspired to the utopia of "penetrating the image" in order to find a place "within the image," whence thoughts "about the image" might be articulated. In 1967 he put this as follows:

> What I wanted was to get inside the image, because most movies are made outside the image. What is an image? It's a reflection. What kind of thickness does a reflection on a pane of glass have? In most film, you're kept on the outside, outside the image. I wanted to see the back of the image, what it looked like from behind, as if you were in back of the screen, not in front of it. Inside the image. The way some paintings give you the feeling you're inside them.[138]

In the 1960s, however, Godard had not yet answered the question as to how such an immersive "being in the picture" could be produced cinematically. But there are a few indications that already point to Passion. Godard already names painting as one of his important examples, because it is able to take a perspective on the image "from within the image." One can only suppose which paintings Godard had in mind, but it is quite likely that he meant those of Delacroix, to which he often referred during the 1960s.[139] Measured against this aim, it must be said about Pierrot le fou that the film didn't come close to this utopia. It gives the "image" its due in a general sense by linking up painting, comics, adverts, and texts. But this tends to boil down to a side-by-side of differing images, which highlights the image as an adaptable surface that can be cut, rearranged, and displaced as material. In Pierrot le fou—as the examples discussed above show—the image is defined more as surface than space. In Passion, by contrast, the ability of the camera to absorb the image as a spatial structure and to move through the various levels of the image is decisive.

This can be observed for the first time in the Goya sequence, which is clearly introduced as an "extension" of the work in the factory and is closely linked to what is going on there: Isabelle discusses the working conditions with her colleagues. They talk about the effort of having to remain in the same position for hours on end (also a problem of the tableau vivant), the bad

138 Godard, "Struggle on Two Fronts," *Godard par Godard I* 32.

139 For example in conversation about Pierrot le fou. See Jean-Luc Godard, "Pierrot mon ami," *Godard par Godard I*, 259–263: 263.

pay, and the question of whether the factory owner Michel will call the police in order to prevent a labor dispute. When they decide to draft a joint declaration, Isabelle is asked to move the lamp a little closer (ill. 36 and 37).

Ill. 36 and ill. 37

Isabelle, whose face is illuminated by the floor lamp, draws its shade towards the camera and lowers it slightly, then there is a cut to the television studio: here too a lamp is being lowered in order to bring more light onto the painting being staged. In a cut like this, as Farocki observes in conversation with Kaja Silverman, it is possible to see a linking of categories that are usually thought to be incompatible. "Again, terms which are generally assumed to be discrepant are shown to be in a generative relationship to each other: factory production and artistic creation."[140] Beyond the montage there are further links between the two: just as Jerzy laboriously attempts to recreate the sublime classical painting through film, in the scene with the workers Godard is concerned with the development of an art of cinematographic portraiture through the use of backlighting and silhouette—an adaptation, or rather a transfer, of painterly methods into film.

The Goya scene, which immediately follows the spotlight sequence, then stands as an example of the layering and concentration of various model canvases. Four of Goya's paintings can be seen projecting into one another, superimposed on one another, their figures related to one another in a relatively short tracking shot. The downward pan, which begins with the studio spotlight, touches on a female figure, passes a kneeling man, and reaches the lantern that is the central source of light for Goya's *3rd of May 1808*. The camera then moves upwards along the body of one of the soldiers and pans to the left along the barrels of their rifles. We can see one of Jerzy's

140 Harun Farocki, Kaja Silverman, *Speaking about Godard*, (New York/London: New York UP 1998), 178.

Ills. 38-40

heavy blue television cameras gliding along in the background, and a sudden gap in the composition reveals another of Goya's paintings, his *Nude Maja*,[141] who lies outstretched on a divan with her arms behind her head. Once again, a large camera can be seen, being pulled through the tableau from right to left by two technicians, obviously filming a woman with a parasol and a dog. A movement of the dog, which pulls at its lead and escapes forward, prompts a pan by the non-diegetic camera: the dog sniffs a man on the ground, whom we quickly recognize as one of the rebels from the *3rd of May*. The following movements are devoted to this painting, which takes up the foreground of the scene. If the perspective of the original painting has hitherto largely been respected, the camera now enters the pictorial space, tracks frontally along the rifle barrels, and looks directly into the faces of the soldiers taking aim. In comparison to the painting, this tracking shot constitutes a "counter-shot" to the direction of fire. What can't be seen in Goya's painting now becomes an image in close-up: the faces of the firing squad.

These three different visual levels—the execution, the reclining woman, and the walking woman between them—can be assigned to the different thematic complexes that structure the film Passion (ill. 38–40). On a small scale, the construction of the film repeats itself in the layering of the visual space:

141 Francisco de Goya, *The Nude Maja* (1789-1805), oil on canvas, 97 x 190 cm, Museo del Prado, Madrid.

> Each of the layers, and therefore each of the individual scenes, represents a thematic area: the foreground the theme of conflict, oppression, and violence (later also extended by work); the background the theme of sexuality and desire (later extended by love); the middle ground the movement that mediates between these two levels and gives rise to a dramatic, epic, or otherwise coherent structural context: narration itself.[142]

The mobility of the camera and the resulting possibility of directing the eye of the viewer have a further important consequence in the Goya sequence: while one quickly grasps the situation in Goya's painting, because the lighting immediately indicates the execution victim in his white shirt, it is only towards the end of the careful tracking shot that the rebel comes into our field of vision. The scene is interrupted once, and only after a second pan along the barrels of the rifles is there a cut to the defenseless man, whose posture resembles that of a crucifixion. In contrast to painting, film is able to create tension through gliding movement and a successive scanning of the image. It can spatially dissolve the decisive moment of the painting and translate it into narrative. Film is thus highlighted as an art of duration and temporal sequence, while painting (like sculpture) reveals its subject matter to the eye synchronously and must appear in Lessing's "fruitful moment."[143] Godard's impulse is to translate part of the painting into a cinematic movement—"I observe, I transform, I transfer, I smooth down what remains. That's all,"[144] as Jerzy describes his function in this scene. Both directors, Jerzy and Godard, are searching for the inner dynamic of the image, which is predetermined by line, light, or composition—a motif that will later culminate in the staging of the El Greco.

Comparatively little has been written about Godard's selection of paintings. In contrast to PIERROT LE FOU, in which the paintings are largely restricted to Impressionism and its twentieth-century successors and are emphatically allocated to the cosmos of everyday images, in PASSION Godard goes further back in history and embraces several centuries of Western art. The works that Jerzy tries to reconstruct in his film are undoubtedly classics of art history, "masterpieces." Furthermore, most of the paintings already contain a germ of movement and narration in that they record the decisive

142 Paech, *Passion oder die Ein*bild*ungen des Jean-Luc Godard*, 179.

143 See Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laocoon. An Essay upon the Limits of Painting and Poetry* [1766], trans. Ellen Frothingham (New York: The Noonday Press 1957), 16.

144 Godard, "Passion," 20.

moment of a course of events. This applies to Goya's *3rd of May*, Rembrandt's *Night Watch*,[145] and particularly so to the finally staged painting, El Greco's *Assumption of the Virgin*[146]. This work is not only the most elaborate of the reconstructed paintings in terms of drapery, costumes, and the arrangement of the figures; it is also characterized as a reflection on the sublime in art through the upward movement of the camera and the sacred music on the soundtrack.

With the El Greco painting, the idea of being able to "penetrate" the image, already present in the Goya reconstruction, is brought together with the defloration of Isabelle. Peter Wollen has interpreted the penetrative visual praxis here in terms of the problem of the frame:

> The frame of a painting is not simply a rectangle inscribed round it, separating it from the plane surface of the wall. There is a second, virtual frame which demarcates imaginary from real space, co-extensive with the picture surface itself, a kind of veil or hymen, to use Derrida's favored term. Whereas movement of the look (the camera's look) outside alters the first frame, the margin, movement of the look inside is an act of penetration, a metaphoric tearing of the veil.[147]

In contrast to Bazin's remarks about the function of *cadre* and *cache* in painting and film, Wollen points to the boundary between observer and visual content. Nowhere is this boundary so substantially breached than in the El Greco sequence. The filming of this painting could be considered the climax of the film, as—in combination with Fauré's Requiem and the parallel narration of the love story between Jerzy and Isabelle—it brings the two plot lines and the accompanying music closer together than anywhere else. The shoots in the studio and the deepening intimacy between the director and the worker are portrayed as two sides of the same coin. On the set, one of the performers walks up some steps onto a pedestal; in the hotel, Isabelle climbs the stairs to Jerzy's room. They talk about Isabelle's dismissal from the factory and about the correlation between the gestures of work and those of love. Jerzy abruptly asks Isabelle if she is still a virgin and strokes his hand over her dress. A cut leads back to the television studio, where the camera is beginning to film the El Greco. "The film culminates

145 Rembrandt, *Night Watch* (*Militia Company of District II under the Command of Captain Frans Banninck Cocq*) (1642), oil on canvas, 359 x 438 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.
146 El Greco, *The Assumption of the Virgin* (1577), oil on canvas, 401 x 229 cm, Art Institute of Chicago.
147 Peter Wollen, "Passion 1," *Framework* 21 (1983), 4.

with the defloration of a virgin, intercut with the camera's movement into and through the tableau of El Greco's *Assumption of the Virgin Mary*. This is the moment when interior and exterior non-story and story most converge and inter-penetrate."[148] The parallelization of defloration and ascension once again implicitly associates the scene with the motif of the "fruitful moment," which Lessing, in his discussion of the Laocoön group, saw as decisive for the immobile arts of sculpture and painting. So the aspect of movement and dynamic is incorporated in PASSION through structure and covert allusion, and via the narration.

After these remarks on the conflation of two plot lines, a small diversion is necessary before coming to speak about the theoretical potential associated with El Greco. For it is not only narrative logic that leads Godard to this painter here but also his rediscovery of the writings of Eisenstein.[149] Eisenstein's deliberations on the "cinematic" in painting, which were published in French in 1980,[150] during the preparatory phase of PASSION, introduce the concepts of the "elastic" and the "pathetic," both of which are equally applicable to Godard's treatment of painted imagery. In his discussion of El Greco, Eisenstein is less concerned with ennobling painting as the prehistory of cinematography than with better understanding paintings through a knowledge of cinema and its possibilities. He principally develops his concept of the "cinematic" in the text "El Greco y el Cine." In the paintings of El Greco, whom he declares a "cinéaste espagnol,"[151] Eisenstein sees a concentration and perspective that points beyond the painting *spatially*, that breaks up the *temporal* cohesion, and—at least virtually—takes the image from stasis to movement. For Eisenstein, the inner dynamic of an occurrence that can be found in El Greco is more important than the painter's depiction of several phases of a narrative in a single canvas:[152] "To speak in dynamic terms, it [the work of El Greco] succeeds in conveying the inner dynamic of a portrayed ensemble, which is given its own temperament by recasting the elements through montage."[153] Eisenstein's concept of montage

148 Ibid.

149 This has been pointed out by Joachim Paech, whose deliberations I refer to in the following: Paech, *Passion oder die Ein*bild*ungen des Jean-Luc Godard*, 30–38.

150 Sergej Eisenstein, *Cinématisme. Peinture et Cinema*, trans. Anne Zouboff (Brussels: Édition complèxe 1980).

151 Ibid., 59.

152 As in *The Martyrdom of St. Maurice and the Theban Legion* (c. 1578–1579), various versions in the Escorial and the National Gallery, London.

153 Eisenstein, *Cinématisme*, 17.

is thus not restricted to the confrontation of several images. It also includes the collision of complementary colors within a painting and the explosive potential resulting from their contrast, which he associates with the concept of "ecstasy," of going beyond the self. Here, ecstasy means that the motif does in fact seem to break the bounds of the frame, as can be seen in El Greco's *Assumption of the Virgin*.

> The fact that Eisenstein describes and analyzes ecstasy as the essential cinematic element shows that he does not find the traces of cinematography in the *depiction of movement*, but in a *moved depiction*, in a particular kind of artistic productivity, which is brought about through different means and portrayed in different forms.[154]

In this sense, the "ecstatic" that Eisenstein notes in El Greco should not only be interpreted as a stepping out of the individual painting but also, in an overall sense, as a stepping out of the medium of painting. The change of medium, which Godard carries out in the opposite direction in PASSION through bringing painting back into film, is already inherent in El Greco's paintings. But it is only through the possibilities of the tracking shot, music, and lighting that what Eisenstein conceives theoretically actually becomes film.

With Godard's staging of the El Greco painting, his impulse—also recognizable in the other films analyzed here—of simultaneously bringing painting and film into convergence, and of distancing them from one another, reaches its climax. In the double gesture of freezing the moving images of film in tableaux vivants and of drawing on paintings that in themselves portray the potential of movement in compelling constellations, there is a superimposition of film and painting that both reveals and transcends the boundaries of the media.

154 Paech, *Passion oder die Ein*bild*ungen des Jean-Luc Godard*, 33.

3. Deviation as Norm—Notes on the Essay Film

> "It is incomprehensible to me how anyone can say that they write essays today. It only sounds pretentious. All the modesty that once spoke from the term has evaporated."
>
> Frieda Grafe[1]

The preceding two chapters have dealt with specific cinematic procedures under the heading of "film as theory": How can film, as a visual medium tied to concrete operations, depict abstraction or even create it from concrete single frames? How does cinema "perceive itself" and its production conditions? What role is played by a different visual medium, such as painting, when it is embedded into a film as a reflective point of reference? In short, what procedures can theorize within the medium of film and talk about images with images? These questions aren't new, and their antecedents in Romantic literary theory have already been mentioned. However, they aren't generally asked in relation to cinematic language. The term "essay film" tends to be used instead to define films that oscillate "between reality and fiction, between different media formats, between the genres."[2] The question is displaced from the level of visual relationships to that of a specific film genre.

The term "essay film," together with some of its derivatives,[3] has become a fixed concept in German-speaking film studies and criticism since the 1980s. More subjective than the usual documentary film, and also less bound to linear narrative patterns than most feature films, the essay film is negatively determined in the first instance. The definition is made to distinguish a film from established cinematic registers and in reference to the literary form of the essay: "In fact, the viewer responds to the essay film like the reader to the literary essay,"[4] a reference book from the 1990s states. But the question is deferred rather than answered, as the logical

1 Frieda Grafe, "Der bessere Dokumentarfilm, die gefundene Fiktion," *Schreiben Bilder Sprechen. Texte zum essayistischen Film*, eds. Christa Blümlinger, Constantin Wulff (Vienna: Sonderzahl 1992), 138–143: 139.

2 Christina Scherer, *Ivens, Marker, Godard, Jarman. Erinnerung im Essayfilm* (Munich: Fink 2001), 23.

3 Above all "film essay" and "essayistic film." For a discussion of these nuances, see ibid. 21–22.

4 Rainer Rother, "Art. Essayfilm," *Sachlexikon Film*, ed. ibid. (Reinbek: Rowohlt 1997), 81–83: 82.

follow-up would be: how does the reader respond to the literary essay? The terminological connection seems less to clarify issues of definition than to delegate them to literary studies. This may be because it is possible that they cannot be resolved as questions of genre. For in discussing the essay film, it is often remarked that it is precisely the elusive, tangential, open forms that are at issue; that the term essay film defines an area in which different rules apply from those of other genres. However—and here lies its problematic aspect—this simply adds a further category to the existing generic scheme, without taking into account that these very films radically oppose strict categorization. For the identification of recurrences and repeating patterns that makes the classification "genre" useful[5] doesn't seem to be effective in the case of the essay film. In retrospect, the revaluation and theorization of the genre concept was aimed at a revisionist perspective of the normalized film productions from Hollywood. In the context of film studies, "genre" is not a neutrally descriptive term but denotes the standardized and conventionalized sub-forms brought about by the studio system: Western, musical, thriller, sci-fi, and so forth. The theorization of these genres reached a climax in the early 1970s, and can productively be understood as a counter-reaction to the European model of the auteur film.[6] Instead of foregrounding the artistic act of an individual director, the interest lay in the creative relationship to the basic genre, against which the film could be seen as a deviation, variation, parody, and so on. This shift in perspective—like the specifically Anglo-American attempt to combine auteur theory and structuralism[7]—is a turnabout from the model of individual creativity to the potential of the discursive rules that precede every individual film.

Against this background, the term essay film is problematic because it is intended to combine a model of utmost individuality and permanent deviation—as derived from Michel de Montaigne in literature[8]—with that of a high degree of standardization and normalization. Yet this problem is not

5 For the Anglo-American discussion of the genre concept, see Barry Keith Grant's *Film Genre Reader*, which collects numerous relevant texts on the subject: Barry Keith Grant, ed. *Film Genre Reader* III (Austin: University of Texas Press 2003).

6 See Jörg Schweinitz, "'Genre' und lebendiges Genrebewußtsein. Geschichte eines Begriffs und Probleme seiner Konzeptualisierung in der Filmwissenschaft," *montage/av* February 3, 1994, 99–118.

7 See Peter Wollen, "The Auteur Theory" [1972], ibid., *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema*, expanded edition, (London: British Film Institute 1998), 50–78.

8 Montaigne formulates the problem of deviation most concisely in his essay "Of the Inconstancy of our Actions," in which he considers inconsistency in almost anthropological terms: "I sometimes wonder to see men of understanding give themselves the trouble of reconciling such inconsistencies, considering that irresolution seems to me to be the most common and

specific to the cinematic form of the essay. Endeavors to define the filmic genre unintentionally reproduce a difficulty that the philology of the 1960s also encountered in its attempts to classify the literary essay. A history of the essay describes this as follows: "Zoologically speaking, the essay proved to be a genre that was believed to be able to be defined phylogenically on paper, but whose phenotype presented itself solely in deviations, and it was not even possible to say from what, exactly."[9] Defining the essay as genre therefore came down to the aporetic question as to how an accumulation of deviations could be described as a norm at all. A series of difficulties arising from this definition of the essay as fundamental deviation has been pointed out by Georg Stanitzek in relation to classical essays and equally classical attempts to define them.[10] In its persistent repetition, the argument of incommensurability and randomness becomes the very thing that speaks against the possibility of defining the genre:

> What we have to do with here is the unreasonable demand to see the norm in the deviation, so that only the frustration of expectations can be expected. This is hardly convincing, however, as the question immediately arises as to how the minimum of order and recognizability that justifies speaking of the essay nevertheless comes about.[11]

In the literary essay, this recognizability is often found in the individuality of the author—that is, in the principle for which the auteur film stands in cinema history[12]—or, normatively, in the literary value of the respective work. The essay is either defined by the prominent voice of a writer or his or her stylistic brilliance. A further reaction may be to "firmly redesignate" the classificatory difficulties, as Stanitzek points out, as "characteristics of

manifest vice of our nature." Michel de Montaigne, "Of the Inconstancy of our Actions," *The Essays of Michel Seigneur de Montaigne*, ed. 8, vol. 2 of 4 (Dublin: James Potts 1760), 38–46: 38.

9 Christian Schärf, *Geschichte des Essays. Von Montaigne bis Adorno* (Göttingen: Vandenhoek und Ruprecht 1999), 14.

10 Georg Stanitzek, "Abweichung als Norm? Über Klassiker der Essayistik und Klassik im Essay," *Klassik im Vergleich. Normativität und Historizität europäischer Klassiken*, DFG symposium 1990, ed. Wilhelm Voßkamp (Stuttgart, Weimar: Metzler 1993), 594–615.

11 Ibid., 597.

12 For the debate on the auteur film, see the collection of texts by John Caughie, ed. *Theories of Authorship. A Reader* (London: Routledge 1990), which also contains key texts from literary theory. The German development of a "cinema of auteurs" is summarized concisely in Thomas Elsaesser, *New German Cinema. A History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press 1989), chapter 3. See also Joachim Paech, "Autorenfilm," *Deutsche Literatur zwischen 1945 und 1995. Eine Sozialgeschichte*, ed. Horst Albert Glaser (Stuttgart: UTB 1997), 693–712.

the essay itself."[13] The weaknesses of the definition are thus declared to be the strength of the genre being defined.

The question of the essay, like all questions of genre, points to a problem of mediating between the specific and the general. Genre definitions have to reflect an average: they should be able to precisely distinguish the form from related genres, while the number of elements they contain necessarily increases the distance from the matter in hand and risks leading to indeterminacy. This holds true for literary genres, but the degree of uncertainty is even more pronounced in the description of cinematic essays. For the category of the literary essay is anything other than clearly outlined, as Christian Schärf's history of the form clearly shows. As an alternative to inserting the essay into the catalogue of genres, Schärf therefore suggests discussing the essayistic as a basic operation of writing. "The question of genre must be modified in such a way that the essay and essayism are seen as hidden factors which pervade the actual, so-called main genres and through which the generic poetics are opened out."[14] Ironically, Schärf's doubts about the literary genre of the "essay" don't lead him to call the concept into question but on the contrary to enhance it as a catalyst to opening up the taxonomy of genres. Particularly because it is not bound to a specific genre, the essay appears as a strategic equivalent to modern thought. Only with the essay and its procedures, according to the tacit assumption, does modern thinking come about.

The film essay has to struggle with difficulties similar to those outlined by Stanitzek and Schärf. Here, too, there is uncertainty about the criteria, and what the works have in common is defined as how they differ. However, the implicit unease that accompanies generic categorization can also be seen in the works that use the term in a continual attempt to redefine it. In the introductory part of her wide-ranging examination of the films of Jean-Luc Godard, Derek Jarman, Joris Ivens, and Chris Marker, Christina Scherer writes:

> The film essay receives its essential impulses from the documentary, and could also be described as "essayistic documentary" (that is, as a subcategory of the documentary), but the essay films selected here owe their aesthetic repertoire to developments both in the area of the documentary and that of the experimental film and the feature.[15]

13 Stanitzek, "Abweichung als Norm," 597.

14 Schärf, *Geschichte des Essays*, 37. It should be mentioned in passing that Schärf himself falls short of this insight when his discussion of the history of the essay nevertheless deals with the usual established authors (from Montaigne and Bacon to Benjamin and Adorno).

15 Scherer, *Ivens, Marker, Godard, Jarman*, 22.

In the same breath, the normative positing—the allocation of the essay film to the category of the documentary—is countered by the resistance of the films themselves, whose impulses don't apparently keep to the postulated categorial restrictions and owe as much to what we have become accustomed to describe in the unclear terms of the experimental film and the feature.

My suggestion of doing away with the category of the essay film and of examining the films in terms of their theoretical content instead is a reaction to these difficulties, among other things. Harun Farocki, whose most well-known films—above all Images of the World and the Inscription of War and As You See, but also Still Life—are regularly described as essay films,[16] rejected the category as unusable in a long interview with Rembert Hüser:

> This category is just as unsuitable as "documentary film," sure. When there is a lot of music on TV and you see landscapes—they've started calling that an essay film as well. A lot of stuff that's just relaxing and not unequivocally journalistic is already called "essay." That's terrible, of course. That's as vague as those "experiments" from the 1950s. Hans Magnus Enzensberger had already noted that the scientific concept of experiment was completely unsuitable for art. The term "essay" has devolved into a similar vagueness. But to me, narration and argumentation are still very closely linked. I strongly hold that discourses are a form of narration. World War II hasn't quite made it into a novel by some new Tolstoy, but instead it has found its way into the *Dialectics of Enlightenment*.[17]

Farocki's remarks are instructive for several reasons: if he criticizes the vagueness and lack of precision in the concept of the essay, he also refers to the narrative potential of any text and the close connection between narrative and discourse for which both his and Godard's films stand. As far as the possibility of recording "reality" goes, there is no principle difference between the categories of fiction and non-fiction; both cinematic registers are equally capable of serving as an instrument of research and of analyzing how reality functions in their images.

16 Tilman Baumgärtel categorizes these films under "reflection": Tilman Baumgärtel, *Harun Farocki. Vom Guerillakino zum Essayfilm. Werkmonografie eines Autorenfilmers* (Berlin: b_books 1998), 156–177.)

17 Rembert Hüser, "Nine Minutes in the Yard. A Conversation with Harun Farocki" [2000], *Harun Farocki. Working on the Sightlines*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2004), 297–314, 313.

The reflections that have historically been made under the heading of the essay film are certainly useful here—although not in an attempt to define the genre but as indications of the link between film and thought. Writing about Chris Marker, whose name works like a center of gravity around which all manner of essay-film concepts revolve, Jürgen Ebert says: "The form of the film essay (Balázs also speaks of the 'film of ideas') cannot be separated from the idea that every film attempts to establish a structure that reflects how the human mind functions."[18]

While Ebert's description operates at a high level of abstraction, the generic delineations in a narrower sense are widely diverging: sometimes—and particularly in the American discussion of the genre, which began with a certain delay in the mid-1990s[19]— the essay film counts as the most subjective of the cinematic genres,[20] inseparable from autobiographical aspects and an emphasis on the respective "author." Essay films thus end up in close proximity to the diary or the letter.[21] Evidence of this is found in the frequently occurring commentary by the filmmaker or his or her integration into the reflection process of the film. Different from the classical documentary, the focus doesn't lie in the subject matter portrayed but in the filmmaker, who groups, arranges, and often explicitly comments on the material according to his or her ideas. The presence of an authorial voice—as in the films of Alexander Kluge, for example—which is often foregrounded as a structuring and interpreting element, fits neatly in this concept. From this perspective, the essay film is the most personal way of filming, and in the end is more about the filmmaker than about the subject matter.

A contrary attempt at a definition attributes a high degree of objectification and scientific method to the essay film. In his attempt to understand what is meant by the "adventure of the essay film," Hanno Möbius names Harun Farocki as a representative of a type of essay film that operates more on the analytical than the autobiographical level. In Farocki's films, Möbius claims, language has a more functional character than in Marker's poetic films. Consequently, Möbius places this variety of essay film in the

18 Jürgen Ebert, "Der Film von Morgen. Chris Marker und das Kino," *... sie wollen eben sein, was sie sind, nämlich Bilder... Anschlüsse an Chris Marker*, eds. Natalie Binczek, Martin Rass (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 1999), 113–125: 120.

19 Phillip Lopate, "In Search of the Centaur. The Essay-Film," *Essays on Nonfiction-Film*, ed. Charles Warren (Hanover: University Press of New England 1996), 243–269.

20 "'Subjectivity' is therefore one of the key words in the academic discussion of the essay film." Scherer, *Ivens, Marker, Godard, Jarman*, 24.

21 See Martin Schaub, "Filme als Briefe," *Schreiben Bilder Sprechen*, ed. Blümlinger, Wulff, 109–118.

proximity of scholarship and education, which aim more for "analytical insight" than the "work of the imagination." [22] By differentiating between two types of essay film, Möbius reintroduces the distinction between art and science, between imagination and analysis, which the filmmakers he discusses—Farocki and Godard among them—are interested in abolishing. It will become clear in this brief discussion of the two poles of subjectivity and scientific objectification, which mark the spectrum of what is meant by the term essay film, how vague the description must ultimately remain. Particularly because further opposites can be assigned to these boundaries: narration versus documentation, poetic vagueness versus scientific exactness, action versus reflection; a vast field extends between these poles and ends up encompassing practically every film imaginable, rather than a terminologically explicable genre.

No other work has determined the discussion of and conceptual approach to the essay film more than Chris Marker's SANS SOLEIL,[23] which comes up as often as Montaigne's *essais* in the literary field.[24] The film often serves as the blueprint from which the attributes of the genre are taken. Moreover, a normative function is usually linked to this more descriptive one and elevates SANS SOLEIL to the standard for essayistic filming against which all other films of the genre are measured. What is responsible for this is not only its structural openness, a montage of footage from Japan, France, Cape Verde, San Francisco, and Iceland that indeed suggests a global cosmos of imagery, but above all how the heterogeneous material is linked, using fictional letters that are read on the soundtrack. Alongside complex thoughts about time, memory, and various visual practices, these letters recurrently contain an element of self-reflection, through which the functioning of electronic images and their readability is discussed. It is probably because of its poetic text that this film has become a preferred object of study for literary scholars[25] like no other essay film.

22 Hanno Möbius, "Das Abenteuer Essayfilm," *AugenBlick* 10, June 1991 [special edition on the essay film], 10–24: 18. Möbius's suggestion of using the term "film essay" for those films in which the analytical impulse is stronger than the poetic-autobiographical and retaining "essay film" for more personal works is somewhat confusing.

23 SANS SOLEIL, F 1982, director: Chris Marker.

24 See Timothy Corrigan, *The Essay Film. From Montaigne, After Marker* (New York: Oxford UP 2011).

25 Such as Michael Wetzel, "La Japonaise. Die Faszination des Fernöstlichen in den Filmen Chris Markers," eds. Natalie Binczek, Martin Rass,*... sie wollen eben sein, was sie sind, nämlich Bilder...*, 159–172.

A decade after Marker's film, when a series of academic attempts to classify it were made, the term essay film primarily served to get to grips with the growing number and heterogeneity of films that principally shared an inability to be placed in the established categories. The publications that put their weight behind the term essay film[26] contain analyses of films by such different filmmakers as Derek Jarman, Joris Ivens, Chris Marker, Hartmut Bitomsky, Johan van der Keuken, Chantal Akerman, Orson Welles, Jean-Luc Godard, or Alexander Kluge, often alongside Errol Morris and Michael Moore in American publications.[27] An attempt to find a pattern in this unequal series brings out two things: essay films, so the list suggests, are a recent phenomenon. Most of the directors named—with the exception of Ivens and Welles, but with them, too, it is usually their late films Une histoire de vent (1988) and F for Fake (1976) that are described as essay films—began making films in the late 1950s. So a connection between the auteur theory propagated in France and the development of the essay film suggests itself, particularly as Chris Marker, one of the most prominent representatives of the essay film, began making his first films in the mid-1950s on the periphery of the New Wave. Following Frieda Grafe's suggestion of seeing the essay film as the "auteur film of the documentary,"[28] Christina Scherer's examination of the genre stresses this tradition:

> The essay film should be seen in this auteur tradition: the film essayist counters the conventions of form and content with a variety of expressive possibilities and individual experiences. These are the organizing and inspirational principle of his creative process.[29]

This line of affiliation, which emphasizes the concept of the filmic "author"—developed more strategically and polemically than systematically by Alexandre Astruc and François Truffaut—as the point of reference for the essay film, seems plauible at first. However, the argument contains an unintentional point: the emphatic concept of individuality named here as the essence of the essay and auteur film counters the very concept of genre. Asking about genres means looking for an impersonal matrix to which the individual elements of the genre can be related as variations, deviations, quotes, parodies, pastiches, and so on. A negative classification of the essay

26 See *AugenBlick* 10, June 1991. See also *Schreiben Bilder Sprechen*, eds. Blümlinger, Wulff.

27 For example by Paul Arthur, "Essay Questions," *Film Comment* 1/2003, 58–63.

28 Grafe, "Der bessere Dokumentarfilm, die gefundene Fiktion," 139.

29 Scherer, *Ivens, Marker, Godard, Jarman*, 30.

film that invokes "expressive possibilities" and "individual experiences" against the "conventions of form and content" is in fact an implicit departure from the principle of generic description. The logical next step would be to abandon the term essay film and replace it with the individual concept of the auteur film.[30]

Aside from these principle objections, the emphasis in the above quote on "individual experience" and the central figure of the author is hard to maintain in regard to the films of Harun Farocki and Jean-Luc Godard. Their works do sometimes centre on the person of the director and his work—particularly in the portrait-like INTERFACE and JLG/JLG, which will be dealt with later—and in many of their films the various perspectives are focused by the author's commentary. This is most evident in the video collage HISTOIRE(S) DU CINÉMA, in which all four chapters are accompanied by Godard's distinctive voice. Yet on the other hand, it is precisely the interconnection of personal and other kinds of experience, of individual and history, that is one of the constants in the work of both filmmakers. The author is also the "receiver"[31] here, and the films are not motivated by a narcissistic view of the self but move ahead in a dialectic back-and-forth between subject and historical context, between seer and seen. The filming subject is thus as much a product of social circumstances as it produces and analyzes them through filming. The fact that this interconnection of authorial subject and basic political conditions occurs in a debate with auteur theory is indisputable for both Farocki and Godard. Yet it is the theory's ambivalences and contradictions, which were present from early on, that they have been able to put to productive use. During the 1960s, Godard in particular, who was initially a fervent advocate of a *politique des auteurs*, turned vehemently against the implications associated with the enthronement of the director. In January 1969, not too long after Barthes published his text "The Death of the Author," he wrote: "The concept of the author is a completely reactionary one. Perhaps it wasn't at the time when the author had a certain progressiveness over the feudal bosses. But from the moment the writer or director himself says, 'From now on I want to be the boss because I'm the poet and I know,' it's completely reactionary."[32] Ten years later, he voices this criticism less dogmatically, but his reservations

30 In this sense, Frieda Grafe's suggestion should also be understood as subversive, as it makes the tacit operations of most analyses of the essay film explicit and shows how the discussion of genre is hardly carried on as a discussion of genre at all.

31 See Silverman, "The Author as Receiver," *October* 96, spring 2001, 17–34.

32 Jean-Luc Godard, "Deux heures avec Jean-Luc Godard" [1969], *Godard par Godard I*, 332–337: 335.

about the position of the author remain. About the politics of the author he now self-critically says:

> What we did was really stupid, and afterwards it did me a lot of harm when I thought it had been good for me. At a certain point it was those of us at Cahiers—Truffaut, Rivette, Godard, Chabrol, the three or four us who were there—we said: "It's not the producer who is interesting, it's the author." We tried to give back, I don't know, what we might call his letters of nobility. But the nobility, it wasn't worth it to cut off their heads in order to give others their letters of credit like that![33]

In 1996, for different reasons, Harun Farocki came to a critical assessment of the filmic concept of the author when he sought to replace the criterion of originality with that of the perception and interest that should guide the portrayal:

> It's clear that authorship is nonsense if it's only about uniqueness. Everyone wants to be unique, but once you've met five other people in the nuthouse who also think they're Napoleon, you'll begin to have your doubts. An author whose perception, whose interest in things, guides the portrayal is something else. It's about the aliveness of the narrating person, no matter how invented and pre-produced it is. I won't be able to give up wanting to be that kind of author.[34]

This is why bringing in the term auteur film in order to qualify the essay film more closely makes things even more complicated. By replacing one contradictory generic concept with another one, we gain no further theoretical awareness of its difficulties, as Godard and Farocki both remark.

If I place a different emphasis here in a discussion of film as theory, this is inspired by earlier attempts to define the essay film. The conventional definition obscures this part of the discussion by limiting it to the genre of the sound film and describing it—following André Bazin's concept of "horizontal montage[35]—in terms of its contrapuntal relationship between

33 Jean-Luc Godard, *Introduction to a True History of Cinema and Television*, ed., trans. Timothy Barnard (Montreal: Caboose 2014), 358.

34 Rolf Aurich, Ulrich Kriest, "Werkstattgespräch Harun Farocki," *Der Ärger mit den Bildern. Die Filme von Harun Farocki*, ed. ibid. (Konstanz: UVK 1998), 325–347: 347.

35 See André Bazin, "Letter from Siberia" [1958], *Film Comment*, July/August 2003, 44-45: 44. Bazin understands horizontal montage to be the interlinking of spoken commentary and image carried out by Chris Marker (in Lettre de Sibérie and other films).

image and sound. "It [the essay film] developed from the insight that images often say too little or are ambiguous, and that a commentary is needed to make them speak."[36] From this perspective, the essay film is a reaction to visual deficits; it attempts to rectify the muteness of the image by adding sound and thus to guide the viewer's visual perception. An incompetence is ascribed to the image, at least in relation to abstract concepts, that can only be met through the use of the word: "Writing and language are particularly conducive to the essay film in its conceptual search, because concrete images can only be understood as signs for abstract concepts through interpretive adjustment."[37] It has already been pointed out that this proposition has often been contradicted in the course of cinema history, and that the endeavors of Eisenstein, Farocki, and Godard can be seen as an alternative model. Yet it is noticeable that despite these efforts, sound is still often described as indispensable to the essay film. It comes first in Phillip Lopate's catalogue of criteria: "An essay-film must have words, in the form of a text either spoken, subtitled, or intertitled. Say all you like about visualization being at the core of thinking, I cannot accept an utterly pure, silent flow of images as constituting essayistic discourse."[38] Paul Arthur agrees with him, describing the link between language and image as the "key ingredient of the essay film," [39] and a little later celebrating Harun Farocki as the "most accomplished current essayist," ironically almost exclusively citing pure "observation films," which do without authorial commentary.

A look at the early history of thinking about the essay film shows that as early as the 1920s the term was aimed more generally at the possibilities of cinematic thought than generic description. Sergei Eisenstein's plan, developed in 1927/28, to adapt Karl Marx's *Capital* is the most notable example. But Hans Richter's text "The Film Essay. A New Form of the Documentary," which attempts to systematize techniques from one of his silent films under the term "film essay," also points in this direction and joins up at certain points with Béla Balázs, who in 1930 had referred to the possibilities of what he called the "montage essay" or "film of ideas."[40] As distinct from the later conceptualization of the essay film, Marx, Richter, and Balázs weren't concerned with activating cinematic reflection through the use of sound but with the question of which elements of the visual language

36 Wilhelm Roth, *Der Dokumentarfilm seit 1960* (Munich, Luzern: Bucher 1982), 185.

37 Möbius, "Das Abenteuer Essayfilm," 19.

38 Lopate, "In Search of the Centaur," 245.

39 Arthur, "Essay Questions," 58–63.

40 Christina Scherer's extensive study of the problem of memory in the essay film, which opens with a lengthy chapter on the form, fails to mention either Richter or Eisenstein.

itself (independently of any spoken commentary) could be theoretical. It is obvious that this also shifts the focus to the aspect of montage.

Hans Richter outlined his point of view retrospectively in a newspaper article in 1940.[41] He proceeds from the difficulty that abstract processes—such as the functioning of the stock market—can't be portrayed directly and requires a new form of film. The essay film (or film essay, as Richter calls this "new form of the documentary") thus responds to a transformation of economic structures in capitalism: visible labor disappears in favor of invisible transactions,[42] and film has to react to this with new techniques of visualization. Richter takes up an idea here that was most trenchantly described by Bertolt Brecht in his famous remarks on photography in the "Threepenny Trial":

> The situation thereby becomes so complicated that a simple "representation of reality" says something about reality less than ever before. A photograph of the Krupp works or of A.E.G. yields nearly nothing about these institutions. Actual reality has slipped into the functional. The reification of human relationships, such as the factory, no longer produces the latter. So there is in fact "something to build up," something "artificial," "contrived." It is similarly a fact that art is necessary. But the old concept of art, drawn from experience, simply breaks down.[43]

Brecht's remark is not a rejection of realistic description but a call for a modification of its purposes and possibilities. Instead of a direct depiction of reality, he seeks a model-like simulation whose emphasis is on structures, not things. If the determining factor has slipped into the "functional," the task of the filmmaker must be to make this function visible. But because a function—in the mathematical sense of the word too—always means a relationship, the step towards montage, which Hans Richter at least implies, is predetermined:

41 Hans Richter, "Der Filmessay. Eine neue Form des Dokumentarfilms" [1940], *Schreiben Bilder Sprechen*, eds. Blümlinger, Wulff, 195–198.

42 The title of the first film by the Lumière brothers (La sortie des usines, 1895) also prophetically describes the changes in working conditions that took place in the twentieth century. Harun Farocki (Workers Leaving the Factory, 1995) and Hartmut Bitomsky (Der VW-Komplex,1988/89) later explored this subject.

43 Bertolt Brecht, "The Three Penny Trial: A Sociological Experiment" [1931/32], *German Essays on Film*, eds. Richard W. McCormick and Allison Guenther-Pal (London: Continuum 2004), 111–132, 117.

> In this way, the documentary is given the task of visualizing conceptual ideas. What is inherently invisible must also be made visible. Both the acted scene and the merely depicted fact are aspects of an argument that aims to make problems, thoughts, even general ideas understandable. For this reason, I find the term essay applicable to this form of film, for in literature too essay means the treatment of difficult subject matter in a generally comprehensible way.[44]

Richter's deliberations end up in a schematic and rather diffuse concept of the essay. Yet it is still worth taking up the elements he suggests, because they can be read as an indication of a development of film into a form of theoretical expression. First, Richter has no doubt that the film essay is a particular kind of documentary; he assigns it to the factual, not to the fictional. Second, he considers its subject matter to be "conceptual ideas."[45] Godard's statement that the cinema is a thought that becomes form and at the same time a form that enables thought is a later direct link to this characterization of the essay film.[46] Third, the function of the film goes beyond simple illustration: Richter speaks of "argument," implicitly displacing film from the arts to the sciences. From this perspective, films neither serve as mere entertainment nor as direct political agitation, as the Russian filmmakers of the 1920s saw it. Through montage, the image becomes an element of a precise argument.[47]

The apparent rigor of this concept, which lies in the idea of film as (hard) science and makes one think of educational films for use in schools, is countered by the openness of means and form:

> Because in the film essay one is not bound to the representation of outer appearances or to a chronological sequence, but on the contrary has to take the visual material from everywhere, one is at liberty to jump

44 Richter, "Der Filmessay," 197.

45 See also Thomas Tode, "Ein Bild ist ein Argument," *Navigationen* 2/2002, 99–108.

46 "Cinema is just as much a thought that takes on form as a form that enables thought." Jean-Luc Godard quoted in *Théories du cinéma. Petite anthologie des* Cahiers du cinéma, eds. Antoine de Baecque, Gabrielle Lucantonio (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma 2001), 5.

47 The closeness between Richter's theory and the Russian concepts of montage in the 1920s can be seen in his programmatic text "Filmgegner von heute – Filmfreunde von morgen" [Today's Film Enemies – Tomorrow's Film Friends] from 1929. Even the emphatic capital headings ("We Montage!" "Seeing Expanded!" "Form Associations!") can be seen both as an adoption of Vertov's ideas and as an imperative of the essay film. Hans Richter, *Filmgegner von heute – Filmfreunde von morgen* [1929], with a foreword by Walter Schobert (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer 1981).

> through space and time: from objective representation to fantastical allegory, for example, and from here to an acted scene; one can depict the inanimate and the animate, artificial or natural things; one may use everything that exists and what can be invented—if it can only serve as an argument for the visualization of the basic thought.[48]

This multiplicity of possible associations makes it difficult to identify an essay film on the level of the material it uses, as it can potentially absorb everything. As for the hierarchization of genres that Richter had undertaken shortly before, in his determination of the essay film as a subgenre of the documentary, a different classification can be imagined here. For in its ability to combine an extremely wide variety of levels, the essay film now looks either like an integrating meta-genre or a particular attitude or energy that cannot be subsumed under a particular genre. This directly connects with Godard's poetics since the mid-1960s. In a programmatic text written in the context of 2 OR 3 THINGS I KNOW ABOUT HER, film is described as a reservoir of different impressions, thoughts, and themes: "During the course of the film – in its discourse, its discontinuous course, that is – I want to include everything, sport, politics, even groceries. [...] Everything can be put into a film. Everything should be put into a film."[49] However, if in fact "everything" can be put into a film, as PIERROT LE FOU had shown, how can its form be determined? Doesn't this inevitably lead to amorphous contours?

Two things should be remarked here: in the final analysis, Richter doesn't see the film essay as a cinematic genre but as "cinematic thinking" oriented to scholarly practice and in this sense more experimental than narrative—or as presenting narration as experimentation and dissolving narrative structures experimentally. The necessity for this had already been formulated as a problem in the film theory of the 1920s. Béla Balázs described it as a challenge for film in 1930, anticipating Brecht's argument. In an explicit reference to Sergei Eisenstein, he describes a type of film that he characterizes as a film of ideas, film essay, or "montaged essay." Under the heading of "Flight from the Story," he takes up Eisenstein's notion of a film of ideas that "depicts neither stories nor destinies, neither private nor social fates, but only ideas. Purely abstract subject matter is to be communicated in a purely sensuous manner: intellectual ideas

48 Richter, "Der Filmessay," 198.

49 Godard, "One Should Put Everything into a Film" [1967], *Godard on Godard*, ed., trans. Tom Milne (New York: Da Capo 1986), 238–239: 239.

transmitted via the image."[50] The development of this type of film exceeds the aesthetic realm, as it results from the lack of visibility of decisive social mechanisms: "Economic and political forces have no visible form and thus cannot simply be photographed for a newsreel. They can, however, be rendered visible."[51] The constellation in the 1920s can be described as follows: after a phase of discovering visibility and emphatically filming reality in the films of the New Objectivity,[52] a fundamental doubt begins to be articulated: What if crucial processes evade the eye of the camera? How can the cinematic recording of the world,[53] which affirmatively duplicates what it finds in reality, be given a critical aspect? One possible answer can be found in an uncompleted project by Eisentein.

A dialectic interweaving of theory and practice, which doesn't merely seek a transition between the two areas but understands practical filming as the "reverse side" of theoretically handled problems, can be seen in Eisenstein's development in the second half of the 1920s.[54] In his *Capital* project, Eisenstein developed a further type of montage, in a continuation of and differentiation from other types (the "montage of attraction," still rooted in theater; metrical, rhythmic montage; tonal montage; and overtone montage), which he called "intellectual montage" and saw as paradigmatic for a new art of filmmaking that was still to be established.[55] Different from the earlier forms of montage, which were primarily used to produce physiological and psychological effects in the audience, "intellectual montage" addresses the viewer's rational capacity. Alongside

50 Béla Balázs, *Early Film Theory: Visible Man and The Spirit of Film*, ed. Erica Carter, trans. Rodney Livingstone (New York: Berghahn Books 2010), 149.

51 Ibid., 154.

52 The most prominent examples of this tendency are Walter Ruttmann's Berlin: Symphony of a Great City from 1927 and People on Sunday, D 1929, director: Robert Siodmak.

53 Because of this apolitical tendency, Siegfried Kracauer in retrospect interpreted the films of the New Objectivity as an expression of "cynicism, resignation, disillusion." Siegfried Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler. A Psychological History of German Film* [1947], ed. Leonardo Quaresima (Princeton: Princeton UP 2004), 165.

54 See, for example, Hans Joachim Schlegel's remark: "This correspondence and cooperation between theoretical and art-practical avant-garde is an essential precondition for Eisenstein's basic dialectical thinking, which also determines his interest in film semiotics: theory and practice are indissolubly linked for Eisenstein." Hans Joachim Schlegel, "Eisenstein und die zweite literarische Periode des Films," *Literaturverfilmungen*, eds. Franz Josef Albersmeier, Volker Roloff (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1989), 38–54: 44.

55 See Oksana Bulgakowa, "Montagebilder bei Sergej Eisenstein," *Handbuch der Filmmontage. Praxis und Prinzipien des Filmschnitts*, ed. Hans Beller (Munich: TR-Verlagsunion 1993), 49–77, particularly 58–67.

emotion, thought was now intended to be brought to the screen (and from there into the viewer's head).

Eisenstein's notes on his planned filming of *Capital*[56] clearly show how montage—and thus the conjunction of thoughts—becomes the core of what he too had often described as a cinematic "essay." The form of organization he chose in the conception phase of the project is illuminating. Eisenstein didn't note his ideas in linear sequence in a book but tacked them as (moveable) slips of paper onto the wall of his editing room. So even the arrangement of his notes follows the combinatory, montage principle that would be required on the level of the cinematic structure. With the pathos of a pioneer, Eisenstein declares his current production October to be the first essay film: "After the drama, poem, ballad in film, October presents a new form of cinema: a collection of essays on a series of themes which constitute October."[57] However, October is obviously about an event—the revolution ten years before—and thus not about an abstract idea in Richter's sense. Intellectual montage is accordingly restricted to a few sequences: a dull speaker coupled with a lyre; the war minister and naval secretary Kerenski, whose vanity is illustrated with the insert of a peacock. Only with the projected filming of *Capital* did Eisenstein plan a complete "de-anecdotization"[58] of film—the abandonment of a continuous film fable.

Eisenstein gives an example of how this was to look in practice: the dialectical method of *Capital* would be demonstrated by an everyday event. The framing structure of the film was to be the image of a woman making soup for her husband coming home. The arc traced from this banal image has global dimensions and owes its associative technique to a literary inspiration: "Joyce may be helpful for my purpose: from a bowl of soup to the British vessels sunk by England."[59] How Eisenstein wanted to get from the saucepan to the sinking of the British fleet is sketched in a rapid sequence of images in which economic relations can be seen behind their purely associative combination (the name of Joyce primarily stands for the stream-of-consciousness technique):

56 Sergei Eisenstein, "Notes for a Film of 'Capital'," trans. Maciej Sliwowski, Jay Leyda, Annette Michelson, *October* 2, summer 1976, 3–26.

57 Ibid., 4.

58 Ibid., 5.

59 Ibid., 15.

> Throughout the entire picture the wife cooks soup for her returning husband. N.B. Could be two themes intercut for association: the soup-cooking wife and the home-returning husband.. [...] in the third part (for instance), association moves from the pepper with which she seasons food. Pepper. Cayenne. Devil's Island. Dreyfus. French chauvinism. *Figaro* in Krupp's hands. War. Ships sunk in the port.. [....] It would be good to cover the sunken English ships [...] with the lid of a saucepan.[60]

On the level of the conjunction of ideas, Eisenstein is guided by a domino effect that doesn't rely on an optical similarity of his images, but on their metonymic closeness to the concepts they represent.[61] This method assumes a trust in the collaboration of the viewer, because a process of intellectual translation has to take place in order to understand the thoughts involved. The images have to be translated back into concepts and (political) backgrounds in order to grasp the causal connection between foodstuffs, colonial history, and war. In terms of purely cinematic poetics, Eisenstein's strategy can be variously assessed: if we recall Hartmut Winkler's characterization of film as a form of articulation that exclusively consists of concrete things,[62] then the montage provides for the reintroduction of intellectual abstraction, which now is no longer seen as the precondition of speech but its result. In Eisenstein's chain of images, a sinking ship is not simply a ship but leads to more abstract thoughts about war and international economic relationships. On the other hand, this abstraction, in the conceptual translation it requires, obliterates the image to a certain extent. One starts to wonder why a film is necessary at all, if its underlying ideas could be presented more precisely and clearly in written or verbal form.

Let us summarize those aspects of the essay film that appear in my examination of Richter and Eisenstein. It seems that the essay film not only differs from the conventional definition of the genre but also questions the meaningfulness of a separate genre at all. For essay films are generally defined through sound–image relationships (productive discrepancy between commentary and image, subjective narrative); the essayistic aspects of a film are often even solely identified in its commentary and separated from

60 Ibid., 17.

61 In this sense, Roman Jakobson has ascribed the documentary as a whole to metonymy: "All documentary or near-documentary films are by definition more metonymic than metaphoric." Roman Jakobson, "Gespräch über den Film" [1967], ibid., *Semiotik. Ausgewählte Texte 1919-1982*, ed. Elmar Holenstein (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1992), 267–280: 271.

62 See Hartmut Winkler, *Docuverse. Zur Medientheorie der Computer* (München: Boer 1997), 207.

the visual level to a great extent. The concept of film as theory, however, emphasizes the relationships between images and image sequences, as found in the early history of the essay genre in the 1920s. This doesn't necessarily mean that the usual definitions of the essay film become invalid. However, it seems to me to be helpful—particularly in relation to the films of Godard and Farocki—to describe the cinematic essay more on the level of the image and to depart from that of the sound. Moreover, it is also debatable whether there is any sense at all in discussing questions of abstraction/concretion, documentary/fictive, and so on in generic terms. More general problems are at issue in regard to visual relationships and the possibilities of representing ideas in the medium of film; problems that arise equally in every film.

In the early phase of the use of the term, "essay film" meant the filming of abstract concepts in the sense of Hans Richter, and the essay film made its impact primarily through the relationships between the images, not exclusively through individual images themselves—as Eisenstein's projected filming of Marx's *Capital* shows. The essay works in a combinatory manner and uses the techniques of montage. Jean-Luc Godard in particular has pointed out, with indefatigable persistence, that *two* images are necessary for the production of a context: "One thing that has always amazed me is: how do you move from one shot to the next? In other words: why put shots one after another?"[63]

If the relationship between two images is thus described as the fundamental impulse for his own filmmaking, Godard later extends it to the determining aspect of film as a whole, particularly for the silent film. So it is difficult to designate the linking of images as the sharp criterion of a specific film genre, that of the essay film. As specifically as Godard uses the term, montage is one of the most general principles of filmmaking and can only be used to define a genre in its specific use. The next step, therefore, does not lead to a clear-cut generic definition but into the editing room.

63 Godard, *Introduction to a True History*, 113.

4. Cut—Interlude in the Editing Room

"Montage. You physically hold a moment, like an object, like this ashtray. You have the past, present, and future in your hands."
Jean-Luc Godard[1]

The search for a specific place in the filmmaking process in which theory turns into practice takes us not to the author's desk but to the editing room. This is usually one of the unseen places in filmmaking, and for this reason alone it is very rarely the subject of cinematic narrative: "For people who work in the editing room, no matter whether they work on their own film or someone else's, one experience is fundamental: no one seems to have the faintest idea of what goes on there."[2] This ignorance doesn't usually give rise to curiosity, however. While there is an element of magic in photographic processing, and the darkroom can become an Archimedian point of an entire film, as Michelangelo Antonioni has shown in Blow Up, the editing room lacks visual appeal. The editing process—despite the extent of the genre "film in film" and the diversification of self-reflexive forms of cinema[3]—is rarely the explicit subject of a film. In general, self-referential films are concerned with the immediate shooting of a film or with the screening of a finished product in the cinema.[4] Both are phases of visibility and thus of social interchange: on the one hand, the production of a film as an often conflictive relationship between director, actors, producers, and so on;[5] on the other, its reception by the audience, which

1 Godard on King Lear, F/USA 1987, in Godard, "Le montage, la solitude et la liberté" [1989], *Godard par Godard II,* 242.

2 Gerhard Schumm, "Montage, das große Geheimnis," *Der Schnitt* 33 (2004), 54–55: 54.

3 See Robert Stam, *Reflexivity in Film and Literature. From Don Quixote to Jean-Luc Godard* (New York: Columbia UP 1992).

4 Farocki marks this discrepancy in a review of Godard's Passion, where he points out the difference between the production of commodities and film production: "The products are put in a display window, and advertising distributes images of them. Everything is done to make people aware of them, while their production is hidden behind walls. (With film production it is a little different, as something is made public from the shoot and only the editing is entirely hidden.)" Harun Farocki, "Passion," *Filmkritik* 7/1983, 317–328: 321.

5 The classics of this subgenre include Godard's Contempt, François Truffaut's Day for Night (F 1973), and Federico Fellini's Eight and a Half (F/I 1963). For an analysis of these films, see Harald Schleicher, *Film-Reflexionen. Autothematische Filme von Wim Wenders, Jean-Luc Godard und Federico Fellini* (Tübingen: Niemeyer 1991).

responds to the film and relates to the characters on screen.[6] The editing room, as an interim stage between these two poles, is, similar to the author's desk, not a space that suggests itself for the development of an exciting story; not least because it isn't a place of social interaction but of interaction between images. Much of the time at the editing table is "dead" time, spent in winding film material back and forth; the decisions taken here are only reflected in the edited material that results from the montage process—the cut is unseen visual work that becomes invisible. Consequently, the editor is much lower down the hierarchy than the director, cameraperson, producer, or author.

Only the Russian film, as a by-product of the early Soviet montage euphoria, has conceded a prominent place to the image of the editing suite alongside its numerous theoretical treatises on different types of montage. No photograph of Sergei Eisenstein is better known than the one in which he can be seen viewing a film strip with a serious look in his eyes, and Godard in turn based one of his much-reproduced portraits on it.[7] But above all Man with a Movie Camera,[8] Dziga Vertov's metafilm from 1929, which attempts to synthesize all aspects of film production and reception in the figure and adventures of a cameraman, cannot ignore the work of a cutter at her editing table. For Vertov, the editing room was an almost religious place of resurrection and revitalization.[9] Vertov repeatedly has the still frames—film material which the cameraman has shot in the previous sequences—jump into the moving images of narration, thus ascribing to the editing process a synthesizing power that blends the past of the shoot, the present of the editing, and the future of the projection. Godard echoes this idea of montage

6 Woody Allen has explored the possibilities of this interaction most consistently in The Purple Rose of Cairo (USA 1985), in which the screen and the auditorium merge into one another and a love story takes place between the viewer Cecilia (Mia Farrow) and her screen idol Tom Baxter (Jeff Daniels).

7 For example, on the cover of his first volume of writings. For the 300th edition of the *Cahiers du cinéma*, which he edited in May 1981, Godard combined the photo of Eisenstein with a picture of Sigmund Freud and one of Freud's texts. While Eisenstein inspects the celluloid and prepares his edit in the foreground, the inventor of psychoanalysis watches him from the screen. Montage, as a rhetorical intervention that brings forth latent and invisible elements, appears in this juxtaposition to be the production of an "optical unconscious," as described by Walter Benjamin in his essay on the artwork. The collage is reprinted in Michael Temple, James S. Williams, Michael Witt, eds. *For Ever Godard* (London: Black Dog Publishing 2004), 12.

8 Man with a Movie Camera, USSR 1929, director: Dziga Vertov.

9 This is vividly presented in Vertov's earlier film Kino Eye, in which the intertitle "The cinema eye reverses time" introduces a sequence in which a cow that has already been cut up for meat is returned to life. Kino Eye, USSR 1924, director: Dziga Vertov).

as reanimation in an important text: "In montage, the object is alive, while during the shoot it is dead. It has to be resurrected. This is sorcery."[10]

Farocki's and Godard's interest in the editing room continues the 1920s tradition of thinking about montage. But the fact that these two directors have featured the editing room in their films and texts also has to do with its marginalization.[11] As a literal embodiment of their poetics of the "in between," the editing room is one of the keys to the central working concepts of both directors.

What an Editing Room is: Interface

"Are scientific experiments conducted at an editing station?"
Harun Farocki[12]

Hovering between question and statement, "What an Editing Room Is" was the heading for a short text that Harun Farocki wrote for *Filmkritik* in 1980. The title alone indicates the neglect of this location by film discourse. For if the specific function of the editing room in the process of making a film were understood, an explication would not be necessary. But the title is also an aesthetic statement: it articulates an interest in visual relationships, in the power that lies in the combination of images, and in the invisibility into which the decisions involved in image production are often forced. Farocki initially describes the editing room as a place of the "in between": "Film script and shooting schedule are ideas and money; shooting a film is work and spending of money. The work at the editing table is something in-between."[13] This topographic description not only refers to the unresolved status of editing a film but also to the fact that something is made visible in the editing room that lies in between the individual frames and sequences. This is another reference to the invisible third element that is so central to the poetics of Eisenstein, Farocki, and Godard.

The extent to which editing is connected to theory depends on the productive dimension of a collision between several shots and also on the fact

10 Godard, "Le montage, la solitude et la liberté," 245.

11 It is worth noting that both directors have usually edited their films themselves—Harun Farocki often under the pseudonym of Rosa Mercedes.

12 Interface, D 1995, director: Harun Farocki.

13 Harun Farocki, "What an Editing Room Is" [1980], ibid., *Nachdruck/Imprint. Texte/Writings*, eds. Susanne Gaensheimer and Nikolaus Schafhausen (Berlin: Vorwerk 8 2001), 78–84: 78.

that through this dynamic the film develops a "life of its own," which gives the work at the editing table an almost metaphysical dimension. "That is the work performed at the editing table: getting to know the material so well that the decisions taken as to where to make a cut, which version of a shot to use, or which music to play follow of their own accord."[14] This automatism, which shifts the editing decisions to the material itself, leads Farocki to the idea of an "autonomy of the image." The film does not confront the filmmaker as a passive object but takes the practical decisions—through the movement and dynamic inherent in the material—for the person who then only has to make the cut: "It's the film that thinks," to take up Godard's pointed statement once again.

The text that Farocki wrote about the editing room in 1980 also occupies an intermediate position. It should be understood as a temporal interface, connecting the past and the future in the sense of Godad's King Lear quote, as it represents both a look back at Farocki's television work of the early 1970s[15] and a theoretical blueprint for his installations of the 1990s. In both cases, the editing room—concealed or unconcealed—is central. In the early 1970s, Farocki made two programs in the WDR series *Telekritik*[16] in which the editing table, although it isn't depicted, represents the material precondition for Farocki's diagnosis of television broadcasting. The term *section* (the French title of Interface), must be understood literally here, as Farocki undertakes an almost medical examination of televisual reality. He extracts individual examples of the genre "feature" from current television productions and subjects them to a multilevel process of criticism: from the uncommented showing of an item to a repeated presentation with comments to interpretive thoughts about how the conventional approach to television might be countered by a critical way of working. Farocki emphasizes the central role of the editing table as an analytical instrument in an accompanying text:

14 Ibid.

15 Farocki himself sees this work critically today. The time between Inextinguishable Fire and Between Two Wars wars primarily spent earning a living from television commissions and—from 1974—as an unpaid editor and author on *Filmkritik*. The works for television are particularly interesting here, however, because in their deconstruction and critical analysis of a certain type of television program (feature), they also developed a theoretical and practical counter-program.

16 The Trouble with Images. A Critique of Television, BRD 1973, director: Harun Farocki. The Struggle with Images. A Critique of Television, BRD 1974, director: Harun Farocki.

> In the case of the feature, archive and editing table are a particularly sharp instrument against the rhetorical envelope. For in this sad genre of the feature, almost all the means of portrayal are means of deception. How the material is edited, how the information is sequenced, how the images relate to the sound: all this is aimed at deception. Like someone who has nothing to say and clothes this nothing in complete sentences.[17]

The text recalls Karl Kraus's attacks on the empty phrases of the daily press; here, the editing table is an analytical tool that exposes the shallowness of the visual and sound levels through repetition and exact observation. But The Trouble with Images goes beyond the criticism of individual features: Farocki is basically concerned with general propositions about the combination of images, so that a different approach to images becomes visible, behind the seen, as it were.

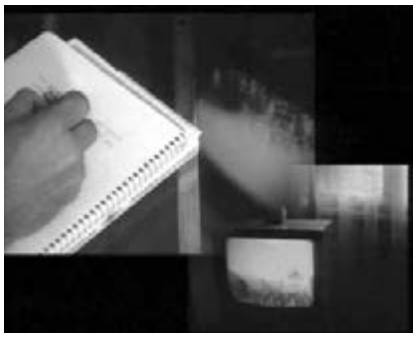
Films usually only make their montage decisions visible in the final result. Farocki, however, repeatedly raises the issue—in words and images—of how such decisions are taken and what it means to connect images. "You notice montage, but not editing. Montage is an intellectual linking of images. The editing is [...] creating flow, finding rhythm."[18] In this opposition of editing and montage, which for a long time had its political equivalent in the East-West conflict,[19] Farocki's and Godard's sympathies undoubtedly lay on the side of the intellectual linking of images. An installation like Interface, in which the work at the editing table is the basic situation of the film, shows such an intellectual linkage in practice and can also be seen as a kind of "adaptation" of the text "What an Editing Room Is." What the text describes in a short subheading as "gestural thinking" is translated in the installation into the working gestures at the editing table. Fifteen years after his short text, Farocki now took the opportunity—for the exhibition *Le monde après la photographie*[20] in Villeneuve d'Ascq in France—of being able to produce a work that theoretically examined the combination of images and put a new kind of juxtaposition to the test that he calls "soft montage," a method he has continued to use in many of his subsequent works. Moving into an exhibition space primarily enabled the spatial separation and synchronous presentation

17 Harun Farocki, "Drückebergerei vor der Wirklichkeit. Das Fernsehfeature/Der Ärger mit den Bildern," [about The Struggle with Images] *Frankfurter Rundschau*, June 2, 1973.

18 Harun Farocki, "Die Aufgabe des Schnittmeisters: Ökonomie. Gespräch mit Peter Przygodda," *Filmkritik* 10/1979, 487–491: 489.

19 See Ute Holl, *Kino, Trance und Kybernetik* (Berlin: Brinkmann & Bose 2002), 25f.

20 *Le monde après la photographie*, Musée d'art moderne de Villeneuve d'Ascq, France, June 10 to September 30, 1995.



Ill. 41

of two images.[21] The exhibition space, unlike the cinema screen, can arrange two images in such a way that the viewer is brought into different relationships with what is shown, and the triangle between the two images and the viewer configures itself variably.

Interface not only presents this type of montage as a product but foregrounds the relational process itself. At least two images—and thus a potential multiplication—are always on view in Interface. In the tradition of early Romantic theory, Farocki had already made the figure 2 into a cipher of "eternity" in Between Two Wars in the late 1970s: "*One* story can't be about *two* people; *one* story can't be about *two* worlds; *one* story can't be about *two* classes, because two is already the totality,"[22] says the author, who is significantly not seen directly but as a reflection in the shining surface of his desk. An image—that of the author—and a text come together and prefigure, before the text about the editing room and the installation Interface, the idea of interpenetrating image and text and of presenting both as a literal process of reflection. Interface takes up this idea again and continues it. Farocki views images from his films, partially supplemented with new footage,[23] each time combining two images with one another. But above all he comments on this process of viewing and montage. Interface is a reflection on the possibilities of the non-linear combination of images, and his juxtapositions accumulate numerous further dichotomies, for example that of image versus text, of film versus video, of visual versus tactile, of coding versus decoding. Editing table and montage—as with Godard—thus become a metaphor for the relating and linking of ideas.

The viewer is confronted by the first doubling immediately after the title insert (ill. 41). Above left, someone is noting a text on a writing pad—a little later, we know it is Farocki himself. To the right but still in the same image,

21 Most of Farocki's installations have single-channel versions for broadcast on television.

22 *Zwischen zwei Kriegen. Film von Harun Farocki. Beschrieben und Protokolliert von Peter Nau. Mit 68 Abbildungen* (Munich: Verlag der Filmkritik 1978), 33.

23 The film also mentions a project about secret documents and the process of coding and decoding that has not been realized.

the blurred bluish reflection of a monitor can be seen. The first sentence of the commentary, spoken by Farocki, closely relates writing and seeing: "I can hardly write a word thse days if there isn't an image on the screen at the same time. Actually: on both screens."[24] This opening gives the film a double foundation: the gesture of retrospection is located in the here and now of the present, and thus historicized, and it is emphatically identified as the reflections of Farocki the author, whose presence as viewer, writer, and speaker are central from the very beginning. However, this is not associated with a glorification of the author but rather clarifies the general tendency of the installation to portray the author as receiver, as someone through whom the thoughts of the images organize themselves and link up.[25] The author is himself the interface, and the image is the catalyst that sets the intellectual and linguistic process in motion. The editing table is the setting for a theoretical viewing that translates into a text of images and words; a place where production and reception coincide. "Both screens" can mean the two screens of the editing table where Farocki sits, and which can be seen in the next shot,[26] but it can also refer to the two monitors or images with which the viewer is confronted in the exhibition and which lie outside the editing-table situation. In this sense, the doubling of the image potentially extends the number of possible combinations into infinity.

There is a further "second" image in this first one: a photograph of Nicolae Ceauşescu, general secretary of the Romanian Communist Party, standing on the balcony of the Central Committee Building delivering a speech, the sudden interruption of which contributed to the overthrowing of his dictatorship in 1989. Farocki takes up a central image from the film Videograms of a Revolution, which he produced with the Romanian media theorist Andrej Ujica and which is compiled from television and amateur

24 This and the following quotes—if not otherwise identified—come from the English subtitles of Interface.

25 In the text "Wie man sieht" which accompanies the film As You See and appeared in Uwe Nettelbeck's journal *Die Republik*, no. 76–78, September 9, 1986, 33–106, Farocki quotes a remark by Claude Lévi-Strauss, who similarly understands the human subject as a channeling of different discourses: "I appear to myself as the place where something is going on, but there is no 'I', no 'me.' Each of us is a kind of crossroads where things happen. The crossroads is purely passive; something happens there. A different thing, equally valid, happens elsewhere. There is no choice, it is just a matter of chance." Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Myth and Meaning* [1978] (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul 2005), x.

26 With Interface it is difficult to talk about "shots" in the classic sense, as the alternation of images and sequences rarely takes place on both monitors at the same time.

footage from the period of the uprising.[27] This image, which was broadcast by state television and replaced by the announcement "Transmisiune directa" when the speech was interrupted, played a central role in the Romanian revolution. The suspension of the visual representation of state power for a moment produced a gap into which a different power—in this case, the Romanian citizens who occupied the television station a short while later—could press forward. The sudden invisibility of power revealed another power—that of the people:

> The televisual blackout does in fact indicate the power-preserving alliance between medium and politics. In the moment that the television image of the dictator collapses and the medium is thrown back on its materiality (it can show images of the world, except that now the authority that decides what is real, and thus worth showing, is suspended), a revolutionary situation seems to have occurred.[28]

In Interface, Farocki again takes up the montage from Videograms of a Revolution and reconstructs it at the editing table. By confronting the television footage of Ceauşescu's speech with a further image taken simultaneously in a private apartment by a video amateur, he succeeds in making a valid statement about something as abstract as the loss of power, a message that only emerges through the relationship between the images. Two images oppose each other like shot and countershot: Ceauşescu can be seen on the television in the apartment; on the streets, the demonstrators are streaming away from the state-organized rally. A camera pan by the amateur filmmaker relates the two, and it is this production of a relationship that Farocki paradigmatically addresses in Interface. If the live broadcast is understood as a gesture of the assertion of power, both its technical interruption and its confrontation with the countershot of the demonstrators leaving the gathering place are its recognizable subversion. Placing them side by side in a soft montage, and thus showing both of them simultaneously, reveals montage as a diagnostic, political, and poetic instrument.

27 Farocki has written a text entitled "Substandard" which gives background information to the film: Harun Farocki, "Substandard" [1993], ibid. *Nachdruck*, 249–267.

28 Eike Wenzel, "Hinter der sichtbaren Oberfläche der Bilder. Harun Farockis dokumentarische Arbeit an gesellschaftlichen Umbruchsituationen. Zu *Videogramme einer Revolution* und *Die führende Rolle*," *Der Ärger mit den Bildern*, eds. Rolf Aurich, Ulrich Kriest (Konstanz: UVK 1998), 269-286.

In Videograms, these two images introduce an intensive debate about the relationship between "real" power and the power of the image during the events in Romania. Here, in Interface, the tracking shot by the amateur filmmaker Paul Kossigian almost allegorically introduces a reflection on the possibilities of combining two images. The film is autobiographical, as Farocki re-views selected films from Inextinguishable Fire to Videograms of a Revolution, making them the subject of a metafilm retrospective. But more importantly, the work is a formal examination of the possibilities of soft montage.[29] To put it simply, this type of montage replaces or supplements the consecutiveness of sequences with a coexistence of two visual levels and uses the numerous combinatory possibilities that arise from this juxtaposition.

> There is succession as well as simultaneity in a double projection, the relationship of an image to the one that follows as well as the one beside it; a relationship to the preceding as well as the concurrent one. Imagine three double bonds jumping back and forth between the six carbon atoms of a benzene ring; I envisage the same ambiguity in the relationship of an element in an image track to the one succeeding or accompanying it.[30]

The chemical metaphor that Farocki develops here to describe the forces between two images is no coincidence and produces various connections in its turn. It takes up an image from Between Two Wars, in which the benzene ring is a symbol for the circular and mutual dependence of the industrial processes introduced during the Weimar Republic. The film tells of the chemist Friedrich August Kekulé, who knows the individual components of benzene—carbon and hydrogen—but has to find out the logic of their variable individual and double connections. Applied to soft montage, the metaphor stands for ambiguity and flexibility: images should not be fixed to a specific, timeless "content," for their translation into text or metaphor is itself a model that has to be presented and continually reinterpreted as such. The emphasis is shifted from a concept of meaning based on the identity of the image to the production of meaning as the effect of a constellation.

29 Soft montage has already been mentioned in the conversation between Kaja Silverman and Harun Farocki about Godard's Numéro Deux: Harun Farocki, Kaja Silverman, "In Her Place," ibid., *Speaking About Godard* (New York/London: New York UP 1998), 141–169: 142.

30 Harun Farocki, "Cross Influence/Soft Montage," trans. Cynthia Beatt, *Against What? Against Whom?* eds. Antje Ehmann and Kodwo Eshun (London: Koenig Books 2009), 69–74: 70.

In 1968, in Le gai savoir, Godard made use of a similar metaphor in order to explain the strategy of his image–sound analysts Emile and Patricia: "To find a solution, whether to a chemical or a political problem, you have to dissolve; dissolve hydrogen or dissolve the parliament. Here we dissolve the images and the sounds,"[31] is how the two describe their three-year program of analyzing and altering images and sounds. This model of an analysis of images and language oriented to the exact sciences once again traces an arc, via the connection between Godard and Farocki, to early Romanticism. Novalis also alluded to physics in his *Notes for a Romantic Encyclopaedia*. His remarks almost read as a paraphrase of Godard, even though he understands "images" to be composed of language: "Experimenting with images and concepts within the faculty of representation in a manner wholly analogous to physical experimenting. Associating. Allowing to arise—etc."[32]

The comparison between visual connections and chemical bonds establishes the direction of Farocki's method in Interface. For the image of a chemical connection between two images also contains the necessity of analytically describing this connection and subjecting it to various kinds of experiments in order to be able to describe it more exactly. The editing room, according to Farocki, is a laboratory for examining visual relationships. That the metaphor of the lab is only one of several conceivable models for the work of editing becomes clear when the idea is taken literally and the technical equipment threatens to disappear in a fog of dry ice, as if it were an actual laboratory.

The division of the visual space into several image fields, which is the basis for Interface, has precursors in all the visual arts. In my analysis of Still Life and the subgenre of the inverted still life, I have already pointed out that the superimposition of various visual spaces through frames, windows, or the creation of hierarchies between foreground and background opened up numerous possibilities for self-reflection in painting. And this practice was also present in film from early on. When the playing-card figures in a film by Georges Meliès, for example, become independent and step out of their cards, they set a varied play of fiction and reality in motion that implicitly also says something about the possibilities of the cinematic medium.[33] The history of the experimental

31 Jean-Luc Godard, "Le Gai Savoir (extraits de la piste sonore)," *Cahiers du cinéma* no. 200/201, April/May 1968, 53–55: 54.

32 Novalis, *Notes for a Romantic Encyclopaedia* [1798/99], trans., ed. David W. Wood (Albany: State University of New York Press 2007), 162.

33 Les cartes vivantes, F 1904, director: Georges Meliès.

film in particular contains many attempts to subdivide the image through multiple exposure and filmic tricks. The split screen was also increasingly used in the commercial cinema of the 1960s—on the one hand, for the narration of simultaneousness, on the other, as a formal correspondence to situations of narrative doubling.[34] Farocki, however, transfers this visual practice to an experimental arrangement that not only shows two images but also the act of their combination. Godard's film Numéro deux, which represents a complex interweaving of film, video, and television,[35] is the model for Farocki's investigation of the juxtaposition and interpenetration of two images:[36]

Ill. 42 and ill. 43

> When Godard presented Numéro Deux in 1975, a 35-mm film that (mainly) shows two video monitors, I was sure that here the new experience of

34 One example of the narration of simultaneity through a split screen is Norman Jewison's The Thomas Crown Affair (USA 1968). Another, whose formal doubling of the image also corresponds to the subject matter, is Brian de Palma's Film Sisters (USA 1972), which tells the story of a pair of Siamese twins. In the early 2000s, Mike Figgis in particular has explored the narrative possibilities of the DV camera and the use of a (multiply) split screen. In Timecode (USA 2000), he tells four stories, each consisting of a single take, simultaneously and with frequent overlaps; he continued this experiment in Hotel (USA 2001).

35 "The unique thing about *Numéro Deux* is that the film was conceived in television terms, but in cinema clothing. […] Television, from which the film was conceived, doesn't exist enough, and film exists too much." Jean-Luc Godard, "Faire les films possibles là où on est" [1975], *Godard par Godard I*, 382–386: 382.

36 See also the conversation between Kaja Silverman and Harun Farocki about this film: "The idea of doubling the image must have come to Godard from working in video. Video editing is usually done while sitting in front of two monitors. One monitor shows the already edited material, and the other monitor raw material, which the videomaker may or may not add to the work-in-progress. He or she becomes accustomed to thinking of two images at the same time, rather than sequentially." Farocki, Silverman, "In Her Place," ibid., *Speaking About Godard*, 141–169: 142.

> video editing, the comparison of two images, was evident. What do these two images share? What can an image have in common with another?[37]

Another example from INTERFACE can illustrate the effects of 'soft montage.' (ill. 42 and 43). On the upper image, Farocki's hand can be seen inserting a cassette into a video recorder—the film INEXTINGUISHABLE FIRE, as can be read in the second image. This is followed on the right-hand monitor by the first scene of the film, from 1969, in which Farocki unemotionally reads a Vietnamese eye-witness account of a napalm attack. More than two decades later, he speaks this monologue with a slight time displacement, partly from memory, partly like an interpreter. At the moment in the original film in which Farocki's right hand reaches outside the frame for a cigarette in order to extinguish it on the back of his other hand, there is a cut in the other image to Farocki's hand stroking the scar he bears today. The older image is continued in the more recent one; its traces can be followed from left to right. The images come into contact with one another; the author reaches out to the author over a gap of twenty-five years.[38]

This metaphor also contains the motif of touch and the tactile, through which Farocki distinguishes the media of film and video from one another. A long sequence shows Farocki's hand winding a film, checking the tension of the celluloid with his index finger and thumb and sliding it lightly through his fingers. He speaks about the tactile quality of the film image, which is lost in video in favor of visual virtuality:

> While working at the film editing table, I keep the tip of my finger on the running image or sound reel to feel the cut or the glue before I see or hear it. This is a gesture of indicating "fine perception" or "sensitivity." They had had almost no contact with the object, but perceived it nonetheless. When working with video, I don't touch the tape, I only push buttons. Another activity for the fingertips.

The difference between film and video is not only in the type of image—on the one hand, the photographically developed frame, on the other, abstract electronic information on magnetic tape—but also in the resulting modus operandi. The filmstrip requires touch and turns the work at the editing table into "gestural thinking," as described in "What an Editing Table Is,"

37 Farocki, "Cross Influence/Soft Montage," 72.

38 I will go into the motif of the hand in the films of Godard and Farocki in chapter 6, "Two or Three Ways of Speaking with the Hands."

while the manual work in video editing is more indirect. Film editing has something of the modeling work of the sculptor, while the tactile aspects of video editing are reduced to pressing buttons. Concrete workmanship and abstract intuition are opposed in both media. Farocki's associative approach is illustrated by his finally bringing together the video gesture of winding images back and forth at the touch of a button with the feeling of touch required for counting money: "With a banknote, it becomes particularly clear how little essence and appearance coincide." Money is an example here of the disparity between sign and content, but the banknote can also be seen as a metaphor for the circulation of images, whose surfaces continually need to be questioned in terms of their value, valance, and function.

Montage, toujours: JLG/JLG

"I don't see how one can leave the montage to anybody else,"[39] exclaims Godard in one of his numerous texts on montage. And he also explains why the editing room has become a solitary place for him:

> In the editing room the territory is so fiercely contested that you really need a common point, the "third point," invisible between the two ends of the filmstrip. "What kind of film are we making? Why are we happy to make it? Why do we want to make this particular film, now, in this particular way?[40]

If Farocki's description of editing in "What an Editing Room Is" proceeded from the production constraints—lack of money, dark spaces that turn the editing room into the site of the excluded, suppressed, invisible aspects of filmmaking—Godard highlights the conflicts between those involved: there are fights about the realization of one's own ideas about montage; collaboration is only possible if the editors see the same "invisible" thing between the images and share the same vision of the film project. In the editing room, questions of the implicit and explicit ideas about the film arise at every step. Over and above these more pragmatic difficulties around organizing the work in the editing room, Godard also speaks about the function of montage, to which he ascribes an almost metaphysical dimension

39 Godard, "Le montage, la solitude et la liberté," 243.
40 Ibid., 244.

Ill. 44 and ill. 45

remote from the everyday and links it to the concepts of "utopia" and "destiny." Godard does indeed think about the editing room as a place of potential rescue that implies freedom of choice much more than shooting does. The actual "chemical reaction" between the images, which remains abstract on the set and can only be thought of as a potentiality, is translated into a definite form through the editing of the material, just as a block of stone already contains the statue that is to be carved from it: "In the montage you meet destiny. [...] It really is the possibility of transforming your freedom into destiny."[41]

In these words, it is easy to discern a "metaphysics of montage" that elevates the editing room to the most important place in the production of a film, and in fact it has often been remarked that montage is the "central, volatile, and essentially open-ended metaphor"[42] that structures Godard's thinking about film and history. However, Godard—unlike Harun Farocki—has never made a film that entirely centers on the work at the editing table. Only HISTOIRE(S) DU CINÉMA clearly demonstrates that it can only have come about through the viewing, arrangement, and organization of films and texts, and thus that the editing room is one of its central categories: consequently, in its first chapter the rolls of film on the editing table are as important a structuring element as the typewriter and the microphone. The rattle of the electric typewriter and the sound of the film being wound back and forth on the editing table are a characteristic feature of the soundtrack (ill. 44 and 45), and together with Godard's commentary they combine to form a complex superimposition of word, sound, and image. The phrase "Don't change

41 Ibid.

42 Michael Witt, "Montage, My Beautiful Care, or Histories of the Cinematograph," *The Cinema Alone. Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard* 1985–2000, eds. Michael Temple, James Williams (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2001), 33-50: 44.

anything, so that everything becomes different," Godard's first words in HISTOIRE(S), can certainly be interpreted as a description of the work at the editing table: without "changing" the scenes and text fragments, strictly speaking, but through displacement, dissolves, quick fades in and out—in short, types of montage—their meaning is completely modified. This is most drastically the case in Godard's superimposition of Elizabeth Taylor and footage from Auschwitz, in which dead bodies are slowly covered by the face of the actress lying rapturously in the arms of Montgomery Clift—a scene from George Stevens' A PLACE IN THE SUN.[43]

But where is the "missing link" between these shots? Are they more than an almost cynical opposition of maximum suffering and greatest happiness? Godard comments on the scene with the words: "If George Stevens hadn't been the first to make a color 16-mm film in Auschwitz and Ravensbrück, Elizabeth Taylor would probably never have found a place in the sun." The shots are linked by the fact that George Stevens filmed both scenes, and he represents a bridge between the two images which Godard makes visible through the editing table and the typewriter: "Film exposes the brutal reality of human suffering in the interval between the beauty of a smile and the hell of the Final Solution. Montage *à la* Godard constructs an image of history in the light of an extreme variation between a vision of happiness and the sense of catastrophe."[44] The invisible image that comes about in this coupling is the result of a palimpsest-like dissolve between two apparently distant images, whose hidden content Godard reveals.

If in HISTOIRE(S) DU CINÉMA the editing table represents the technical a priori of Godard's approach to (film) history, it is an explicit theme of another of his films, which shows more points of contact with Farocki's analysis of this piece of equipment. There are numerous correspondences between INTERFACE and the video JLG/JLG, which Jean-Luc Godard produced in 1994. At almost the same time, both authors turn to their own places of work and combine filmmaking with introspection.

The site of filmmaking is reflected in terms of production conditions and media, authorship literally becoming a practice of viewing, theory, and (self-)quotation. More than a self-portrait, JLG/JLG appears at first sight more like an inventory of the various media Godard has used as material in his work. Godard writes concepts into an empty notebook; in a long tracking shot along a bookcase, recalling the supermarket sequence from TOUT VA

43 A PLACE IN THE SUN, USA 1951, director: George Stevens.

44 Alan Wright, "Elisabeth Taylor at Auschwitz: JLG and the Real Object of Montage," *The Cinema Alone*, eds. Temple, Williams, 51–60: 52.

BIEN, the written word is surveyed instead of consumer goods; paintings and reproductions are filmed, as well as TV sets and video monitors.

The editing table is therefore not introduced as a central metaphor but as one of the many places where "work with images" takes place: Godard's apartment, the bookshelves, video cassettes, prints, and the exterior shots of the Swiss landscape are at least as important, if not more so. The main title of this "self-portrait in December" makes it clear that the prospected "self" can only be addressed indirectly: JLG/JLG, as with every self-portrait, is the site of a duplication, a splitting into two symmetrical parts. Subject and object of description only apparently coincide; in reality they are the effects of an internal montage. But how do the two halves relate to one another? How should the title be understood and paraphrased? Godard on Godard? Godard by Godard? Godard next to Godard? Godard himself has rejected such an interpretation: "There is no 'by.' [...] If there is a 'by,' it means it's a study of JLG, of myself by myself and a sort of biography, what one calls in French *un examen de conscience*, which it is absolutely not."[45] But what is it then? "JLG," the figure whose image is developed in the film, is a reader, author, speaker, above all someone who sees and is seen. From the very first shot, which highlights the altered black-and-white photograph of a boy who we later learn is the young Jean-Luc, the film is two things at once—reflections on the "I" and reflections on the image—and demonstrates how little they can be separated. Identified by its subtitle as a snapshot, a point in time, the film shows a retrospective and melancholy search which begins and ends with this photograph. "The somewhat contrite impression I make in the small photograph, which doesn't just come from a couple of slaps [...]. The sole aim of this film should be to find out about it," says the voiceover (Godard) after a few minutes. The path that this search takes is not a psychoanalytical self-inquiry, however; the film is not an attempt to re-enter the past but consists of a survey of the visible space currently surrounding this photograph. The film is more interested in a cinematic investigation of texts, images, and sounds than a psychological self-examination. It continues in tranquil shots, whose precise lighting is often reminiscent of paintings: rooms and objects in a private home; and on the other hand almost motionless landscapes—a Swiss Lake, green hills, a snow-covered forest.[46] Views out of the window partially link theses two levels, and handwritten pages also supply "chapter headings" throughout the film. While the dichotomy of "outer" and "inner,"

45 "Jean-Luc Godard interviewed by Gavin Smith," *Film Comment*, March/April 1996, 31–41: 35.
46 Godard didn't shoot these sequences himself but asked a photographer friend to take footage of the surroundings, which he worked into the film.

to which these spaces are assigned, also contains two possible approaches to the self—"inner" would be Godard's voice, "outer" his image, which variously appears as a photograph, film image, or in the viewfinder of a video camera—the editing room, which plays an important role in a later scene, is not allocated to either of these poles. It lies in between and is a reservoir in which the numerous media with which the JLG of the film surrounds himself—paintings, books, a video camera, the television—potentially coincide and can be joined into a film.

JLG/JLG is punctuated with fragments of philosophy and literature—in this respect, the most obvious theoretical level is that of the cited texts. Numerous quotations can be identified on the soundtrack, as Godard either names their sources or films the book title. Alongside Wittgenstein—a statement from *On Certainty*—the authors are Heidegger ("Chemins qui mènent nulle part" writes Godard in his notebook, the French title of *Off the Beaten Track*), Merleau-Ponty, Diderot, Nietzsche, and others. But the exact identification of the sources is less important than how they are used, for, as in other films, the quotations only partly refer to the contexts from which they come and are mostly emphasized as extracts and excerpts. They are not cited as a *pars pro toto*, to represent an overall context, but stand out from the film like splinters. In this, they are examples of Godard's radical extracting and "cutting" reading practice: "I have rarely read a book right through, ten or fifteen perhaps. This has to do with the fact that if a sentence impresses you, it is almost entirely sufficient. If you read a whole book, you lose the élan and the shock the sentence gave you."[47] Editing, montage, and arrangement therefore also determine Godard's approach to texts—and the editing table, even though it only appears in one scene of the film, can be seen as an overarching metaphor for his understanding of material.

The scene in which editing and the editing table are central stands out from the rest of the film because it is not associated with either of the two poles of landscape and home. It takes place in a spacious, tidy office: Godard's production company. While a young secretary negotiates loudly with a producer on the phone, a woman introduces herself as an editing assistant. Justice Fielding is blind and only "sees" her surroundings through touch and hearing; on the soundtrack, she and Godard will later quote a dialogue from Diderot's "Letter on the Blind," which deals with the difference between inner and outer image, with imagination and actual seeing:

47 Jean-Luc Godard, "Une boucle bouclée. Nouvel entretien avec Jean-Luc Godard par Alain Bergala" [1997], *Godard par Godard II*, 9–41: 15f.

Godard:	One day I said to her, "Mademoiselle, imagine a cube."
Fielding:	I see it.
Godard:	Place a point in the centre of the cube.
Fielding:	I have done so.
Godard:	From the point, draw straight lines to the angles; into what have you divided the cube?
Fielding:	Into six pyramids, each having its base one side of the cube, and a height equal to half its height.
Godard:	True, but tell me where you see this.
Fielding:	In my head, as you do.[48]

As in Diderot's text, the boundary between inner and outer, between "real" and "imaginary" image, is one of the main lines of distinction here, the subversion of which leads to an extension of the concept of the image. The introduction of the blind editing assistant transfers both types of "seeing" to cinema, and the art of the visible is brought into contact with the invisible. The linking of blindness and editing immediately indicates the possibility of producing an invisible third image through the combination of two, which is explored as the scene unfolds. At this point, the film becomes a reflection on the relationship between seeing and feeling; the tactile qualities of the filmstrip, which Farocki points out in INTERFACE, also mark an important distinction here: "Through her monologue, Godard brings together the two senses that are generally most opposed to one another—seeing and touching. 'To see' comes to signify 'to touch,' and 'to touch' 'to see.'"[49] The monologue that Kaja Silverman refers to is an extended passage from Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *The Visible and the Invisible*, which Godard has his blind assistant speak. In JLG/JLG, he describes a scene to her from HÉLAS POUR MOI,[50] produced in the previous year, and tells her the exact number of frames after which she is to make the cut. His assistant repeats his instructions conscientiously, and then, after a series of black frames, carries them out, her hands gliding over the cutting mechanism of the editing table. These gestures are accompanied by her long quotation from Merleau-Ponty: (ill. 46 and 47):

48 Denis de Diderot, "Addition to the Letter on the Blind" [1749], *Diderot's Early Philosophical Works*, ed. Margaret Jourdain (New York: Lenox Hill 1972), 142–157:153.

49 Kaja Silverman, "The Author as Receiver," *October 96*, spring 2001,17–34: 31.

50 HÉLAS POUR MOI F/CH 1993, director: Jean-Luc Godard.

Ill. 46 and ill. 47

> If my left hand can touch my right hand while it palpates the tangible, can touch it touching, can turn its palpation back upon it, why, when touching the hand of another, would I not touch in it the same power to espouse the things that I have touched in my own? [...] But this domain, one rapidly realizes, is unlimited. If we can show that the flesh is an ultimate notion, that it is not the union or compound of two substances, but thinkable by itself, if there is a relation of the visible with itself that traverses me and constitutes me as a seer, this circle which I do not form, which forms me, this coiling over of the visible upon the visible, can traverse, animate other bodies as well as my own. And if I was able to understand how this wave arises within me, how the visible which is yonder is simultaneously my landscape, I can understand a fortiori that elsewhere it also closes over upon itself and that there are other landscapes besides my own.[51]

Merleau-Ponty's text is an attempt to describe the perceiving body—what he calls "the flesh" (*la chair*)—as an ineluctable authority in which the various modes of perception coincide. This primarily occurs because of its double function as perceiving and perceived subject. Seeing and being seen, active perception and passive reception, combine into a dual figure that has its equivalent in the concept of the author that Godard develops in JLG/JLG. The active author, who initiates and stages perception, and who could certainly be charged with egocentricity or narcissism, is countered by a perceiving, "receiving" author. The film, it can be argued with Kaja Silverman, is less the vain product of one of its two figures than the place of a conflict they argue out: "I actually think, however, that the two Godards

51 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "The Intertwining—The Chiasm," *The Visible and the Invisible* [1964] trans. Alphonso Lingis (Evanston: Northwestern UP: 1968), 130–155: 141, 140f.

featured in the title JLG/JLG are the two Godards who compete with each other for center-stage in that film: the author as legendary personage, and the author as receiver."[52]

On the other hand, the use of Merleau-Ponty's text—independent of its philosophical implications—can be read as allegoric. It is a commentary on the genre of the self-portrait, which, by definition, means both perceiving and being perceived. The seeing subject and the seen object, which Merleau-Ponty understands as being coincident in the perceiving body, together constitute the point of departure and arrival of autobiographical work. But Godard also quite literally relates the "coiling over of the visible upon the visible" mentioned in the quote to the visual practice of cinema when he underlays the words with the visual commentary of the rotating spools of an editing table. It is one of the many examples of Godard's deliberate "misreading"—in this case taking the metaphorical "coiling" (*enroulement*) literally. For in an entirely material sense, the unwinding and rewinding of a filmstrip is of course nothing less than the visible revolving around the visible. Going further than Christina Scherer in her analysis of JLG/JLG, I would therefore suggest reading this sequence as a reflection on the practices of film itself—on the material preconditions for the correlation of different images at the editing table and the genre of autobiographical speech.

The editing room here is primarily a place of self-reflection and the coincidence of the sense of touch and sight. Michael Witt has pointed out that Godard evokes a sculptural quality through his editing and his permanent reflection on the material with which he works: "In view of his insistence on systematically assuming the role of editor of his own work since the 1970s, there is a real sense in which Godardian thought has been consciously channeled through a physical, sculptural engagement with his material."[53] But the editing table is also the place where reception (texts) and production (images) are linked, where other people's texts and one's own images converge.

The belief in the power of image combination (over that of the single image) doesn't only go back to the Russian theorists of the silent film. One of Godard's most important points of reference, also quoted in JLG/JLG, is a short text by the French surrealist Pierre Reverdy. Reverdy doesn't speak about material images but about poetic metaphors and comparisons. Yet

52 Kaja Silverman, Gareth James, "Son image," *I said I love. That is the promise*, eds. Gareth James, Florian Zeyfang (Berlin: b_books 2003), 210–243: 215.

53 Witt, "Montage, My Beautiful Care," 33f.

Godard understands his statement literally, which here, ironically, means in a metaphorical sense (ill. 48–50).

> The image is a pure creation of the spirit. It cannot be born of a comparison, but of the rapprochement of two more or less separate realities. The more distant and just the relationships between these realities that are brought together, the stronger the image will be. Two realities with no relationship between them cannot be usefully brought together. No image is created. Two contrary realities cannot be brought together. They oppose each other. An image is not strong because it is brutal or fantastic, but because the association of ideas is distant and just.[54]

Ills. 48-50

Pierre Reverdy is a model for Godard in one thing above all: he doesn't think of the image as a single entity but as the result of a difference. Only in the combination and convergence of two differing but not opposing realities does an image arise. The recurrent phrase "distant and just" (*juste*), which JLG takes up, recalls Godard's much-quoted (and untranslatable) phrase from his Dziga Vertov Group days: "Ce n'est pas une image juste, c'est juste une image."[55] But it also provides a precise defini-

54 Jean-Luc Godard, *JLG/JLG. Phrases* (Paris: P.O.L. 1996), 21f. Reverdy's definition of the image was first published in 1918 in the journal *Nord-Sud* and reprinted in Pierre Reverdy, *Plupart du temps. Poèmes en prose* [1915–1922] (Paris: Flammarion 1967), 409f. This translation is the one Michael Witt gives in Witt, "Montage, My Beautiful Care."

55 In LE VENT D'EST (1969, directors: Jean-Luc Godard, Jean-Pierre Gorin), the phrase is repeatedly given in intertitles.

tion of the work of combining two images at the editing table. Rephrased in media-theoretical terms, this means that the relationship between two images, and all the more between two visual media—such as photography and film—is equally characterized by difference and similarity.

5. Taking pictures—Photography and Film

"For men at war, the function of the weapon is the function of the eye."
Paul Virilio[1]

Whenever a film depicts photographs, it says something about its own preconditions. A photograph in a film acts like a flashback in which the medium is projected back onto its history and takes its own background into consideration. Reduced to its technical requirements, film is nothing other than a succession of physically and chemically produced single images—of photographs placed in a series and set in motion. Cinema, as has often been remarked, is the demonstration of a paradoxical form of movement consisting of the simple addition of frozen moments. Zeno's question, formalized by Henri Bergson and taken up again by his exegete Gilles Deleuze,[2] as to how a continual flow of time can emerge from a succession of moments, is answered technically by film—an answer, however, that on closer inspection turns out to be a tricky displacement of the question, as the effect is created simply by outwitting the slowly reacting eye:

> The movement that is "depicted" by the apparently cinematic hyperphoto is a false one, based on the classic paradoxical principle that prevented Achilles from catching up with the tortoise: the minimization of the time differential between the continually divided static elements propels the respective gap/dark zone towards a limit. By contrast to the factory conveyor belt, which spits out complete cars, for example (by projecting divided labor onto the axis of abstract time), the cinematographic-image

1 Paul Virilio, *War and Cinema. The Logistics of Perception* [1984] (London: Verso, 6th ed. 2000), 20.

2 Deleuze has described the problem, which in 1907 Bergson called the "cinematographic illusion," as follows: "On the one hand, you can bring two instants or two positions together to infinity; but movement will always occur in the interval between the two, in other words behind your back. On the other hand, however much you divide and subdivide time, movement will always occur in a concrete duration [*durée*]; thus each movement will have its own qualitative duration." Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image* [1983], trans. Hugh Tomlinson, Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2009), 1.

> conveyor belt does not have a complete image as its end product: the result is strictly speaking only a relationship.[3]

It is only this differential quality that allows cuts to be made between discrete frames, thus enabling the montage of different images and strips of film. What looks like a continual visual flow then becomes a discontinuous leap from one image to the next that can only be understood as a relational element. For this reason, the film image is always an abstract "interim image," and in this sense Eisenstein located the montage principle on all levels of filming—from the connection of individual frames into flowing movement ("the stage of micro-montage"), to the actual montage of separate sequences, to the combination of entire image clusters: "Thus montage pervades all 'levels' of film-making, beginning with the basic cinematic phenomenon, through 'montage-proper,' and up to the compositional totality of the film as a whole."[4]

Assigning film and photography to the "universe of technical images"[5] has two dimensions: one systemic, one historical. The systemic dimension concerns the dialectic of individual frame and moving image upon which every film is based: every image is in itself immobile, so the movement of a film must lie "in between" the images, in the editing, in the darkness between two frames, with the brain synthesizing a transition and making something visible which can't be found in the material itself. In this sense, cinema is in fact, prior to any semantics, a medium of deception and follows in the long history of optical illusion.[6] Aside from the tension between stasis and movement, which operates tacitly in every film, the relationship between photography and film also concerns the historical emergence of the medium of film as the result of a linking of physics and chemistry. From this perspective, film, as André Bazin writes about the

3 Rudolf Kersting, *Wie die Sinne auf Montage gehen. Zur ästhetischen Theorie des Kinos/Films* (Basel, Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld 1989), 53f.

4 Sergej Eisenstein, "Laocoön," ibid., *Selected Works*, vol. II, *Towards a Theory of Montage*, eds. Michael Glenny, Richard Taylor (London: BFI 1991), 109–202: 109.

5 Vilém Flusser, *Into the Universe of Technical Images* [1985], trans. Nancy Ann Roth (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2011).

6 See the many examples in Werner Nekes's Film Before Film. What Really Happened Between the Images? (BRD 1986) and the exhibition catalogue *Die Wunderkammer des Sehens. Aus der Sammlung Werner Nekes* (Graz: Johanneum 2003/04). Ideological suspicion of film, be it in Adorno's judgment of the medium as an illusion machine, or in the label "dream factory," or in the French criticism of the ideological preconditions of the cinematic apparatus, has often been ignited by its aspect of illusion.

realistic character of the medium, seems to be the fulfillment of "objectivity in time."[7] The disinterestedness with which the camera eye "records" reality is also expressed in the German language, in which the word for that decisive part of the apparatus, the lens, is *Objektiv*. And it can be seen as an apt depiction of film's line of descent that the Lumière brothers, the "inventors" (along with others) of the medium, were the proprietors of a factory for photographic instruments. As plausible as this historical derivation may be, in its characterization of the "movie" as moving (single) images, it is also problematic. For the apparent line of descent levels out the media differences more than it brings them out. If, on the other hand, one takes individual films in which photographs play an important structural role, the threshold between the two media is given a theoretical value and once again marks the point at which film can make the transition from depiction to theoretical statement. The boundary between film and photography is therefore another place at which a theoretical determination of each media results—from an oscillation between their two poles.

Even though this oscillation is latent in every work of cinema, there are films that explicitly deal with photography and use the tension between both media to define cinema. Such a definition equally occurs from within—from within the individual image—and without—from the other medium. And as with the cinematic recourse to painting, the fact that the theoretical approach to film takes a detour through a different, related medium in order to obtain a view of "itself" has to do with the impossibility of *self*-reflection in film in the strict sense. An examination of film from the point of view of photography produces a second level of observation from which the filmic subject can become the analyzed object. "As soon as you stop the film, you begin to find the time to add to the image. You start to reflect differently about film, about cinema,"[8] is how Raymond Bellour describes the effect of stills in films. And Stanley Cavell has a similar phenomenon in mind when he writes that the rigidity of a photograph in the context of a film is a shock that destroys the dramatic illusion.[9] Freezing an image ironically sensitizes the viewer to its qualities as a moving image.

7 André Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," trans. Hugh Gray, *Film Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 4. (Summer 1960), 4–9: 8.

8 Raymond Bellour, "The Pensive Spectator" [1984], trans. Lynne Kirby, *Wide Angle,* 19:1 (1987), 6–10, 10.

9 See Stanley Cavell, "What Photography calls Thinking," *Camera Austria* 19/20, 1985, 32–43: 35f.

To put it differently: only when an image stands still can it be recognized as a moving one.[10]

The photographic detour to cinematic self-reflection seems to be shorter than the one through painting, as both media are defined by the same automatism of depiction, as Susan Sontag notes: "While a painting, even one that meets photographic standards of resemblance, is never more than the stating of an interpretation, a photograph is never less than the registering of an emanation (light waves reflected by objects)—a material vestige of its subject in a way that no painting can be."[11] Both the manner of creating images and the relationship between image and reality are similar in film and photography, and give rise to the possibility of speaking in the one medium about the other.[12]

The search for films in which such reflection is particularly evident again leads to many works usually classified as essay films. Chris Marker's La jetée[13] appears in almost every text on the relationship between film and photography, as Marker takes the linking of the two media to an endpoint early on by almost entirely organizing the visual level of his film as a sequence of stills.[14] However, La jetée strikingly shows that the sequencing of photographs is already film. Through the procedure of montage, Marker carefully arranges the images to produce a narrative flow with varying speeds and rhythms. Not for nothing had Hitchcock's Vertigo and Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu* been two central points of reference

10 The hitherto little theorized image type of the still—whether utilized for commercial purposes or in contemporary art (by Richard Hamilton or Cindy Sherman, for example)—is the subject of a book by Winfried Pauleit, *Filmstandbilder. Passagen zwischen Kunst und Kino* (Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld 2004).

11 Susan Sontag, "The Image World," ibid. *On Photography* (London: Penguin 1977), 151–180: 154.

12 Morgan Fisher combines the media of film and photography in a particularly simple but fascinating way in his film Production Stills (USA 1970): eight Polaroid photos are shown one after the other in a fixed shot, and become gradually recognizable as stills from the set on which the film Production Stills is being made. On the soundtrack, the noises of the camera and discussions between the participants can be heard, and photo by photo we are given a clearer visual impression of the shoot. The creation of the photographs is at the same time as that of the film; the material of the film is a roll of film and a package of Polaroids. See Morgan Fisher, "Production Stills," ibid, *Writings*, eds. Sabine Folie and Susanne Titz (Cologne: Walther König 2012), 29–32.

13 La Jetée, F 1962, director: Chris Marker.

14 The film departs from the principle of sequencing stills at one point only, when the female protagonist wakes from sleep and slowly, almost imperceptibly opens her eyes.

for Marker since the 1950s.[15] The still photo not only stands for the past tense but also becomes an allegory for time as a whole. So La jetée can jump between present, future, and past, and the resulting threads are connected by the narrator into a vertiginous temporal texture: "Time is not represented indirectly here, but directly, for its own sake."[16]

With Marker, as in Michelangelo Antonioni's Cortázar adaptation Blow Up and numerous other films,[17] the photographs are part of a fictional context, but there is a second group of films that speak about photography from a documentary angle: an integral part of any historical documentation, aside from written documents, is the use of photographs and films—as far as they exist—to reconstruct events. Photographic depiction is then understood as a window that can provide a more undisguised view of the past than is the case with written sources. Blending historical and juridical discourse, which aim to discover the truth, the photograph becomes a piece of evidence that stands for something that can't be seen directly.[18] While in the fictional "photo films," reflection is often concerned with the abstract principle of time and related complexes (memory, melancholy), the documentaries usually draw their strength from the unbroken referentiality of the photograph: what you see here actually happened in this way. For this reason, Roland Barthes—at the same time as Godard was working on The Carabineers—summarized the function of the documentary photograph as follows: "Certainly the image is not the reality but at least it is its perfect *analogon* and it is exactly this which, to common sense, defines the photograph. Thus can be seen the special status of the photographic image: *it is a message without*

15 See Birgit Kämper, "Das Bild als Madeleine. 'Sans Soleil' und 'Immemory'," *Chris Marker. Filmessayist*, ed. ibid., Thomas Tode (Munich: Cicim 1997), 142–159.

16 Christa Blümlinger, "'La Jetée.' Nachhall eines Symptom-Films," *Chris Marker. Filmessayist*, eds. Kämper, Tode (Munich: Cicim 1997), 65-72. In the same volume see also Jan Christopher Horak, "Die Jagd nach den Bildern. Fotofilme von Chris Marker," ibid., 73–86.

17 See, for example, Hitchcock's Shadow of a doubt (USA 1943), Max Ophüls' Letter from an unknown woman (USA 1948) or, more recently, Brian de Palma's Femme Fatale (F 2002), or Mark Romanek's One Hour Photo (USA 2002). Memento (USA 2000, director: Christopher Nolan), in which the (lost) memory is completely substituted by a "prosthetic" Polaroid camera, also belongs in this category. See also the December 2005 edition, on "FotoKino," of the Internet journal *nachdemfilm*, which contains a series of short reviews of "photo films" alongside the contributions to a conference on the genre: www.nachdemfilm.de, August 2005 [accessed February 1, 2015].

18 For the interplay of aesthetic and judicial questions in 19th-century discourses on photography, see John Tagg, "A Legal Reality: The Photograph as Property in Law," ibid., *The Burden of Representation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1988), 103–116.

a code."[19] However, this apparently pure denotation of the photograph, leaving no space for interpretation or ideology, is contaminated by numerous more hidden elements that connote it otherwise. This is exactly what makes up the "photographic paradox": the "co-existence of two messages, the one without a code (the photographic analogue), the other with a code (the 'art' or the treatment, or the 'writing,' or the rhetoric, of the photograph.)"[20]

In their debate with photography, the films of Harun Farocki and Jean-Luc Godard can be understood as elaborations of this paradox; but above all, they examine the rhetorical function of photographs. They are directed against the freedom of connotation and the idea of evidence with which photography appears in the public discourse (particularly in newspapers and on television), and they follow the ambiguities that characterize every photograph—and every film. These films should therefore be seen as a critique of a "rhetoric of evidence" with which photography frequently operates in politics and journalism. For the automatization of image production that characterizes both photography and film, and seems to minimize the subjective influence of their respective producer, in no way results in unambiguous images. On the contrary, it is the apparently self-evident images that require particular study and critique.

Various questions need to be addressed in order to determine the significance of photography in the work of Godard and Farocki: What is the relationship between photography and war reporting, an issue that interests both filmmakers in different ways? What is the status of "the image" that becomes the focus of attention in this use of photography? In order to clarify these questions, I will examine individual films and analyze them in their specific use of photographs. With Godard, this is initially The carabineers from 1963, which places a special form of commodified photography—the postcard—in the context of colonialist warfare and appropriation. The referential character of the photograph and the magical belief in an identity between the depicted and depiction are taken to an extreme here and used to comic effect.

From Farocki's work, I will single out two films that disrupt the visual flow of the medium and discuss cinematic practices via photography. Before Your Eyes Vietnam—a film that in 1982, quite late, looked

19 Roland Barthes, "The Photographic Message," *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (London: Fontana Press 1977), 15–31: 17.

20 Ibid., 19.

at the Vietnam War—focuses on press photos to ask questions about the proper, appropriate view of war. How were and are photographs instrumentalized for propaganda purposes, and how is it possible to develop alternative ways of reading them? Six years later, Images of the World and the Inscription of War, probably Farocki's best-known film, raises the question of visibility and adequate forms of representing war and annihilation on the basis of aerial photographs of Auschwitz taken in 1944. At the intersection of various surveying practices, the photograph is thematized as an intermediate link between the mathematical logic of central perspective and the image-recognition software of the late twentieth century. The historical line that Farocki draws from the photograph to the electronically processed images of today will also necessitate a renewed examination of the concepts of abstraction and theory.

Displacing: The Carabineers

> "A photograph is both a pseudo-presence and a token of absence. Like a wood fire in a room, photographs—especially those of people, of distant landscapes and faraway cities, of the vanished past—are incitements to reverie. The sense of the unattainable that can be evoked by photographs feeds directly into the erotic feelings of those for whom desirability is enhanced by distance."
>
> Susan Sontag[21]

When The Carabineers, Godard's fifth feature film, was released in France in 1963, it was greeted with sharp criticism from reviewers, and the public didn't show much interest in it either. In Paris, only 2,800 people went to see the film.[22] The story of the two naive protagonists Michel Ange (Albert Juross) and Ulysse (Marino Masè), who are drafted by certified mail from the king and sent to an unnamed war in which they mechanically and coldly rape, murder, pillage, and plunder, was not only felt to be carelessly shot and badly photographed, it was also accused of trivializing war: death and horror were banalized; the wooden figures were lifeless.

21 Susan Sontag, "In Plato's Cave," ibid., *On Photography* (London: Penguin 1977), 1–24: 16.

22 According to Enno Patalas in "Godards Film vom Krieg," *Filmkritik* 5/1965, 259–266: 262.

From today's perspective, it is easy to discern the opposing critical positions on The Carabineers, particularly because Godard himself reacted to the polemic tone with a no less polemic reply in the *Cahiers du cinéma*.[23] At the core of the discussion were questions of realism and representation. Godard responded to the basic problem of how war—in more general terms one could say: reality—can adequately be depicted in film from a Brechtian, exaggeratedly comic perspective,[24] in which the plot is schematically simplified and didactically generalized, while the critics demanded psychology, conventional realism, and empathy. In his discussion of the film at the time, Enno Patalas contrasted the "realistic" war film and Godard's approach and described The Carabineers as the first film to apply the fragmentary, discontinuous, chaotic qualities of war to the composition of the film itself:

> "Realistic" war films revere war in that they profess to depict it objectively. They pretend that the shot of an exploding grenade is comparable to an exploding grenade. They should be accused less of showing the exploding grenade than of only *showing* it exploding. The greater the impression of realism, the more complete the deception.[25]

Patalas's exaggeration directly links to Brecht's complaint that a photograph says nothing about its structural background. It therefore follows—just as Godard and Farocki would claim—that war can only be dealt with through deliberate alienation or construction.

Godard's thoughts about how war can adequately be brought to the screen start from the relationship between concrete image and general content, from the possibility of using mise en scène and montage to create abstraction. The director defends his approach by pointing out the generalizing function of his montages: "In dealing with war, I followed a very simple rule. I assumed I had to explain to children not only what war is, but what all wars have been from the barbarian invasions to Korea and Algeria by way of Fontenoy, Trafalgar and Gettysburg."[26] Godard thus relies on simplicity and the reduction of complexity. He attempts to depict war

23 See Jean-Luc Godard, "*Les Carabiniers* under Fire" [1963], *Godard on Godard*, trans. and ed. Tom Milne (New York/London: DaCapo 1972), 196–200.

24 One of the texts to which The carabineers obviously refers is Alfred Jarry's play *Ubu Roi*—the famous "merdre" is often quoted. See Robert Stam, *Reflexivity in Film and Literature. From Don Quixote to Jean-Luc Godard* (New York: Columbia UP 1992), 186–191.

25 Enno Patalas, "Godards Film vom Krieg," 261.

26 Godard, "*Les Carabiniers* under Fire," 197.

not as a historically specific event with numerous details but schematically as a general formula in its invariant mechanisms, structures, and relations. In this simplification, there is also a movement towards abstraction that turns the concrete image into an example of any imaginable war. But how is this abstraction achieved? The answer is that Godard addresses the concept of war through the montage of different visual levels, in this case through the use of archive material. When the two soldiers' combat is shown in monotonous succession, Godard draws on existing newsreel footage rather than shooting his own material. The remaining scenes were then matched to the quality of the newsreels through repeated duplicating in which the gray tones disappear. Once again, although different from the montage of painting in PIERROT LE FOU, the aim is to create a break—the change of level is easily noticed, as the war footage is recognizable as quoted newsreels despite the qualitative adjustment of the other material—but to make this break appear to be an extension rather than a discontinuation of the action.

The recourse to existing film material has different implications. The device can be translated into the statement: "Because there is 'real' war, as a director I don't need to restage it (and thus duplicate it). War *is* real." Authenticity isn't produced through the filming of "genuine" scenes but is "accessed" through the incorporation of documentary, "authentic" material. At the time of the film's release, the blurring of fiction and reality was criticized as an immoral belittlement of real suffering. Yet this argumentation can easily be reversed if we acknowledge the preconditions of Godard's technique. He was only able to insert the anonymous newsreel sequences seamlessly into his film because the documentary footage itself abstracts concrete individual suffering and omits the victims of war. We see airplanes, tanks, exploding bombs, and so on, but no "real" death. It is this that made it possible to combine the "objective" footage of war with its "subjective" opposite, the story of Michel Ange and Ulysse.

A movement towards abstraction can also be seen in the characters' names: Ulysse and Michel Ange not only stand for a somewhat arbitrary "disparate couple stubbornly set on storming the world," for which Barthélemy Amengual sees models in Sancho Panza and Don Quixote, Laurel and Hardy, Ole and Aksel;[27] they also almost archetypically evoke the media of literature and painting, producing an ironic distance through their contrast to the naivety of the characters. If the odyssey in this film

27 See Barthélemy Amengual, "Jean-Luc Godard et la remise en cause de notre civilisation de l'image," *Jean-Luc Godard au-delà du récit*, ed. Michel Estève (Paris: Minard 1967), 113–178: 132.

corresponds to anything at all, it is war, the violence of which is seen as a continual accompaniment to human history, as something outside of historical time.[28]

Many examinations of photography define the medium through its relationship to time: "[T]here is always a defeat of Time in them: *that* is dead and *that* is going to die," [29] is how Roland Barthes describes the confusing superimposition of different times present in every photograph; the photographed motif, whether person or thing, will disintegrate over time or no longer exist at the time of viewing. The "presence" of the photographic moment, from the point of view of a future viewer who is always implied, is also an anticipated absence.[30] It is this aporetic breaking up of the continual experience of time that has always associated the medium of photography with the phenomena of death, memory, and melancholy:[31] "All photographs are *memento mori*. To take a photograph is to participate in another person's (or thing's) mortality, vulnerability, mutability. Precisely by slicing out this moment and freezing it, all photographs testify to time's relentless melt."[32] However, such a characterization of photography as a medium of presentification and sorrow is usually the result of a preoccupation with private photographs, with souvenir images to which the viewer establishes a personal relationship. In The Carabineers, by contrast, Godard is interested in public images, which in the broadest sense come from the area of advertising. Images that promise something, and therefore don't capture a moment from the past but are intended to awaken the desire to possess what they depict in the future. The film is characteristically framed by commercial photographs: in the scene in which Michel Ange and Ulysse are recruited by the king's emissaries, the suggestive power of photography is already set against the sobriety and ineffectiveness of the written word. The conscription order, a carelessly filled-in form on which the name M. Ange, a recruitment number, and the words "la guerre" can be seen in Godard's handwriting next to the royal seal (ill. 51), is skeptically received by the two protagonists and their wives: "A letter from the king?

28 It should be added that Godard's idiosyncratic adaptation of Homer's *Odyssey* in Le mépris, which transfers the motif to film production, was made in the same year as The Carabineers. A close connection can be seen here—and elsewhere—between Godard's various films, blurring the boundaries of the finished "work" and making the director's output readable as film series in communication with one another.

29 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography* [1980], trans. Richard Howard (London: Vintage 1993), 96.

30 See Volker Pantenburg, "Phantombilder. (Barthes – Kracauer)," *Arcadia 37* (2002), no. 2, 327–343.

31 See also Susan Sontag, "Melancholy Objects," ibid., *On Photography*, 49–82.

32 Susan Sontag, "In Plato's Cave," ibid., 15.

What garbage!" Only when, a little later, the emissaries break down the general term "war" into concrete objects that can be appropriated during combat without punishment is the spark of enthusiasm ignited. The film is introduced with a quote from Borges,[33] and the following catalogue of possible belongings does indeed recall the Argentine author's encyclopedic lists:

Ill. 51

Emissary:	First you'll enrich your mind by visiting foreign countries. And then you'll get very rich. You'll be able to have everything you want.
Ulysse:	Well, all right, but where?
Emissary:	Where the enemy is. You just have take it from the enemy. Not only land and livestock... but also houses, palaces... towns, cars, cinemas, supermarkets, stations, airfields, swimming pools, casinos, theaters, bunches of flowers, triumphal arches, cigarette factories, print shops, lighters...[34]

Though this enumeration—particularly in its grotesque intensification—invokes a magic of naming that identifies denomination with possession, the use of photographs is even more explicit at this point: when the emissary pulls out a photograph of a girl in a bikini to the words, "The women of the world!" there is more in it than an ironic denunciation of the erotic desires of Michel Ange and Ulysse (ill. 52).

The suggestive power of photography is in fact deployed as a kind of trump card against language. The promise of photography as concrete depiction is superior to oral or written enumeration. In its self-evidence, the photograph appears not only to be a constative description—on this

33 The English subtitles read: "More and more... I strive for simplicity. I use worn metaphors. It's what's basically eternal. For example, stars resemble eyes... or death is like sleep."

34 Jean-Luc Godard, "Les carabiniers" [1963], *L'Avant-scène cinéma*, 1976, no. 171–172, 5–38: 13. In the following section, all quotes from the film are taken from this transcription and will only be referenced by indicating the page. In its heterogeneity, the list recalls Foucault's famous introduction to *The Order of Things* three years after Godard's film. While Foucault's quote from Borges takes taxonomic thinking to its limits, here the list is a kind of grotesque catalogue of goods.

Ill. 52

level there is an ironic difference between description ("of the world") and what can be seen ("in a bikini")—but also a performative enunciation: the image says, "This will belong to you," and anticipates possession in the present: what is photographed is also available. The way in which Godard incorporates the photograph into the recruitment merges three different areas: war, photography, and advertising. In the picture of the girl in a bikini, the politically expansive act of "conquest"—a term that can equally be used in a sexual or political context—combines with a medium of promise and the commercial aspect of sale and purchase. In theoretical terms, the film thus thwarts the medium's established association with the past, melancholy, and memory. Godard is concerned with the future promise of the image—instrumentalized by every form of advertising—which treats the photographed object as potential property.

Removed from context and continuity, the image becomes a shiftable fragment of the world that can be instrumentalized commercially or politically at will. Susan Sontag also emphasizes this point: "Through photographs, the world becomes a series of unrelated, freestanding particles; and history, past and present, a set of anecdotes and *faits divers*."[35]

The idea that photography has led to a fragmentation of historical processes and contexts and to a leveling of meaning comes from Susan Sontag's book *On Photography*, which opens with Godard's The Carabineers.[36] The film can in fact be described as a conglomerate of particles and episodes that are held together intellectually by the overall concept of war and in narrative terms by the postcards the two soldiers write home. The brief

35 Susan Sontag, "In Plato's Cave," 22f. Jonathan Crary describes something similar from the point of view of the *viewer* of photography: "The photograph becomes a central element not only in a new commodity economy but in the reshaping of an entire territory on which signs and images [...] circulate and proliferate. [...] Photography and money become homologous forms of social power in the nineteenth century." Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer. On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press 1990), 13.

36 In her exploration of photography, Sontag often turns to films, supporting the idea that a medium can most productively be analyzed from the point of view of its "neighbor" but must remain "blind" to itself.

reports of the war[37] appear as the first level of conquest, as a form of linguistic colonization, in which suffering and the everyday banality collide.

That Godard does indeed see consumerism and war as two sides of the same coin is made clear even before the recruitment scene: when the two emissaries of the king arrive at the protagonists' poor remote hut, there is a hint of what the officer's luring photograph will zero in on: Venus (Geneviève Galéa) is combing her hair in front of a simple mirror; yet she doesn't go by her reflection but tries to adjust how she looks to a magazine photograph, which she repeatedly compares to what she sees in the mirror. Identificatory desire has been transferred from the object to its depiction. Whether this shift from the represented onto the level of representations can be described as a "new" phenomenon of the 1960s, as the popular idea of a decade of increased prosperity accompanied by more widespread advertising suggests, is not important. What is certain is that at this time the potential for any arbitrary item to become an image or a commodity was increasingly noticed in art and theory. Any consumer object, however trivial, whose depiction was previously reserved for advertising, was now a potential subject matter for art— Pierrot le fou is not least the product of this extension of the image space. Likewise, art began—for the first time deliberately—to project itself as a commodity, oriented less to classical aesthetic standards than to the laws of the (art) market. During the 1960s, no other artist employed this dialectic more consistently than Andy Warhol, who began creating his famous paintings of Campbell soup cans or multiple Coke bottles[38] in the same year as Godard's The Carabineers. If Pop Art (and here I mainly refer to Warhol's serial works) increasingly made use of photographic originals, it was only making explicit something that had already applied to Impressionist painting: Edouard Manet drew on photographs for his work, with the difference, however, that his visual source remained invisible in the final painting. Warhol's series, on the other hand, blatantly refer to their origins in press photography and thus reveal themselves as reflections on

37 Some examples of the travel impressions of Michel Ange and Ulysse: "The war has entered its third spring here and offers no prospect of peace from now on."; "We execute people in series by firing a bullet through their heads. When the pit is full of corpses, we cover it with earth."; "Yesterday we stormed the town of Santa Cruz. The girls threw flowers after us. In the evening I went to the cinema for the first time."; "We leave a trail of blood and bodies behind us. We kiss you tenderly."

38 *Big Torn Campbell's Soup Can, Vegetable Beef*, 1962, acrylic on canvas, 183 x 137 cm, Kunsthaus Zürich; *Green Coca Cola Bottles*, 1962, oil on canvas, 209.6 x 144.8 cm, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

the transformation of world into image. It is no wonder, therefore, that the development of Pop Art was an important impulse for the work of both Harun Farocki and Jean-Luc Godard.[39]

The increasing overlay of "world" by "image" was also perceived in the theory of the 1960s and led to various discursive and aesthetic strategies. While Pop Art and Godard responded with a euphoric embrace of the image cosmos, a skepticism about the image began to develop on the theoretical level that sometimes bordered on iconoclasm. A text that particularly polemicized against the way everything was becoming an image, and that is likely to have influenced both Godard and Farocki on its publication in 1967, is Guy Debord's manifesto *La Société du Spectacle*.[40] Almost no other text more excessively contrasts the image as an agent of illusionary dazzlement with the "actual" thing, which it causes to disappear in depiction and duplication. Debord introduces his proposition, which he then runs through many different areas, with a quote containing the core of his argument: "And certainly our time [...] prefers the image to the thing, the copy to the original, representation to reality, the appearance to being." Ludwig Feuerbach wrote this in 1843 in the forward to the second edition of his text *The Essence of Christianity*.[41] So his diagnosis that the copy was now generally preferred to the original and visual depiction to reality coincides almost exactly with the invention of photography. However, what Feuerbach diagnosed as a mere tendency only came to completion in the course of the nineteenth and

39 In a conversation with Ulrich Kriest and Rolf Aurich, Harun Farocki indicated that Bertolt Brecht and the Pop Art of the 1960s had had the greatest influence on his work: "I noticed with *How to Live in the FRG* how strongly I've been influenced by Pop Art. I think it's my strongest influence, along with Brecht. I don't know if this has been much theorized: Brecht's alienation and that of Pop Art; the avoidance of naturalized depiction is an impulse in both cases. The difference is of course that Brecht wants to develop a form of portrayal, while Pop Art adopts one. Advertising images are inappropriate images, and they are adopted because there is a truth in this distortion." Rolf Aurich, Ulrich Kriest, "Werkstattgespräch mit Harun Farocki," *Der Ärger mit den Bildern. Die Filme von Harun Farocki*, eds. ibid. (Konstanz: UVK Medien 1998), 325–347: 346f.

40 Guy Debord, *Society of Spectacle* [1967], trans. Ken Knabb (Wellington: Rebel Press 2006). For a discussion of Debord's iconoclastic project and its implications, see Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes. The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: California UP 1994), 426–434.

41 The English translation of Feuerbach's work reads: "But certainly for the present age, which prefers the sign to the thing signified, the copy to the original, fancy to reality, the appearance to the essence, this change, in as much as it does away with illusion, is an absolute annihilation, or at least a reckless profanation; for in these days *illusion* only is *sacred, truth profane*." Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Chrisitanity* [1841], trans. Marian Evans (New York: Calvin Blanchard 1855), 10.

twentieth centuries. What Debord brings to the idea is his linking of it to an ideological critique of the economic model of capitalism. In 221 aphoristic sections, he parallels the circulation of commodities and the circulation of images, observing a mutually dependent "separation" between them: there is as great a distance between producer and product as there is between image and observer. It would be possible to speak of a "two-world theory" that postulates an autonomous world of goods and images against which the consuming and seeing subject is powerless. In such a model it is not difficult to see the pessimistic notion that a direct and undisguised perception of the world has become impossible through its mediation in images and (or as) commodities. This is summed up in one of Debord's first sentences: "Everything that was directly lived has receded into a representation."[42] Life and representation (of life), directness and distance are irreconcilably opposed, and in the rest of the book this guiding difference is re-described and repeated.

The thought suggests itself that in The Carabineers Godard follows a similar model of the Platonic splitting-up of "world" and "image," by which the "actual" threatens to disappear behind the world of images and needs to be rescued. But even if this is the case, the point is a different one. There is no space untainted with images or ideology in The Carabineers, no utopian sphere behind the images; the problem is localized within the images themselves and reformulated into a question of appropriate image production.[43] The fact that there is nothing beyond the images that needs rescuing in an iconoclastic gesture is dealt with on several layers. The already mentioned use of existing film footage is a part of this strategy. Apart from the above-described generalizing intention, the use of archive material suggests that a cinematic critique of war can be effectively articulated only as a critique of war images.[44]

The substitution of the world by the photographic image becomes more explicit in a scene at the end of the film. I have already referred several times to the naive visual gullibility of Michel Ange: in the cinema, he holds his arms in front of his face in fear of the approaching train, and climbs up to the

42 Guy Debord, *Society of Spectacle*, 7.

43 A further comparison of Debord and Godard should at this point also include Debord's film work. It is noticeable that in its radical image critique, the book *La Société du Spectacle* is cast as a visual desert without illustrations. Debord's films, some of which are compiled in the programmatically titled *Contre le cinéma*, follow an iconoclastic impulse. See Guy Debord, *Contre le cinéma* (Aarhus: Institut scandinave de vandalisme comparé 1964).

44 This position is further elaborated in Godard's next films and reaches its climax in his contribution to Far from Vietnam, the collective film coordinated by Chris Marker in 1967.

Ill. 53 and ill. 54

screen in order to take a look at the woman lying in the bath. Now, at the end of the film, Godard brings several strands of his image critique together. At the start, the photograph of the "woman of the world" had lured the two recruits into the war, as a representative of the promise of wealth and the power of control over any object or person. When the two men return from the war and are asked by their wives about the promised booty, they come full circle. Godard doesn't have them return empty-handed; they do in fact bring home rich spoils, which they finally hand over after the women's impatient questioning.

But the qualitative leap from image to "reality" does not occur. The baggage contains, neatly categorized and tied in tidy parcels, hundreds of postcards (ill. 53 and 54): "We're bringing back all the treasures of the world," (29) Ulysse boasts, and flips them onto the table a little later like trumps or banknotes. While doing so, he begins to systematically spell out the world in the image, gradually working himself up into a deliriously taxonomic rage:

Ulysse:	The monuments. The means of transport. Shops, works of art, industries, riches of the earth – coal, crude oil, and so forth. Wonders of nature: the mountains, the rivers, the deserts, the landscapes, the animals, the five continents, the planets, and... of course...
Michel Ange:	Of course, every group is divided into several others.
Ulysse:	... which are divided into others in turn. (30)

In Godard's fiction, this scene ought to mean the disillusionment of his figures. They have "only" brought images home, not a single "real" object corresponding to them. The war—according to a possible first interpretation—has had the status of a holiday from which the soldiers have brought

back postcards as souvenirs. But neither the women nor Michel Ange and Ulysse appear to be disappointed. On the contrary, they enjoy their mindless enumeration of and categorizing self-assurance in the images. From antiquity to modernity, through all the various categories, Ulysse and Michel Ange, soon enthusiastically accompanied by their wives, chant an inventory of the (image) world. In its implied completeness, a power of control, defined solely by images, is claimed over the entire globe and its history.

> The mindlessness of these enumerations, which the despisers of the film believe they may ascribe to its author, quotes the mindlessness of the idea that abundant happiness lies in the total availability of things. It is the idea of an enlightenment freed from dialectics, that governs museums and commercial advertising.[45]

When Cléopâtre (Catherine Ribeiro) complains a little later, "All right, but none of these are real things," and then asks, "When will we have them?" to be assured by Michel Ange, "Whenever we want," (34) it becomes clear that Michel Ange and Ulysse haven't yet lost their belief in the image and its authority. Both men have a magical understanding of the image that doesn't categorically distinguish between image and object. Signifier and signified are thought of as identical; in an almost legal sense, possession of an image also means possession of the thing. If the two carabineers are shown as indiscriminately murdering, naive perpetrators, they are also victims of a naive understanding of the image that Godard exaggerates satirically:

> Heroes who believe in images, who are formed by images and directed by them, who have retained nothing of their lives apart from a series of images, who will die in search of the real-absent which these images guarantee. More than a meditation on cinema, *The Carabineers* is a questioning of our civilization of images. Behind us (motor) is the image as ancient myth, before us (goal) the image as future myth, and we are no longer very far away from a philosophy of the omnipotent imaginary; the imaginary as human destiny.[46]

Independent of whether, like Barthélemy Amengual, we see a step towards a philosophy of the imaginary in this, Godard's film is about the confusion of world and image, about an illusionism represented by both cinema and

45 Patalas, "Godards Film vom Krieg," 260.

46 Amengual, "Jean-Luc Godard et la remise en cause de notre civilisation de l'image," 145.

photography. The mistake that Michel Ange and Ulysse make when they equate depictions with the things they portray is the same as the one made by viewers who see a real war in Godard's film. "Realism," as Godard's position can be paraphrased here, is at best a deceptive effect of the medium and should be presented as such. The cinema as a projective apparatus (both literally and figuratively) functions according to the same principles of desire and promise that lured the two soldiers into the war. Parts of the film can therefore be understood as statements about filmmaking.

But something else becomes visible if we also take into account the relationship between word and image, which was at issue before Ulysse and Michel Ange's journey. In the tautological naming of the triumphantly presented objects, the linguistic authority loses its persuasiveness in the same way as the images do. What appears to signal ownership in language and image is in fact common property and consists of standardized formulas lacking any autonomy. The labels that name the things portrayed do not adhere to the objects but, in their stereotypicality as general terms, at best invoke an exchangeable relationship. However, it should be recalled here that it is not mere photographs that Ulysse and Michel Ange bring home but postcards. Here, too, Godard's decision conforms to his preference, recognizable on other levels, for already existing material, which he simply recombines and imbues with meaning: with the postcard—as with the newsreel footage—the originator of the image retreats behind the information content of what is depicted. The images are anonymous and standardized, but they are above all—just like the paintings in Pierrot le Fou—single copies of visual motifs that have been reproduced thousands of times. The idea of ownership of the respective object collapses ironically in the face of the fact that thousands of other viewers "possess" it in exactly the same way.

In The Carabineers, the struggle between text and image is ironically decided in favor of photography: where the written induction order lacks authority, the photograph of the woman in a bikini is enough of an incentive to go to war. Godard shows the confusion of image and reality, of signifier and signified, as a delusion that not only affects Michel Ange and Ulysse but also the viewers and critics who demand from a "war film" an unambiguous criticism of real war. The question of war is thus shifted to that of its images, and political issues become visible as those of visual politics. The apparently "transparent" medium of photography is presented as a wall from which Michel Ange and Ulysse rebound with their desires for ownership, along with audiences who expect a view of war through the cinema screen. In this respect, The Carabineers should be read as an allegory of the viewer,

who in his laughter at the protagonists sees himself called into question about his naive grasp of photographs.

Rendering: Before Your Eyes Vietnam

Like The Carabineers, Harun Farocki's film Before Your Eyes Vietnam also has to do with the circulation of photographs. However, this is no nameless and generic war but the American intervention in Vietnam and its proliferation through press photos. More than with his other films, in Before Your Eyes Vietnam Harun Farocki conveys his reflections on images through a storyline. The film is Farocki's most "narrative" work, together with Between Two Wars and Betrayed, and the one most firmly in the tradition of the auteur film. His stylized black-and-white images recall the rigid framing of Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet, who along with Godard are an important point of orientation for Farocki.[47] Like Straub and Huillet, Farocki also adopts a strategy of paradigmatic alienation and disallows a narrative form calculated to arouse empathy in the viewer. And as in 1969 in Inextinguishable Fire, images from Vietnam are the film's central point of reference.

The Carabineers and Before Your Eyes Vietnam overlap in several ways, even though they adopt quite different cinematic registers. In Godard's film, comic elements predominate.[48] The view of photography as a displaceable image frame that replaces reality and supplants actual objects follows the logic of the burlesque and uses established means of exaggeration and characterization. Two naive country bumpkins, through whose eyes the viewer is presented with war as a tourist leisure program, are on an expedition from which postcards are brought home as trophies and "acts of ownership."[49] The film presents photographs as a visual medium that organizes the desires of those confronted with it. Farocki's film dispenses with the comic element to take up some of the basic questions lying beneath the surface of Godard's film. What image of war is portrayed by television and photographic reportage? How can images of war be read, reformulated, and related to an entirely different situation? What does "Vietnam" mean in West

47 In 1983, Farocki played the role of Delamarche in Klassenverhältnisse and made a short film about the rehearsal process with Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet (Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet at Work on a Film Based on Franz Kafka's *Amerika*, BRD 1983, director: Harun Farocki).

48 "The commedia dell'arte digresses and almost escalates into burlesque." Amengual, "Jean-Luc Godard et la remise en cause de notre civilisation de l'image," 130.

49 Godard, "Les carabiniers," 34.

Berlin in 1982? How can this be meaningfully rendered eight years after the Saigon armistice? What role does the spatial and temporal distance between photograph and viewer play in the interpretation of the events? More than the images themselves, looking at them is central to Farocki's film. At one point, the program not only of this film but of Farocki's overall guiding inquiry is summarized in a succinct formula: "The philosopher asks: What is man? I ask: What is an image?" The film reaches a provisional answer in repeatedly portraying the image as something located in between other images and seeking to decipher its meaning in the tension between them.

Before Your Eyes Vietnam is a Vietnam film that differs from its American counterparts, which were in vogue during the 1970s, in almost every respect. The story of Robert (Marcel Werner) and Anna (Anna Mandel), a couple who are trying to bring love, work, and politics together in a meaningful way, doesn't pretend to be set in Southeast Asia, like Coppola's Apocalypse Now, or the USA, like Hal Ashby's Coming Home and other "returnee" films: Farocki instead transfers the problematic to Germany.[50] The Vietnam he is interested in is perceived in West Berlin via television and photographs, and was recreated for the shooting—with simple means and immediately recognizable as a staging—in rural West Germany. "We have to replace the images from Vietnam with images from here, express Vietnam here" is one of the central axioms of the protagonist Robert and also reflects the stance of the author Farocki. Photography is the most important medium in this act of transfer; it should be understood as a metaphor and an appeal to a particular kind of reading, not as unambiguously readable "evidence" of acts of war.

Three levels can be distinguished on which (image) theory is staged in Before Your Eyes Vietnam. First, that of the characters: the film tells a love story that overlaps with the history of the Vietnam War, is called into question by it, and also questions the images of the war, including numerous photographs. The couple meet at a demonstration against the war and try to establish a relationship to it through a study of texts and images. In contrast to a conventional love story, the attempt to communicate through images, and to articulate similarities and differences through looking at the war photographs, is in the foreground here. "The couple's difficulties are, however, present in the film only in a very muted form, insofar as their own central preoccupation is to understand the relation between the personal and the political, dramatized in their anti-Vietnam war protests

50 See also Rembert Hüser, "Etwas Vietnam," in eds. Aurich, Kriest, *Der Ärger mit den Bildern*, 215–230.

and their encounter with this war through its media representations.[51]" Much of the deliberation that in Farocki's later films is spoken in a voiceover commentary is incorporated into the diegesis here and divided between the two protagonists Anna and Robert:

> *Before Your Eyes Vietnam* dissolves the elements that an essay film usually assigns to the commentary level. This equally includes theoretical discussions about possible explanations for the differences between American and North Vietnamese society or the equipment and motivation of the GIs and the Viet Cong, and the (often radically) changing opinions and attitudes of the German left in relation to the war, both during and after.[52]

Secondly, alongside these dialogically distributed theoretical fragments, theory is articulated on the level of the images themselves, which in their juxtaposition develop a dynamic that is taken up by the characters and translated into dialogue. And third, Farocki's extended text "Dog from the Freeway" contains additional material and further develops ideas from the film, putting them in a different perspective.[53]

Problematizing the representation of war in photographs particularly suggests itself in the case of the Vietnam War. It isn't necessary to belabor the truism "first television war" in order to realize that not only the perception but also the moral indignation of the war's opponents was primarily directed by images. Even if television was a factor in the politicization that took place in Europe and America, in retrospect the photographs of the war seem to have impressed themselves on people's minds more strongly than the television sequences.[54] Before Your Eyes Vietnam addresses both media; to a certain extent, the film "remembers" the time of the war and repeatedly uses this memory as a means of distancing and reflection.

Farocki utilizes photographs at two hinge points of his film in order to set in motion ideas about the relationship between images and politics. In the

51 Thomas Elsaesser, "Political Filmmaking after Brecht: Harun Farocki, for example," *Harun Farocki. Working on the Sight-Lines*, ed. ibid. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2004), 133–153: 140.

52 Rainer Rother, "Das Lesen von Bildern. Notizen zu Harun Farockis Film *Etwas wird sichtbar*," in eds. Aurich, Kriest, *Der Ärger mit den Bildern*, 231–244: 233f.

53 Harun Farocki, "Dog from the Freeway" [1982], *Harun Farocki. Working on the Sight-Lines,* 109–132.

54 The photograph of the burning monk Thich Quang Duc, who doused himself with gasoline and set fire to himself on the streets of Hue in 1963, the napalm-burned screaming children running towards the photographer, the photograph of the execution used in Before Your Eyes Vietnam: as frozen moments in time, these photographs seem to have a greater effect than film.

Ill. 55

first, he quotes one of the most important photographic icons of the year 1968 (ill. 55). The image shows the police chief of Saigon executing a Viet Cong suspect. The Associated Press photographer Eddie Adams took the picture on January 2, 1968, shortly after the North Vietnamese Tet Offensive, which took the war from the country's rural areas into its cities. It is one of the most frequently published war photographs ever and shocks because gun and camera have shot almost simultaneously. Although in a deliberately artless way, Farocki deals with the photograph much as Jean-Luc Godard approached the famous paintings a year before in PASSION:[55] he translates the two-dimensional image back into motion and turns it into a tableau vivant—a scene that no longer shows the representation itself but rather the act of representation. The photograph is reenacted by children; the boy holds a wooden pistol instead of a revolver. The simulation differs from the original in that here the photographer himself appears in the image. Farocki puts an additional frame around the scene, opening up the act of representation. A further step back, which would encompass the act of filming, becoming ever more inclusive and never coming to an end, might also be conceivable. The film image of the shooting of the Viet Cong guerrilla therefore consists *in itself* of two images: the photographic original and its reenactment; it can only be understood in this difference. The superimposition contains two pieces of contradictory information: "This is an image from Vietnam" and "This is not an image from Vietnam," the common denominator being "'This is an image," whose visibility and readability can't be taken for granted but have to be determined through interpretation.

55 See also Thomas Elsaesser: "The tableaux in which the 'visual motifs' of the Vietnam War are are in a certain sense presented similarly to the short narrations in Godard's *Passion* (F/CH 1982) or the collaged stories of Raul Ruiz, but they are not concerned with elaborateness or mimetic meticulousness and instead concentrate their deliberate artlessness on bringing forth certain abstract and abstracting aspects, which require a non-referential space, while nonetheless pointing out that they are images of West Berlin." Thomas Elsaesser, "'Mit diesen Bildern hat es angefangen.' Anmerkungen zum politischen Film nach Brecht. Das Beispiel Harun Farocki," in eds. Aurich, Kriest, *Der Ärger mit den Bildern*, 138f. This passage seems to be missing in the English version of Elsaesser's text.

Ill. 56 and ill. 57

This scene, which makes the familiar but worn-out Vietnam photo visible once again through deviation, is immediately followed by a second, much more explicit reflection on the possibilities and limitations of photography. In place of the deadly shot, Farocki cuts back to everyday life in West Berlin. A forced interpretation allows this edit to be understood metaphorically: the identification of the Vietnam War with West German reality—through the cut, which places them so close together—is itself an act of violence. The principle of simple—political and visual—representation, as exemplified by Rudi Dutschke's succinct phrase "In Vietnam, we too are crushed day by day"[56] is superseded by an awareness of incomparability. In this respect, the cut from the Vietnam photograph to West Berlin illustrates the ambivalence within every montage decision: montage establishes a comparison and constructs an equivalence that is undermined and questioned in the same moment: "Politically, metaphorical thinking is criticised in the film because the Vietnam experience teaches that concepts such as struggle and resistance, in order to be effective, have to be thought differently, as a relational dynamic of non-equivalent entities, such as strong and weak, machine and tool, centre and margin, the visible and the representable."[57] The film seeks abstraction and transfer, only to decide on the singular and concrete.

How the film achieves this is shown in the scene after the photograph of the execution. We see the two protagonists in a sparsely furnished apartment, which has two functions in the film. It is a private place of love but also of study—one of the central problems of the film is the question of how both the private and the political, love and work, can be brought together. Like an

56 Dutschke's speech to the Vietnam congress of the Free University in Berlin in February 1968.

57 Thomas Elsaesser, "Political Filmmaking after Brecht: Harun Farocki, for example," 151.

exhortation not to forget, Anna and Robert have hung press photos of the Vietnam War on two of the room's walls. The camera takes in these photographs in a long tracking shot: in one of the first there is a row of imprisoned Vietnamese men; the next shows women and children being guided by soldiers across a river or paddy field. After the camera has passed the backs of Anna and Robert, who can be seen in an embrace in front of the wall of photographs, it looks over Robert's shoulder into a mirror. The faces of the couple can now be seen from the front (ill. 56 and 57). We see them looking at the photographs and hear Robert commenting on the one to the right of the mirror:

> The American soldier has a stethoscope to hear whether there are tunnels under the ground through which the Viet Cong are moving. Like a doctor. And the image says: the Viet Cong is a sickness that has befallen Vietnam. The American soldier is the doctor who will bring the country back to health. And it says something else too: The Viet Cong is the blood flowing through Vietnam's veins. The heartbeat.[58]

In "Dog from the Freeway," Farocki takes on Robert's role and interprets the photograph of the two American soldiers. His reading is introduced with the sentence: "A photograph from Vietnam. An interesting photo. One has to put a lot into it to get a lot out of it."[59] What can be read out of the photograph is anything but unambiguous, however. Over and above the denotative level, there are two possible, diametrically opposed interpretations that also stand for two differing ideologies: different conclusions can be drawn depending on how the metaphor of the soldier as doctor is seen: whether he is diagnosing an illness or bringing his patient back to health. Here, too, the decisive thing is not in the photograph itself but in Brecht's sense has slipped into the functional and needs to be reconstructed by relating it to one's own attitude or to other photographs.[60] The fact that Robert and Anna, framed by the mirror, are also included in the series of photos has several consequences. For one thing, it directly expresses the phenomenon of reflecting on images and illustrates the necessity of establishing a relationship between the self-image (here, now, in Berlin) and foreign images (there, then, in Vietnam). Anna comments on the series' danger of leveling out

58 Anna and Robert's conversation is reprinted in Aurich, Kriest eds., *Der Ärger mit den Bildern*, 240–243: 240.

59 Harun Farocki, "Dog from the Freeway," 109.

60 For a more detailed discussion of the connections between Brecht and Farocki, which become clear in Before Your Eyes Vietnam and other films, see Elsaesser, "Political Filmmaking after Brecht: Harun Farocki, for example," 133–153.

Ill. 58

with the words: "How illegitimate it looks. An image of us between images of war," and Robert adds: "Like in a war film. An exciting love story against the background of war and genocide." Farocki counters the classical dramaturgy of the war film summarized in these words with the following discussion between the couple. Talking about the photographs on the wall, Anna says: "It began with these images. They started to appear in 1965, first in the USA, Sweden, France, then here as well. Captioned 'Torture in the name of freedom' or 'America's dirty war'." In answer to the question as to why there are so many photographs of individual shootings and abuse from the Vietnam War, Robert gives a historical explanation:

> What was new was Americans killing personally, like sadists, robbers and murderers, jealous maniacs. In the Second World War they had killed like the law. They enforced it. They gunned down everything in front of them, made their motorized advance, fired again. Like a machine, an enforcement machine. In Vietnam the soldier is so close to his victim that both fit into one photograph.

The photographs that aroused such moral indignation and gave rise to political action during the 1960s also set in motion an ideological struggle about their use that understood them as evidence and instrumentalized them as advertising for one's own moral integrity: a photograph showing American cruelty hangs next to one showing a Viet Cong atrocity (ill. 58).

Despite their opposing ideologies, the proximity of these two photographs therefore indicates a closeness between the rhetorical strategies from which they derive: "The images were so close together. We pointed to one and said 'Americans, get out.' They pointed to another and said 'Viet Cong, get out.' It was like advertising. It was a competition for the worst cruelty. It made me feel ashamed," is how Anna summarizes the use of photographs during the Vietnam War, and Farocki reduces the problematic to a systematic common denominator: "These discussions are not about pictures, but about what a picture represents. If it is representative, one may take an interest in what is shown. If it is not sensitive, one has to be able to see through what

is actually depicted."[61] What Farocki calls for here, and articulates through the figures of Anna and Robert in the film, is a moral attitude towards the image that mistrusts the representational claim of photography (an image stands for a political conviction) as much as its apparent evidence (an image stands for what it shows). The image should not be understood as an answer but as a question whose context and interests need to be reconstructed. A photograph carries a temporal and subjective index. It is defined by a distance from the viewer, the implications of which need to be pursued. Images of the World and the Inscription of War takes up these issues and extends the question of images to that of the connection between military and civilian image production and processing. The focus is no longer on rendition but on survey.

Surveying: Images of the World and the Inscription of War

> "The preserving photograph, the destroying bomb, these two now press together."
> Harun Farocki[62]

A digression: in 1988, Manfred Blank and Harun Farocki made a trip to the Cine City Paris.[63] The two former contributors to *Filmkritik*, who had taken the roles of Robinson and Delamarche in Straub/Huillet's Kafka film,[64] made a documentary that doesn't conjure up the stereotypical cinematic myth of the city but revisits actual traces of the cinema in contemporary Paris.[65] The films of Jean-Luc Godard are present in Cine City Paris in many ways. In a department store, the filmmakers stumble on Godard's video installation

61 Farocki, "Dog from the Freeway," 131.

62 Images of the World and the Inscription of War, BRD 1988, director: Harun Farocki. The commentary is published in *Harun Farocki: Diagrams. Images from Ten Films*, ed. Benedikt Reichenbach (Cologne: König 2014), 273–286: 278. In the following section, all quotes from the film are taken from this transcription and will only be referenced by indicating the page.

63 Cine City Paris, BRD 1988, directors: Manfred Blank, Harun Farocki.

64 Klassenverhältnisse, BRD 1983, directors: Jean-Marie Straub, Danièle Huillet.

65 The film includes a mythical place like the Cinémathèque française along with Michel Delahaye, one of the most influential critics of the *Cahiers du cinéma*, the film collector René Charles, and the anthropologist Marc Augé. But Blank and Farocki also document peripheral forms of cinema—such as women who provide "erotic services" via Minitel, or the robot-controlled image archive in the Forum des Images.

On s'est tous défilé,[66] a short montage that was made as part of a series of television adverts for the Swiss fashion designers Marithé and François Girbaud. However, another scene is more interesting in relation to Farocki's involvement with photography, and introduces Godard as if his films hadn't only entered the real or imaginary city of Paris but also the unconsciousness of Farocki and Blank. The two exhausted filmmakers sit at a café table, snoozing after a series of interviews and visits to various cinephiles. On the voiceover we hear the words: "We sleep and dream. We sleep and dream of the images." The dream shown in the following shots is about different ways of organizing images. We see the large robot in the Vidéothèque de Paris (later renamed Forum des Images) that at the touch of a button can fetch video cassettes from the shelves and play them for interested viewers. Another sequence is blended into these images, proposing a second cinematographic archive: the scene from The Carabineers in which Michel Ange and Ulysse show their wives their booty of photographs. Two ways of collecting and systemizing images—as the spoils of war and by robot in a prestige institution from the Mitterand era—are brought together and provoke the general question of the addressability and availability of images. This scene is not only a further example of the many paths leading from Godard to Farocki; it also marks the specific interest of both filmmakers in the medium of photography, locating it at the intersection of destruction and war on the one hand, and of preservation and archiving on the other.

Images of the World and the Inscription of War, which starts from this ambivalence and provides us with a complex discussion on the medium of photography, was made at the same time as Cine City Paris. Outside Germany, the film was also noticed in the United States—primarily in academic circles—and did much to increase Farocki's popularity there.[67] It theorizes technical images much more explicitly than The Carabineers and does so not by delegating this to the characters in a storyline but through the images themselves and their montage, and also through a commentary, which is a critical text in itself.[68] Farocki's analysis of the photographic images is influenced by

66 For On s'est tous défilé, in connection with Godard's motifs of procession and projection, see Christa Blümlinger, "Prozession und Projektion: Anmerkungen zu einer Figur bei Jean-Luc Godard," *Zwischen-Bilanz. Eine Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Joachim Paech*, www.uni-konstanz.de/paech2002 [accessed February 1, 2006].

67 Kaja Silverman, "What is a Camera? or: History in the Field of Vision," *Discourse* vol. 15, no. 3 (spring 1993), 3–57; Tom Keenan, "Light Weapons," *Documents* 1/2 (fall/winter 1992), 147–153; Nora M. Alter, "The Political Im/Perceptible," ibid., *Projecting History. German Nonfiction Cinema 1967–2000* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 2002), 77–102. Farocki was himself a visiting professor at the University of California in Berkeley from 1993 to 1999.

68 It makes sense that the commentary was published in 1993 in the journal *Discourse*: Harun Farocki, "Commentary from *Bilder der Welt und Inschrift des Krieges*," *Discourse* vol. 15, no. 3

phenomenology, and attempts to develop arguments from within the material itself. The frequently still images of his film are therefore not confronted with an elaborated visual theory: it is the images themselves that imply or evoke particular thoughts. Nora Alter succinctly describes Images of the World as "implied/applied theory"[69] and lists the heterogeneous topics that are held together and focused in it through the medium of photography: "The film interrogates photographic processes of image making and the surrounding disciplines that use these images: fine arts, engineering, architecture, artisanal and assembly-line production, city planning and urban renewal, military science and practice."[70] The photographic image—in more general terms one should say the photogram—represents a link here between various fields of activity and discourse. It connects the sphere of art with that of the architectural survey and air reconnaissance; in the form of image-recognition software, it is used in automobile production and police work. The wide-ranging title of Images of the World and the Inscription of War acknowledges this comprehensive organization of all areas of life by images and can be related back to the film itself, which is simultaneously an analysis and an aspect of this image world. In Farocki's film, "reading" images—metaphorically alluded to in the title—appears as a basic practice determining civilian and military activity, and needs to be fostered by schooling the eye.

In order to establish the theoretical aspects developed in Images of the World, it is useful to describe the film's various levels in more detail. An inventory of the complex of motifs brought together by the spoken commentary and through repetitions of individual image clusters allows several layers to be distinguished: the story of Albrecht Meydenbauer, one of the pioneers of photogrammetry; a female face being made up; women in a nude drawing class; aerial photographs of Auschwitz taken by American reconnaissance planes in April 1944; deliberations on aerial photographs in general; aerial photographs of various bombing raids; photographs of the empty premises of the last metal-printing company in Berlin; sequences of electronic image processing and pattern recognition (in automobile production and police searches, for example); sketches and drawings by the concentration-camp prisoner Alfred Kantor; photographs from the

(spring 1993), 78–92. A transcription of the film is also included in Harun Farocki, *Diagrams. Images from Ten Films*, ed. Benedikt Reichenbach (Cologne: Walther König 2014), 273–286.

69 Alter, "The Political Im/Perceptible" 81. Despite this apt formulation, Alter mostly discusses Farocki's films as examples of the problematic category "essay film."

70 Ibid.,82.

Auschwitz extermination camp taken by the SS; police composite drawings; meditations on the development and adoption of perspective in the Renaissance; thoughts about the camouflage of potential military targets to protect them from airstrikes; the story of the prisoners Rudolf Vrba and Alfréd Wetzler, who succeeded in escaping from Auschwitz; a volume of photographs of Algerian women who were photographed unveiled for the first time in 1960. Some of these images are interpreted in a voiceover—as in Still Life, this only happens during the non-moving sections of the film.

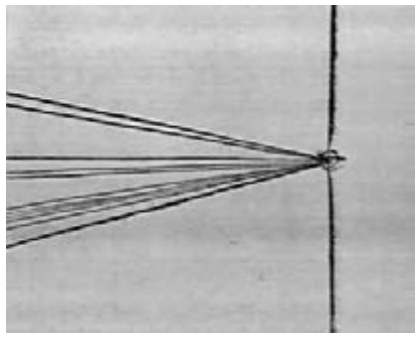
The first shot of the film is strictly observational and concrete, but it also opens up the film for an allegorical, abstract reading:

> When the sea surges against the land, irregularly, not haphazardly, this motion binds the gaze without fettering it and sets free the thoughts. The surge that sets the thoughts in motion is here being investigated in its own motion—in the large wave channel at Hanover. The motions of water are still less researched than those of light. (274)

This open beginning, in which the film differs from its shorter precursor Images–War,[71] uses the image of waves to describe the desired effect of Images of the World: to attract the eye without constraining it. But the image of light also speaks to the central metaphor of the film and is followed in two directions: its place in the history of ideas as a symbol for "enlightenment," and empirically as the precondition for—and in a sense author of—a new type of image, the photograph. Moreover, the shot of the wave channel introduces a third element: that of experimental measurement and evaluation, whose special case of image analysis Farocki both examines and continues. In this context, the photograph should be understood as a medium that is itself the result of measurement and evaluation—an image that owes its existence to various formulas rather than direct transfer. Elements can be seen here from the photographic theory of Vilém Flusser, whose books Farocki reviewed and with whom he did an interview for the television channel WDR in the preparatory phase of Images of the World. "Like all technical images, photographs are concepts encoded as states of things, including photographers' concepts, such as those that have been programmed into the camera,"[72]

71 Images–War, BRD 1987, director: Harun Farocki. Lasting 45 minutes, Images–War is half an hour shorter than Images of the World. Among other things, it lacks the central shot of the woman photographed on her arrival at the concentration camp.

72 Vilém Flusser, *Towards a Philosophy of Photography* [1983], trans. Anthony Mathews (London: Reaktion Books 2000), 48. The discussion with Vilém Flusser, in which he and Farocki analyze the front page of the current tabloid *BILD-Zeitung*, was broadcast by WDR on May 1, 1986 under



Ills. 59-61

says Flusser in a radical departure from a realistic interpretation of photography. His statement draws attention to the distance between depiction and reality: only after the multiple conversion of an impression of light by chemical and physical formulas can a representation appear that denies its conceptual origins in its apparent accordance with reality. Itself the result of the measurement of the world, during the nineteenth century the photograph began to be used as an instrument of measurement and survey: in criminology, military reconnaissance, and architecture, to mention only a few of the areas covered in IMAGES OF THE WORLD.

It is difficult to reduce the different visual levels of the film to a single concept. But through rhythmization and repetition they are combined into image clusters, whose boundaries and transitions enable a leap from the individual shot to an abstract image or concept—a leap, that is, that has to take place in the viewer's mind if he or she is to bridge the gap between the film's different areas of interest. This can be illustrated by the frequent appearance in the montage of a puzzling image: at various points in the film—for the first time immediately after the shot of the wave channel—the face of a woman being made up can be seen. "Enlightenment—that is a word in the history of ideas. In German,

the title of SCHLAGWORTE – SCHLAGBILDER. EIN GESPRÄCH MIT VILÉM FLUSSER. A text on Flusser's theory of photography also appeared in the journal *Der Schnitt*: Harun Farocki, "Das Universum ist leer," *Der Schnitt* no. 24 (2001), 18–19 [special issue on Vilém Flusser and film].

Aufklärung" (274) says the commentary, introducing the guiding concept of the film (ill. 59–61).

This apparently isolated image comes from a film that Farocki had made fifteen years previously[73] and shows a woman's closed eye. In Images of the World, it is embedded between a drawing of an eye struck by a conically ordered series of rays and a photograph of Wetzlar Cathedral. In the first image, seeing is presented as a subject of investigation, with historically different explanations, while the face refers to changes to which *the seen* can be subjected through human intervention. The face is "disguised" in the same way that the surface (the "face") of the world is camouflaged during wartime to prevent it being recognized from the air.[74] The image of the face is thus a prologue to the film's later discussions of aerial photography. With the third shot, the film switches to the modus of historical argumentation and marks the starting point for an examination of photographic surveying.

The film traces the development of photogrammetry back to a hazardous situation experienced by Albrecht Meydenbauer, a pioneer of the technique, while surveying Wetzlar Cathedral. In Farocki's film, this occurrence becomes the primal scene of a specific type of photography closely connected to the aspect of distancing. "In the year 1858 in Wetzlar, the local governor building officer Meydenbauer had the task of measuring the dimensions of the cathedral façade. To save the costs of erecting scaffolding he traversed the length of the façade with a basket hanging from block and tackle, the same method used for cleaning windows." (274) Meydenbauer luckily averted a fall on climbing out of the basket and had the idea of replacing the dangerous act of personal surveying with photographs. Farocki comments on this decision as follows: "The idea of obtaining measurements through photography came to Meydenbauer after he was suspended between life and death. That means: It is dangerous to hold out physically on the spot. Safer: to take a picture." (274) This sequence can be seen as a blueprint for the rest of the film, as it contains the essential motifs that will be developed. One of them being the aspect of distancing, a "modern fate" that combines with the photograph "to relate to the world by viewing it, taking views of it, as if at a distance to it, as from behind the self."[75]

73 Make Up, BRD 1973, director: Harun Farocki.

74 For an interpretation of these images, see also Kaja Silverman "What is a Camera?" 16ff.

75 Cavell, "What Photography Calls Thinking," 33.

Ill. 62

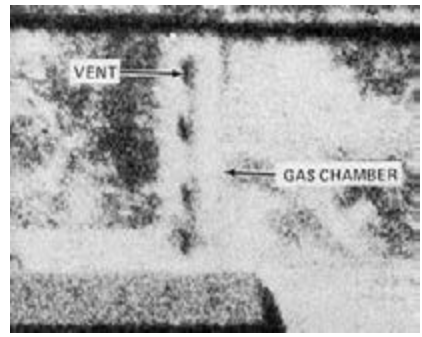
Aside from the disciplining function of photographs, but closely connected with it, the link between photography and death is central to Images of the World. While Meydenbauer's photographs were intended to avoid danger to life, photography has repeatedly revealed itself as death's accomplice—as in the photographs taken by members of the SS in the concentration camps, for example. Comparatively late in Farocki's film it becomes apparent that his lines of argumentation have been organized in relation to a hitherto concealed center. A photograph from Auschwitz occupies a prominent position in Images of the World. It shows a woman photographed by an SS man after her arrival in the camp: she glances at the photographer (ill. 62), who captures her movement from right to left:

> A woman has arrived at Auschwitz; the camera captures her in movement. The photographer has his camera installed and as the woman passes by he clicks the shutter, in the same way he would cast a glance at her in the street, because she is beautiful. The woman understands how to pose her face so as to catch the eye of the photographer, and how to look with a slight sideways glance. On a boulevard she would look in the same way just past a man casting his eye over her, at a shop window, and with this sideways glance she seeks to displace herself into a world of boulevards, men and shop windows. Far from here. The camp run by the SS shall bring her to destruction, and the photographer who captures her beauty for posterity is from this very same SS. How the two elements interplay, preservation and destruction! (280)

The photograph and its commentary, whose interpretive collision of banality and murder have provoked dissent and protest[76] (as Godard's montage of Elizabeth Taylor and the images from Auschwitz in Histoire(s) du cinéma can also seem scandalous), introduce the most important theme of Images of the World: the dialectic of belligerent genocidal destruction and simultaneous photographic preservation. In their *Dialectic of Enlightenment*,

76 See, for example, Dietrich Leder, "Begegnungen in Duisburg und anderswo," eds. Aurich, Kriest, *Der Ärger mit den Bildern*, 57–72: 66.

Horkheimer and Adorno call rationality into question in the face of the systematic killing carried out by the National Socialists, maintaining that "the wholly enlightened earth is radiant with triumphal calamity."[77] In Farocki's film, photography epitomizes this ambiguity like no other medium.



Ill. 63 and ill. 64

The example of the Shoah shows the possibilities and deficits of photography in a particularly drastic way. Auschwitz represents the boundary of all visual depiction. That the annihilation of the Jews cannot be directly portrayed without making light of it through individual narration is a view that Godard and Farocki share. Godard has repeatedly criticized Schindler's List, even saying that Steven Spielberg should have been prevented from making the film, which obscenely individualizes the horror of the camps into an object of the viewer's empathy.[78] Where Spielberg subordinates the reality of the camps to the concrete story of a single person, Godard uses abstraction and alienation to capture an idea of horror in his contrasting montage of Elizabeth Taylor and images from Auschwitz. Images of the World is also directed against individualized narration; the film often refers to the television series Holocaust, which was broadcast with great success in the United States and Germany in 1978 and 79, and distances itself from the series' sentimentalizing narrative scheme. In Images of the World, this diagnosis gives rise to two strategies. A first step in the direction of alienation is to draw on existing visual material. This corresponds to Godard's use of newsreels instead of shooting his own material for the acts of war in The Carabineers. Farocki interprets publicly available photographs and relates

77 Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* [1947], ed. Gunzelin Schmid, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford UP 2002), 1–34: 1.

78 Jean-Luc Godard, "Godard/Amar. Cannes 97" [1997], *Godard par Godard II*, 408–422: 416 and "Résistance de l'art" [1997], *Godard par Godard II*, 443–446: 446.

them to one another. He prefers montage and commentary to a dramatic mise en scène. Aside from photographs from inside Auschwitz, a group of aerial photographs of the complex taken by Allied reconnaissance planes in August 1944 (ill. 63 and 64) is the most important basis of his montage.

Death cannot be seen directly in these images, but it is recognizable at a distance. The photographs are Allied intelligence with which it would have been possible to find the camp a year before the end of the war—something that was only discovered in the 1970s, because during the war, interest was concentrated on the nearby Buna plant. In discussions,[79] Farocki has explained how these photographs gave him the chance to speak about the extermination camps in the first place, because they already contain an alienation effect that enables one to give form and language to something that actually cannot be portrayed. A woman on arrival, photographs from 23,000 feet: in each case, the image stands for a different one, which the viewers themselves create or can supplement with their own historical knowledge. But at the same time, the two images belong to different categories: "They embody the technical and the narrative mode of historical writing."[80] Thus they stand for two poles of the tradition of which cinema is also a part. As witnessed by nine out of ten films, cinema is primarily a narrative medium, which can recount individual people and their stories. But film is also a surveying technique and is able to abstract from the singular. Farocki summarizes both tendencies as symptoms of a crisis in the photographic image: "[T]his is somehow a turning point in human history. Both types of narrative, both types of images are inadequate, both are inappropriate."[81] Showing the photographs from Auschwitz despite this expresses the hope of finding some kind of adequate portrayal through the combination of two images that taken in themselves are inapt.

The film pursues the dialectic of preservation and destruction through a number of areas that illuminate the field of image production in various facets: the individual sections of the film initially appear to have little to do with the subject of Auschwitz; only a repeated reading of the film and its complementary text uncovers a subterranean reference system that makes up a complex "dialectic of the survey." As already mentioned, a first line of argumentation concerns the surveying of buildings, which was made less

79 For example in February 2003 at an event on "Political Film after Brecht" at the Brecht-Haus in Berlin.

80 Harun Farocki in conversation: Thomas Elsaesser, "Making the World Superfluous: An Interview with Harun Farocki," *Harun Farocki. Working on the Sight-Lines*, 183.

81 Ibid.

hazardous for the surveyor through the use of photography from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. Photography was intended to reduce danger here, but it allowed for destruction at the same time, as the photographs were intended as an aid for reconstruction should the building be destroyed. This results in a first line of connection between labor, war, and image production. The film historically extends this to the aerial photographs from the Second World War and introduces the ambiguous term *Aufklärung* (Ger. "enlightenment," "reconnaissance," "solution") as an argumentative hinge between the individual levels. *Aufklärung* doesn't just stand here for a concept from the history of ideas that Adorno and Horkheimer consider to have always been one of the surveying and dominance of the world; it is also a concept in criminology and military language and is closely connected to the medium of photography through mug shots, composite images, and reconnaissance photos. In the nineteenth century, photography introduced a type of image that uncouples seeing from the seeing subject and thus also optical knowledge from the knower. The mistrust of photography felt by Farocki and Godard feeds from this tendency to give the photograph a dynamic of its own and to create a world of technical images which evades human responsibility. Against this background, it can be seen why painting and not photography is Godard's permanent reference point in Histoire(s) du cinéma. On the other hand, it also becomes clear why Farocki—since Images of the World at the latest—insists on the particular theorization of technical images, which for their part have become theoretical objects that are beginning to detach themselves from spatial and temporal determinations.

It is due to a historical innovation that the Second World War and the Nazi extermination camps mark the center of gravity around which the other types of images in Images of the World revolve: in the warplane the camera is directly linked to bombardment for the first time; the destruction of the world and the record of this destruction converge within the photograph. Farocki's argumentation here evokes Paul Virilio, who has examined the military "logistics of perception" like no one else. In fact, Images of the World should be seen as the cinematic continuation of Virilio's book *War and Cinema*. Where Virilio associates historical photography and cinema history with the history of war, Farocki applies his argumentation to the aerial photographs of Auschwitz. In a book that appeared at the same time as Farocki's film, Virilio sums up the new type of warfare made possible by the collaboration between technical images and military technology:

> It is a war of images and sounds, rather than objects and things, in which winning is simply a matter of not losing sight of the opposition. The will to see all, to know all, at every moment, everywhere, the will to universalized illumination: a scientific permutation on the eye of God which would forever rule out the surprise, the accident, the irruption of the unforeseen.[82]

In this context, photography is assigned an intermediate position in Farocki's film. Without developing an explicit historical thesis leading in a straight line from A to B, the photographs are nevertheless related to the surveying techniques of the Renaissance, which led to the development of central perspective and to a new type of technical image that began to interest Farocki in the mid-1990s. This type of image, for which Farocki himself has coined the term "operational image," is central to the three installations entitled Eye/Machine and the television film compiled from them, War at a Distance.[83] "Operational" in this context means that the image no longer stands "for itself" in any way but is merely an element of an electro-technical operation in which aesthetic standards are detached from functional criteria. Since the 1990s, operational images have increasingly permeated both the military and the civilian sectors: iris scanners facilitate clear identification; infrared cameras register movements, image-based navigation systems guide missiles and automobiles—all these are examples of our daily contact with such images. Even in Images of the World, the image-recognition programs that operate the robots in the car factory are both a counter image and a civilian equivalent to the flight simulators and software used in air reconnaissance. The term "operational" is also apt because these images are completely absorbed into the process of the respective operation. They aren't intended to be released separately, and strictly speaking don't need to appear as images at all but emerge as the intermediate product of a wider technical process.[84] In this respect, they are

82 Paul Virilio, "The Vision Machine," ibid. *The Vision Machine*, trans. Julie Rose (Bloomington/London: Indiana UP, BFI 1995), 59–77: 70. Virilio writes in more detail about the simultaneous birth of film and aviation in *War and Cinema. The Logistics of Perception*. Here, he expounds the idea—also taken up and elaborated by Farocki—that aerial reconnaissance, not the equipment of airplanes with bombs, marks the beginning of military aviation. See Virilio, *War and Cinema. The Logistics of Perception* [1984], trans. Patrick Camiller (London: Verso 1989), 17ff.

83 Eye/Machine (three parts, D 2001–2003), War at a Distance, D 2003, director: Harun Farocki.

84 This line of argumentation is also found in As You See (FRG 1986, director: Harun Farocki): "Through the use of computers ('In dialogue with the computer'), products are already being developed to production standard without recourse to a single plan. A drawing, a depiction, or

difficult to place in the usual categories—their aesthetic value is anyway irrelevant. In contrast to the classical image types that in the 1970s and 80s were the obvious subject of an ideological critique of their manipulative content and the overt way in which such images pervade everyday life (advertising, television, and so on), the interpretation of operational images is more primarily concerned with the technical precision and mathematical exactness that make them into the constituents of military and economic operations. If the advertising image still belongs to the industrial era of the production and sale of commodities, the operational image is part of a postindustrial world of hardware and software that threatens to abolish the laboring hand and eye entirely.

Operational images are tied to a digital medium whose only concern is to capture and process the visual material as a data volume, in order to be able to pass on the corresponding information and initiate the next steps. They were first widely deployed during the Gulf War of 1991, when—in place of independent reporting—the images from the projectiles themselves, shown and interpreted by the American military, attested to the precision bombardment. Farocki sees a new visual logic in this:[85]

> Warfare and war reporting coincided. Such images are produced and controlled militarily. Cameras are built into the projectiles for the purpose of remote control. The aim is to avoid enemy fire, which causes the enemy to become indistinct. Today's highly technical war does not reckon with people, and only takes the human victims grudgingly, even flippantly into account.[86]

The images from the Gulf War structurally follow the same logic as Albrecht Meydenbauer's photograms: in both cases, in order to avoid direct danger, the photographer creates a distance between himself and the photographed object. However, the aim of this distancing separates the civilian endeavor of architectural surveying from the military one of bombardment. The abstraction of photogrammetry serves a human interest, but in the case of the Gulf War bombardment, though protecting the aggressor, it causes the

a master is only made if the client wants one. Only the client still wants to see a picture." Harun Farocki, "Wie man sieht," *Die Republik*, no. 76–78, September 9, 1986, 33–106: 104.

85 Here, too, there is a text by Virilio that might have inspired Farocki to create his installation Eye/Machine: the sequel to *War and Cinema*, published in Germany as *Krieg und Fernsehen* in 1993 and in English as *Desert Screen. War at the Speed of Light* (London: Continuum 2002).

86 Harun Farocki, "Material zum Film Erkennen und Verfolgen," on the website www.farocki-film.de [accessed July 15, 2014].

victims to disappear. While the image results in a theorization of depiction in both cases, the abstraction brought about by the images from the missile warheads doesn't lead to a critical distance. On the contrary, the "overview" they enable causes the distinction between reality and simulation to collapse. Writing about his immediate impression of the Gulf War, Klaus Theweleit has described this as follows:

> The people who died in Iraq in real time under the filming bombs were treated by the apparatus like human simulations. The military censor has decided to show us only this type of image, if possible. What we have here is the abolition of both the "authentic image" (of the famous image with the "dog tag," of the location and time around the neck) and the abolition of the eye as the organ of historical witness.[87]

This reference to the distancing function of "intelligent weapons" explains why the installations Eye/Machine I–III and the film War at a Distance, which are entirely concerned with operational images, can be seen as a consistent follow-up of Images of the World. Albrecht Meydenbauer's idea of replacing the direct survey with photographs in order to minimize his own danger can be updated to the remote-control weapons of the late twentieth century in which the original surveying function turns into its opposite. The step from the photograph to the electronic processing of images is only a gradual one, if Vilém Flusser's remark that even the photographic image represents a calculated image, and thus one that can be calculated and processed, is taken seriously:

> In accordance with its deeper structure, the photographic universe is grainy; it changes its appearance and color as a mosaic might change in which the little pieces are continually being replaced. The photographic universe is made up of such little pieces, made up of quanta, and is calculable (calculus = little piece or "particle")—an atomized, democratic universe, a jigsaw puzzle.[88]

Because of this quality, Farocki had already characterized the photograph as a calculable image, as an intermediate position between Jacquard's loom

87 Klaus Theweleit, "Neues und Altes vom brennenden Busch. Zum Golfkrieg" [1991], ibid., *Das Land, das Ausland heißt. Essays, Reden, Interviews zu Politik und Kunst* (Munich: dtv 1995), 71–86: 85.

88 Vilém Flusser, *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*, 66f.

and the pixelated images of television and computer monitors,[89] in As You See. The production of operational images is based on the calculability of images and, following the replacement of the manual worker by machine production, leads to the increased decoupling of seeing from the subject, as the most important function of the eye can likewise be delegated to an image-recognition program.

What relationship does this type of image, whose industrial integration is seen in Images of the World, have to the complex of film as theory? On the one hand, it can be argued that these images are quite literally "practical images" that aren't intended for viewing and have no self-reflexive potential. They are built into contexts of production, destruction, and security that entirely absorb them. On the other hand, this hidden character results in an increased necessity to examine their implicit preconditions. This is all the more urgent because none of the usual disciplines—art history, visual anthropology, media studies—feels particularly responsible for operational images. One could say that they are images that don't want to be seen but themselves see (and act); images that suspend the eye from its work in the same way that automation does with the hand; images "devoid of social intent, not for edification, not for reflection," as they are described in Eye/Machine I. While the hand—and thus the gestures of labor—belongs to the industrial era, in the postindustrial media world the eye is in the process of disappearing and is being superseded by technologies of image recognition, which are finding their way into a wide range of areas. The first part of Farocki's installation—proceeding from and framed by images from the "intelligent weapons" of the Gulf War of 1991—covers the civilian and military sectors in which electronic image recognition and processing are playing an increasingly important role: industrial production, medical examinations, traffic control, GPS, and above all the arms industry, which deploys these functions for military reconnaissance and precise destruction through high-tech control engineering.

89 See Farocki, "Wie man sieht," 62–64. See also Farocki's text "Reality Would Have to Begin," in which he goes in greater detail into the connection between the techniques of Renaissance painting and surveying photographs: "The mathematical artists of the Renaissance stretched transparent papers in frames and traced on the plane the outlines of the spatial objects shining through. With the invention of photography, these founders of the perspectival method seem to be the precursors of photographers; with the invention of scale measurement, they seem to be early scale-measurement engineers," Harun Farocki, "Reality Would have to Begin," trans. Laurent Faasch-Ibrahim, *Nachdruck/Imprint. Texte/Writings*, eds. Susanne Gaensheimer and Nikolaus Schafhausen (Berlin: Vorwerk 8 2001), 186-213: 198.

The third part of Eye/Machine takes up visual material from the military sector that was already partly shown in the first two installations and connects the individual points to draw a historical line. In 1942, an instructional film about the V1 rocket was primarily aimed at technicians, and in this sense doesn't argue propagandistically but didactically. A PR film for the company Texas Instruments, however, which praises the efficiency of a missile series that has been continually improved since the Vietnam War, is intended to both advertise and entertain. Wagner sounds accompany images of bombarding airplanes, and the voiceover argues in economic terms: experience has shown that up to 200 bombs are needed to destroy a target; with computers, this figure can be reduced to forty. The laser guidance system of this new type of missile finally brings the rate down to one on one: "With Paveway, it's one target, one bomb." In contrast to these two film clips, the operational images of the 1990s no longer require a viewer; they aren't intended as either instruction or propaganda. Image recognition represents itself within them in a kind of "cinematography by devices." The installation suggests that the economic principle of efficiency enhancement also requires a new type of war: "If each bomb hits its target, fewer bombs can be sold. Lost turnover. To compensate, more guidance systems must be sold. [...] The economy calls for wars of the highest precision, such as wars declared humanitarian."

The triad of displacement, rendition, and surveying that is highlighted as a characteristic of photographs in this examination of three films by Godard and Farocki necessitates a differentiation of the images' potential for abstraction. For what the three operations have in common is that the technically produced image is detached from both author and referent, and attests to an abstract, mechanical gaze. The abstraction associated with this has both possibilities and dangers. On the one hand, the distancing potential of the aerial photographs of Auschwitz and the operational images from the Gulf War, with their implicit alienation effect, present an opportunity to talk about the genocide in the first place; on the other hand, the photographs are in themselves the result of a coldly observing camera eye lacking all vividness. If we see the photograph as a decisive step on the way to calculated and calculable images,[90] it becomes clear that abstraction per se shouldn't be understood as a means of acquiring

90 The difference between pressing a shutter release and the gradual emergence of a woven image on a punch-card loom brings about an acceleration in production that leads in the long term to an autonomization of the image through sheer quantity.

knowledge but can only be profitably employed by a knowing subject. The distancing element of operational images is that of a cynically "objective" gaze that disregards what it "sees." It recalls what Béla Balázs called "murderous abstraction," which completely ignores the specific—here the human—case. We thus need to distinguish between two types of abstraction articulated within these images. There is the one with positive connotations which takes the image beyond itself and enables a qualitative leap to a conceptual level. It arises through the possibilities of montage or the multiplication of differing levels within an image. It is also linked to a seeing subject, who actively reconstructs the theory of the image from within the image itself: reading, editing room, "author as receiver" are the key words for this form of abstraction. On the other hand, certain abstract images have completely detached themselves from the sensibility of an observing and analyzing subject. Examples can be seen in the aerial photographs from Images of the World, and even more so in the operational images from Farocki's works since 2000. The decisive thing is that here abstraction becomes a vacuous principle in which the image abolishes itself. Compared to the "powerful" images of the cinema or painting, operational images—at least for the moment—have no aesthetic effect. They aren't interesting as images but as data that control processes of production and destruction.

Jean-Louis Comolli's remark, quoted in chapter one, that the photograph means both the triumph and the grave of the eye—both a celebration of visibility and the relinquishment of the eye, which now successively delegates its functions to the machine—is strongly confirmed by the operational images analyzed by Farocki. The link between mechanical and mathematical knowledge (between polished lenses and programmed software) has now made it possible to substantially detach the physiological act of seeing from the human being. This development repeats another historical phenomenon of cultural relinquishment: just as the act of visual perception is being increasingly automated today, the gestures of the hand were subject to a fundamental change during the twentieth century.

6. Two or Three Ways of Speaking with the Hands

> "I have sometimes wondered why we have no Treatise on the Hand, a thorough study of the innumerable potentialities of that miraculous machine which blends delicate sensibility and nimble strength. There would be no limit to such a study."
>
> Paul Valéry[1]

In conversation with Serge Daney and two other editors of the *Cahiers du cinéma* in 1982, Godard suddenly starts to talk about a fictive choice:

> If I had been condemned by a caliph with the words, "All right, you may continue making films, but you must decide between blindness or having your hands cut off. What is your choice?" I think I would choose blindness; it would interfere with me less [...]. I would be more obstructed by not being able to use my hands when making a film than by not being able to use my eyes.[2]

Godard's assertion seems absurd. It is difficult to imagine the hands being more important to a director than his eyes, and how blindness would inhibit him less than the loss of his hands. Yet this provocative preference for the hand over the eye has its parallels in Godard's films—the scene with the blind editing assistant in JLG/JLG analyzed in a previous chapter is only one obvious example. "If the skin of my hand was as sensitive as your eye, I should see with my hand as you see with your eyes; and sometimes I imagine there are animals who have no eyes, but can nevertheless see,"[3] says Diderot, in one of the reference texts for Godard's self-portrait. And Godard has in fact always linked his examination of different types of images at least implicitly to his interest in hands and their forms of expression. His films and texts are pervaded by hands and thoughts about their relation to theory and practice—most clearly in Histoire(s) du cinéma (ill. 65–70).

1 Paul Valéry, "Address to the College of Surgeons," [1938] ibid., *Occasions,* trans. Roger Shattuck, Frederick Brown (Princeton: Princeton UP 1970), 129–150, 143.

2 Jean Luc Godard, "Le Chemin vers la parole" [1982], *Godard par Godard I,* 498–519: 503f.

3 Denis de Diderot, "Addition to the Letter on the Blind" [1749], *Diderot's Early Philosophical Works*, ed. Margaret Jourdain (New York: Lenox Hill 1972), 142–157: 156.

Ills. 65-70

Hands trying to feel for each other, as in one of the first shots of La Chinoise, hands making fists to present the socialist greeting, as in Le petit soldat, hands gliding along a body, as in the opening scene of Une femme mariée: a whole catalogue of sequences can be complied from Godard's early films in which the hand is the main figure of cinematic narrative and

takes over the direction for the duration of individual scenes.[4] Narration becomes manual in a literal sense.

But Godard's interest in the motif can't be restricted to the 1960s. He has also repeatedly made hands into independent figures in more recent films. Nouvelle vague, for example, begins with the autonomous and enigmatic scene of a hand being fleetingly caressed by another, a gesture which is taken up later in the film in what turns out to be one of its central shots.[5] In an extended interview with Alain Bergala, in which he recalls his productions of the 1980s and 90s, Godard mentions the frequent occurrence of the motif: "Shots of hands repeatedly occur in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*. I only noticed this afterwards. There are a great many shots of hands."[6] What Godard describes in relation to the concentrated montage of the Histoire(s), and explains as an unconscious impulse, can in fact be observed over a period of over forty years. But what pattern does this preference follow? To what discourses do these scenes allude?

Once more, the motif of the hand is a bridge to the work of Harun Farocki. As in Godard's work, hands are repeatedly seen in Farocki's films, seeming to detach themselves from their bodies, observed with great attention as autonomous figures with their own forms of expression: in Between Two Wars the fingers of the chimney baron dance a tango with those of a young woman, a metaphor for the convergence of politics and economic interests during the Weimar Republic; having received the news that nothing more stands in the way of the decisive merger of several coking plants, the baron symbolically interlocks his fingers (ill. 71 and 72).[7]

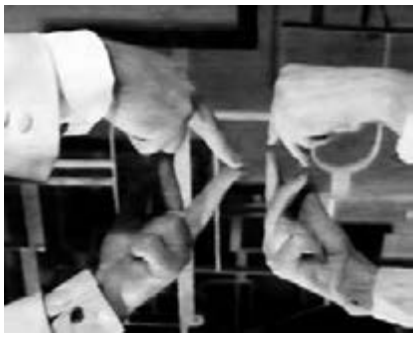
As You See often shows a robotic hand that mechanically grabs a component and carries out various grasping movements: an emblem for the shift

4 When Godard was awarded Switzerland's Grand Prix Design for his lifetime achievements in 2010, Michael Baute made Godardloop, a 27-minute compilation of visual motifs from the films of Jean-Luc Godard. One of the segments is devoted entirely to the motif of hands. Godardloop, FR/G 2010, director: Michael Baute. [https://vimeo.com/31347453, accessed July 15, 2014.]

5 Nouvelle vague, F/CH 1990, director: Jean-Luc Godard. See Elke Bippus, "'Das Wunder unserer leeren Hände.' Jean-Luc Godards Erzählmodus in Nouvelle Vague," *HAND. Medium – Körper – Technik*, eds. Ulrike Bergermann, Andrea Sick, Andrea Klier (Bremen: Thealit 2001), 285–297.

6 Godard, "Une boucle bouclée. Nouvel entretien avec Jean-Luc Godar par Alain Bergala," [1997], *Godard par Godard II*, 9–41: 30.

7 Five years after Between Two Wars, Farocki wrote as follows about a scene in Jean-Luc Godard's Passion: "The strongest and deepest connection between two hands is the interlocking of the fingers." Harun Farocki, "Passion," *Filmkritik* 7/1983, 317–328: 324.



Ill. 71 and ill. 72

from manual labor to industrial production, and later to the postindustrial processing of data rather than material.[8] Yet the clumsy, unchanging movements of the artificial hand also refer to the dexterity and complexity of the real limb; in its planned abolition through automatization, the superiority of actual manual work is revealed. The installation Interface performs a series of gestures at the editing table and repeatedly focuses on Farocki's own hand, whose movements illustrate the "gestic thinking" about which he speculated in "What an Editing Room Is." In this sense, Interface can be read as an important study for the television production The Expression of Hands, which was made in 1997 and represents a kind of metafilm on ways of portraying the hand. The fact that—as with Cine City Paris—it contains a commentary on a scene from a Godard film once again shows the close interweaving of the work of Farocki and Godard.

Before going into the subject in more detail, and in order to indicate one of the most important functions of such hand sequences, I would like to return to the photograph of the woman in Auschwitz—discussed in the previous chapter—from Images of the World and the Inscription of War. The photograph develops an unsettling dynamic through the historical knowledge of the viewer. Death and survival coincide, as Roland Barthes remarked in relation to a photograph of a condemned man: "But the *punctum* is: *he is going to die*. I read at the same time: *this will be* and *this has been*."[9] What Barthes sees as the defining characteristic of the photographic medium as a whole also applies to the specific photograph examined by Harun Farocki.

8 These economic and historical transitions play an important role in As You See and other films by Harun Farocki: the working title of Images of the World and the Inscription of War was The History of Labor.

9 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography* [1980], trans. Richard Howard (London: Vintage 1993), 96.

Ill. 73

The image is ambiguous, as it both participates in and denies death. A production photo, taken as part of the accompanying material for Farocki's film and often reproduced since then,[10] shows the woman framed by the author's hands (ill. 73).

The hands prominently crop the picture and determine a provisional framing. Together with the scissors, which lie ready for use next to the photograph, they prepare a shot and mark it as an enlargement of the original photograph. The hands cut, but they also seem to protect the woman and shield her from her surroundings. The gesture shows the author and producer of the film literally intervening in the argumentation, and presents the production of theory as a work process. It directs the eye and the attention of the viewer. In this respect, the hands become part of the act of seeing: "The hand intervenes into the image, emulates a lens of flesh and blood, works with the eye and directs it—through the act of intervention itself—to something that is perhaps then taken up by the commentary."[11] In Images of the World there are several such scenes: we see Farocki leafing through a book of images of Algerian women photographed for the first time (ill. 74 and 75), or examining the aerial photographs of the concentration camp. The hand establishes relationships and provisionally determines viewing angles, for example to indicate what it means to subject one's face to a camera for the first time.

The interest both Farocki and Godard have in the hand has several sources in film history and wider cultural contexts. Both directors admire the films of Robert Bresson,[12] whom Pascal Bonitzer described as the inventor of a "special language of the hands": "The great cineastes have tried to show that a hand says something different from what the mouth declares. Bresson has created a special language of the hands, a form of gesture unique to him

10 For example, on the cover of the book by Nora M. Alter, *Projecting History. German Nonfiction Cinema 1967–2000* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press 2002).

11 Johannes Beringer, "Hand und Auge," *Zelluloid* no. 28/29, May 1989, 64–68: 64. The same issue of *Zelluloid* also includes a discussion between Harun Farocki and Klaus Heinrich that took place in Heinrich's postgraduate seminar.

12 In 1984, *Filmkritik* published two special editions around Robert Bresson's film L'Argent. They contain Farocki's text "Bresson: A Stylist" (later included in Farocki's book *Nachdruck/Imprint*) and extracts (about actors) from a long interview with Bresson conducted by Michel Delahaye and Jean-Luc Godard in 1966. *Filmkritik* 1–2/1984, 25–34.

Ill. 74 and ill. 75

which almost denounces the words of the mouth."[13] The uniqueness in Bresson's approach to the hand, as in L'Argent (ill. 76–78), lies in a radical autonomization and the resulting possibilities of creating tension from the equality of two contradictory forms of expression.[14]

The language of the hands is opposed to and foils that of the word but can also occasionally correspond to it. The discrepancy between the two forms of expression enables frequent disruption and mutual commentary. Behind this is a poetics that is contrary to the usual cinematic redundancies arising from an understanding of sound and image as a mere doubling, and instead makes use of their opposition and the friction between them.

Over and above this film-historical connection, the hand also draws attention to a larger cultural and historical framework. Farocki and Godard have had a continual interest in the economic background to filming, and in work processes and technologies. The historical background to many of Harun Farocki's films is the mechanization and automatization of increasingly wider spheres of human action, and the close connection this has to the development of technologies of image recognition and production. Whether the subject matter is the replacement of the human

13 Jean-Claude Carrière, Pascal Bonitzer, *Praxis des Drehbuchschreibens* (Berlin: Alexander Verlag 1999), 113.

14 This is taken up explicitly or implicitly by both Godard and Farocki. Farocki refers to it in his text on Bresson, and explains the attention to the hand in terms of the change it creates: "Continuously looking at the importance of speaking people (with words and with facial gestures) is unbearable, even if the camera is positioned most skillfully. Before Bresson shows a close-up of a face, he shows the close-up of a hand. Wth passion, he cuts off the head and with that the face, and concentrates on the actions of the hand (or the foot)." Harun Farocki, "Bresson: A Stylist," ibid., *Nachdruck/Imprint*,172–184, 180. See also Hartmut Bitomsky's characterization of L'Argent: "Hands that seize, hold, pass on, receive, deliver something. One could also pursue the film as a long and convoluted from one hand to the next." Hartmut Bitomsky, "Ohne Alibi sein," *Filmkritik* 1–2/1984, 17–24: 20.

Ills. 76-78

eye by image-recognition software in the productive and destructive industries (Images of the World, Eye/Machine I–III, War at a Distance) or the impending abolition of manual work by industrial manufacturing (As You See), the subtraction of the human being from work processes has been a determining theme of Farocki's films since the 1980s. Against this background, the motif of the hand makes it possible to focus these interests with an image and enables the director to raise the issue of work processes and the relationship between "immaterial" intellectual production and manual labor. The hand is a survivor of manual, non-alienated forms of production at a time when increasingly large areas of sensory experience are being delegated to machines—machines that see and grasp, machines of production and destruction. In relation to work processes, the hand stands for the concrete and individual in contrast to the interchangeable and abstract rhythm of machines.

***

Reflection on the significance of the hand goes as far back as ancient Greece, where it marks the intellectual point of departure of a European philosophy of technology. In "On the Parts of Animals," Aristotle contrasts two positions and sets the course of the discussion for the following centuries:

> Now it is the opinion of Anaxagoras that the possession of these hands is the cause of man being of all animals the most intelligent. But it is more rational to suppose that his endowment with hands is the consequence rather than the cause of his superior intelligence. For the hands are instruments or organs, and the invariable plan of nature in

> distributing the organs is to give each to such animal as can make use of it; nature acting in this matter as any prudent man would do. For it is a better plan to take a person who is already a flute-player and give him a flute, than to take one who possesses a flute and teach him the art of flute-playing.[15]

Disregarding the plausibility of this argumentation—how can someone become a flute player without first owning an instrument?—Aristotle's juxtaposition exposes two viewpoints that continue to determine the discussion of the hand during the following centuries, either seeing it materialistically as a physical a priori of reason or idealistically as preceding from the primate of reason. But the idea expounded shortly after this passage has had more significant influence: Aristotle claims that the hand "is not to be looked on as one organ, but as many," and continues to characterize it as "an instrument for further instruments. This instrument, therefore—the hand—of all instruments the most variously serviceable, has been given by nature to man, the animal of all animals the most capable of acquiring the most varied handicrafts.[16]

Various modern reappraisals go back to this position. Marshall McLuhan's proposal of understanding media as extensions of the human body, as technical "extensions of man,"[17] can be seen as a continuation of Aristotelian thought, for example. But the evolutionary deliberations of Friedrich Engels are also based on Aristotle's ideas. In Engel's concept, the human being is only secondarily a social and communicative animal. Socialization and communication can be traced back to the gestures of labor, as both developments can only take place when the hand is liberated from walking on all fours. For this reason, the hand not only participates in the "transition from ape to man" but as the organ of labor it also represents the decisive step within the process of evolution:

> Thus the hand is not only the organ of labor, *it is also the product of labor*. Only by labor, by adaptation to ever new operations, through

15 Aristotle, *On the Parts of Animals*, trans. William Ogle (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co 1882), 117–118.

16 Ibid., 118. See also Wolfgang Krohn, "Technik als Lebensform. Von der aristotelischen Praxis zur Technisierung der Lebenswelt," *Philosophie der natürlichen Mitwelt. Grundlagen – Probleme – Perspektiven. Festschrift für Klaus Michael Meyer-Abich*, eds. Hans Werner Ingensiep, Anne Eusterschulte (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 2002), 193–210.

17 See Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man* [1964] (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press 1994).

> the inheritance of muscles, ligaments, and, over longer periods of time, bones that had undergone special development and the ever-renewed employment of this inherited finesse in new, more and more complicated operations, have given the human hand the high degree of perfection required to conjure into being the pictures of a Raphael, the statues of a Thorwaldsen, the music of a Paganini.[18]

Where Aristotle saw reason as the decisive factor in the hand's versatility, labor was the crucial element for Engels. Surprisingly, he doesn't instance the gestures of the proletarian worker in order to illustrate his theory but the activities of painter, sculpture, and musician. He doesn't find his examples in socially useful work but in art as the complete self-realization of the hands. With his glorification of the hand as an evolutionary product of labor, Engels also enthrones art as the most consummate outcome of manual dexterity: no art without the preparatory and schooling gestures of labor.

Taken together, Engels' and Aristotle's ideas enable the concepts of labor, thought, and art to determine a wide-ranging set of coordinates within which to think about the hand. In contrast to what one might first expect, the hand is not exclusively associated with practice but equally points to reflection and aesthetics. So a hasty schematism that sees practice as concrete handiwork and theoretical thought as its abstract counterpart is inadequate and has provoked objection at various times. In the Romantic utopia of the unity of action and reflection, the opposition of hand and thought was very much called into question, and Marxism insisted on an unalienated, unified form of work, which had meanwhile been differentiated through the division of labor and the increasing alienation of manual and mental processes. "It is said that some think, the others act!" is how Denis de Rougemont summarizes the popular view of the hand in his influential book *Penser avec les mains*, only to continue with a call to overcome this dualism: "But the true condition of man is to think with his hands."[19] Thoughts from Rougemont's book regularly appear in Godard's films from the 1980s onwards and take on an almost programmatic character in chapter 4A of Histoire(s) du cinéma.[20]

18 Friedrich Engels, "The Part Played by Labor in the Transition from Ape to Man" [1873-1883], ibid. *Dialectic of Nature* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Press 1954), 228–246: 230.

19 Denis de Rougemont, *Penser avec les mains* [1936] (Paris: Gallimard 1972), 151.

20 In chapter 4A, Le contrôle de l'univers, Godard quotes a long passage from Denis de Rougement's book: "It is high time for thought to become once more / as it is in reality / dangerous to the thinker / and able to transform reality / where I create I am real / Rilke wrote / some think,

De Rougement's appeal is more than the extension of the Aristotelian figure of thought that considers thinking and acting as two sides of the same coin. His essay, which first appeared in 1936, also politically charges the connection between hand and brain, and from this derives its call for committed, "intervening" thought. Diagnosing a split between apparently unreflecting activists on the one hand (de Rougemont lived and worked during the mid-1930s in Frankfurt and observed both the National Socialist regime and the Stalinism of the Soviet Union) and apparently disinterested intellectuals on the other, his formula is a plea for reflecting on intervention and intellectual commitment. De Rougement contrasts the intellectual and the worker in the poles of theory and practice in order, in dialectic conclusion, to derive his call for "thinking with the hands" from the two poles' apparent incompatibility, which is countered by his appeal. Numerous further distinctions are associated with this basic opposition: the difference between idealism and materialism in the history of ideas, the economic distinction between conception and execution, the topographic contrast between individual desk (or editing table) and abstract factory. In his self-description, the intellectual is in an intermediate position, as he always sees his task in giving his theories a practical function. Thus questions about the hand are also questions about action, and where necessary about agitation. A cipher like the year 1968, which for both Farocki and Godard is a crystallization point for the question of the social relevance of filmmaking, therefore also stands for the problem of how theoretical thought (of a writer, filmmaker, intellectual) can be transformed into concrete political action.[21] Against this background, the hand represents a privileged motif if one wishes to speak cinematically about the simultaneity of practice and theory. It is the hand itself that poses the question of the status of theory because it is the organ of execution but also because it has always had a connection to the complex problems of perception and

they say / others act / but the true human condition / is thinking with one's hands." Jean-Luc Godard, "chapter four (a) control of the universe," ibid., *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, trans. John Howe (Munich: ECM New Series 1999), 36–49: 38f.

21 See the important interview with Godard from 1967 in which the questions of the coming year are already formulated: Jean-Luc Godard, "Struggle on Two Fronts," ibid. *Godard on Godard*, 67–104. Farocki is distinctly reserved and skeptical now about the events of 1968: "I don't want to badmouth '68, but I'm still quite hung over from it. I once read that the French people shouted 'The King shall live!' at the beginning of the revolution—this meant that they wanted to overthrow the monarchy. I have that same feeling: we said something completely different from what we meant, and nowadays it seems that our intentions were right." "Nine Minutes in the Yard. A Conversation with Harun Farocki" [2000], *Harun Farocki: Working on the Sight-Lines*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2004), 297–314: 314.

reason. Because of its diversity, it is the symbol of both the active and the thinking person.

Aside from the complex of labor and the problem of the oscillations between theory and practice, the hand is primarily an organ of communication. In his paleographic study of hand and word, André Leroi-Gourhan quotes the fourth-century Gregory of Nyssa:

> So it was thanks to the manner in which our bodies are organized that our mind, like a musician, struck the note of language within us and we became capable of speech. This privilege would surely never have been ours if our lips had been required to perform the onerous and difficult task of procuring nourishment for our bodies. But our hands took over that task, releasing our mouths for the service of speech.[22]

The autonomization of the hand described by Leroi-Gourhan leads to the liberation of the mouth and enables sophisticated linguistic communication. This naturally doesn't mean that all language is henceforth monopolized by the mouth. In its impressing independence, the hand is a sophisticated communicative organ in its own right. Particularly in the era of the silent film, which developed a rich visual inventory and has a strong presence in the thinking of Godard and Farocki, the gestural potential of the hand was repeatedly mobilized in order to give the "dumb" medium a language of its own.[23]

There are two sides to the conception of the hand as an organ of communication: on that of the addressee, the "expression of the hands" calls for the necessity of interpreting its gestures; for as long as there has been a physiognomic practice of reading characteristics and states of mind from faces, there has also been a practice of interpreting gestures and reading the hand—something that goes as far as gestural language and chiromancy. In recent years, due to an anthropological orientation in cultural studies and an interest in the "readability" of the body, numerous publications have appeared that deal with the hand from various perspectives.[24]

22 Gregory of Nyssa: "Treatise on the Creation of Man" [379], quoted in André Leroi-Gourhan, *Gesture and Speech*, trans. Anna Bostock Berger (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press 1993), 25.

23 I will return to the function of the hand in the silent film in connection with Farocki's film The Expression of Hands.

24 For an evolutionary and neurobiological perspective, see Frank R. Wilson, *The Hand. How its Use Shapes the Brain, Language, and Human Culture* (New York: Pantheon 1998). An overview of the various discourses on the hand is provided by Marco Wehr, Martin Weinmann, eds. *Die*

> The "tool of tools" is one of the most individual parts of the human body, so it is plausible not to attempt to read solely from faces but also from hands. Hands and arms are active as narrative agents of the body in both spontaneously individual and culturally acquired, coded gestures.[25]

Two things should be noted here: Jörg Becker, co-author of Harun Farocki's film The Expression of Hands, describes the hand both as an appeal to reading and interpretation, and as an autonomous narrative element of cinematic and other discourses. The hand occupies the interface between emotion and convention. Its special place in relation to the rest of the body has to do with both its readability and its reflective quality. "It can happen that what someone writes comes as much from the hand as the head,"[26] writes Hans-Jost Frey, provoking the question as to which of the two body parts his sentence itself came from:

> It is conceivable that writing, taken in the broadest sense, occurs as the flow of thinking into the hand, which forms the thought into words, so that an exact boundary between inside and outside, thought and language, mind and hand can no longer be drawn. The transitions become more imperceptible and, just as thinking guides the hand, the deliberation of the hand makes thought handleable.[27]

Frey goes beyond the Aristotelian idea of a mutual correspondence between mind and hand by relating the two entities closer to one another and pointing to their blending in the act of writing.[28] Furthermore, the

Hand. Werkzeug des Geistes (Heidelberg: Spektrum 1999). The conference proceedings *HAND. Medium – Körper – Technik. Zwischen Kunst und Wissenschaft*, eds. Ulrike Bergermann, Andrea Sick, Andrea Klier (Bremen: Thealit 2001) address media theory from a feminist perspective. Part of the Cologne collaborative research center on "Media and Cultural Communication" examines the hand at the interface of rhetoric, iconography, and media theory: Matthias Bickenbach, Annina Klappert, Hedwig Pompe, eds. *Manus loquens. Medium der Geste – Geste der Medien* (Cologne: DuMont 2003 [= *Mediologie* vol. 7]). See also Volker Pantenburg, "Aus Händen lesen," *KulturPoetik* vol. 3,1 (2003), 42–58.

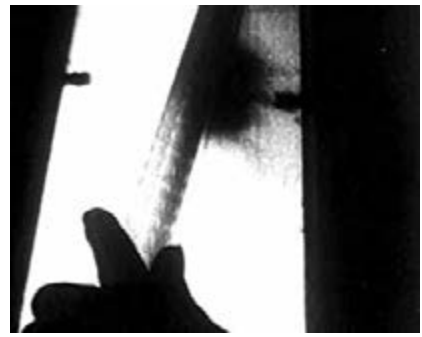
25 Jörg Becker, "Der Ausdruck der Hände. Ein filmischer Terminus," *Suchbilder. Visuelle Kultur zwischen Algorithmen und Archiven*, eds. Wolfgang Ernst, Stefan Heidenreich, Ute Holl (Berlin: Kadmos 2003), 30–45: 33.

26 Hans-Jost Frey, "Tastatur," ibid., *Lesen und Schreiben* (Basel: Urs Engler 1998), 48–53: 48.

27 Ibid., 50.

28 At this point, there should be a discussion of Heidegger's writings, and also of Jacques Derrida's reading of Heidegger, in which the hand becomes the protagonist of a poetics of offering. I will return to this in connection with Godard's Nouvelle vague. Jacques Derrida,

quotation links the problem of writing to the question of reflectivity. Gunter Gebauer formulates this in general terms: "Of all human organs, the hand possesses the widest variety of active functions. It can be applied in a great many ways to things within and out of its reach, and also to the *body*, including the hand itself."[29] Before any interpretation of its individual functions, the hand therefore stands for a multiplicity of possible applications that is also important for its deliberate use in films. Gebauer links the hand linguistically to activity (Ger. *Handlung*) and notes the possibility of a reflexive relationship of the hand to itself and the rest of the body, but in his description the hand also appears as a fundamentally open and ambiguous organ. Maurice Merleau-Ponty takes the idea of the self-reflective possibilities of the hand further, and, as I have shown, Godard adopts an important aspect of his ideas in JLG/JLG:



Ills. 79-81

"*Geschlecht* II Heidegger's Hand," trans. John P. Leavey, *Deconstruction and Philosophy. The Texts of Jacques Derrida*, ed. John Sallis (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1987), 161–196.

29 Gunter Gebauer, "Hand," *Vom Menschen. Handbuch Historische Anthropologie*, ed. Christoph Wulf (Weinheim und Basel: Beltz 1997), 479–489: 479.

> If my left hand is touching my right hand, and if I should suddenly wish to apprehend with my right hand the work of my left hand as it touches, this reflection of the body upon itself always miscarries at the last moment: the moment I feel my left hand with my right hand, I correspondingly cease touching my right hand with my left hand. But this last-minute failure does not drain all truth from that presentiment I had of being able to touch myself touching: my body does not perceive, but it is as if it were built around the perception that dawns through it; through its whole internal arrangement, its sensory-motor circuits, the return ways that control and release movements, it is, as it were, prepared for a self-perception, even though it is never itself that is perceived nor itself that perceives.[30]

Merleau-Ponty's idea shows both the possibilities and limitations of the self-reflective potential of the hand. The mutual touching of both hands remains only the attempt at self-perception: the congruity of gesture and insight forms an asymptote that may be approached but is finally unreachable.

In the silent era of filmmaking, particular attention was given to gestures and their "language of the hands." So it is unsurprising that the theoretical concepts about the medium also speak about the hand. Walter Benjamin, for example, pursues and transforms Gregory of Nyssa's idea of a new autonomy of the hand through upright walking. In his essay on the work of art, he links the mechanization of reproduction brought about by photography to an emancipation of the hand:

> For the first time, photography freed the hand from the most important artistic tasks in the process of pictorial reproduction—tasks that now devolved upon the eye alone. And since the eye perceives more swiftly than the hand can draw, the process of pictorial reproduction was enormously accelerated, so that it could now keep pace with speech.[31]

Benjamin therefore not only sees photography as the first technological medium in a chain of de-auratizing forms of reproduction that uncouple the work of art from the here and now; he also discerns a shift in sensory

30 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible* [1964], trans. Alphonso Lingis (Evanston: Northwestern UP 1968), 3–49: 9.

31 Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility. Second Version" [1936], trans. Edmund Jephcott and Harry Zohn, ibid., *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility and other Writings on Media*, eds. Michael W. Jennings, Brigid Doherty, Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge/London: Harvard UP 2008), 19–55, 20–21.

responsibilities. If previous to photography the hand had been the decisive organ of artistic reproduction, now the eye became the gage of aesthetic decision. For Benjamin, this is primarily connected with acceleration. Because the camera aperture opens and closes in an instant, the process of reproduction is not only simplified but above all considerably accelerated, with the effect of extending the pictorial universe. One theory that is at least indirectly connected to this development holds that the appraisal of this new, considerably more wide-ranging image world and its characteristics—such as the evolution of an "optical subconscious," as Benjamin suggests—requires the development of new proficiencies in reading and interpretation.

***

> But hands are a complicated organism, a delta into which many divergent streams of life rush together in order to pour themselves into the great storm of action. There is a history of hands; they have their own culture, their particular beauty; one concedes to them the right of their own development, their own needs, feelings, caprices, and tendernesses.[32]

It is not by chance that Rainer Maria Rilke describes the world, whose center is understood to be the hand, as a reflex of the encounter with a visual artist. The quotation comes from Rilke's essay about Auguste Rodin, written in 1902. It follows a catalogue-like enumeration of the wide range of hand types found in Rodin's work. Yet Rilke by no means repeats the usual topos of the "hand of the artist," from which the creativity of the master can be read.[33] On the contrary, Rodin's hand sculptures, as Rilke describes them, are almost completely detached from their owners and lead a life of their own.

A straight line leads from Rilke's essay on Rodin to his *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*, also written in Paris. The image of the hand pervades Rilke's only long prose text like a leitmotif.[34] The many hand episodes include the haunting scene in which a limb "emancipates" itself from body and mind and follows its own will. A banal event—the search for a pen which

32 Rainer Maria Rilke, *Auguste Rodin* [1902], trans. Jessie Lemont, Hans Trausil (New York: Sunwise 1919), 40.

33 Karl Riha published a collection of examples in word and image in the 1980s. See Karl Riha, *Das Buch der Hände. Eine Bild- und Textanthologie* (Nördlingen: GRENO 1986).

34 See Idris Parry, "Malte's Hand," *German Life and Letters* 11 (1957), 1–12.

has rolled off the desk—causes the young Malte to witness a hallucinatory encounter with a phantom hand that seems to grasp for his own:

> I could already make out the wall in back, which ended at a bright baseboard. I oriented myself by the legs of the table; above all I recognized my own, outstretched hand moving around down below all by itself, like some aquatic animal investigating the bottom. I looked at my hand, I still remember, almost curiously; it seemed as if it could do things I had not taught it as it tapped around there so independently, with motions I had never seen it make. I pursued it as it pressed forward, it interested me, I was prepared for anything.[35]

And indeed the now alien hand is "answered" by another one, seeming to come from within the wall: "But how could I have been prepared for another hand coming out of the wall towards mine, a bigger, uncommonly skinny kind of a hand I had never seen. It was searching around in a similar fashion from the other side, and both outstretched hands were blindly moving toward each other."[36] This excerpt from *Malte Laurids Brigge* is a particularly striking example of how far the autonomization of the hand can be taken.[37] Through the dissociation of seeing from feeling, which is entirely given over to the hand, Rilke creates an uncanny effect of alienation and estrangement. The autonomy of the hand offers narrative possibilities for presenting the familiar as foreign.

The theme of hands with a life of their own has been increasingly adopted since the early twentieth century. The horror movie in particular repeatedly took up the motif, treating it literally: In The Hands of Orlac, Robert Wiene has a former concert pianist succumb to the belief that the hands he has received in a transplant belonged to a murderer and that he must himself now murder. In The Beast with Five Fingers, Peter Lorre's hand completely detaches itself from his body and attempts to strangle its owner.[38]

35 Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* [1919], trans. Burton Pike (Champaign: Dalkey Archive Press 2008), 69.

36 Ibid.

37 In this, it is similar to a short prose fragment by Kafka that was given the title "The Struggle of the Hands" by Max Brod. See Franz Kafka, *The Blue Octavo Notebooks*, trans. Ernst Kaiser and Eithne Wilkins, ed. Max Brod (Boston: Exact Change 1991). For a reading of Kafka's text, see Pantenburg, "Aus Händen lesen," 42–58.

38 Also worthy of mention are Oliver Stone's The Hand (USA 1981) or Sam Raimi's Evil Dead II (USA 1987), in which hands also become independent and rebel against their (and other) bodies.

What Rilke's text achieves through narrative perspective and the dissociation of two senses is immediately suggested in film by the possibilities of the camera. Making a hand visible and placing it at the centre of a film requires the close-up, a special type of shot that Béla Balázs—in *The Spirit of Film*, written in 1930—called the "first, radical change of distance"[39] between audience and actor. For Balázs, the radical redefinition of the gap between work and viewer is the distinctive feature that distinguishes the medium of film from all other art forms, particularly from theater. Calm, distanced observation isn't possible in the cinema because the viewer's perspective on events is altered with every shot as the audience is hurled from one point of view to the next. The aggressive and violent potential of film lies in this permanent, jerky alteration of perspective, whose effect on perception was described by Walter Benjamin as *choc* and whose radical novelty was also emphasized by Rudolf Arnheim:

> For example: In scene 1 a man is discovered ringing the front doorbell of a house. Immediately following appears a totally different view—the interior of the house with a maid coming to answer the door. Thus the spectator has been jerked violently through the closed door.[40]

Only through such jumps between different shots or field sizes and the reduction of distance was the hand able to move into the center of cinematic attention and become the second lead alongside the human face.[41] The motif of the hand requires a rudimentary form of montage in order to be able to appear at all.

In the television series The Addams Family (and its cinema spin-offs), the "helping hand," which lives in a small box and comes out from time to time when needed, is a full member of the family.

39 Béla Balázs, *Early Film Theory: Visible Man and The Spirit of Film*, trans. Rodney Livingstone, ed. Erica Carter (Oxford/New York: Berghahn Books 2010), 100–111: 100.

40 Rudolf Arnheim, *Film as Art* [1932], trans L. M. Sieveking, Ian F. D. Morrow (Berkeley: University of California Press 1957), 8–33: 27. Benjamin makes the following remark about the *choc* effect of film: "Film has freed the physical shock effect—which Dadaism had kept wrapped, as it were, inside the moral shock effect—from this wrapping." Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility. Second Version," 39.

41 Balázs cites Carl Theodor Dreyer's La passion de Jeanne d'Arc, the most well-known film based almost completely on close-ups of faces. Today, one would also have to name Ingmar Bergman and John Cassavetes, among many others, as directors who have repeatedly addressed themselves to the human face. Significantly, they have both made films simply entitled "The Face" (Ansiktet, S 1958, director: Ingmar Bergman; Faces, USA 1968, director: John Cassavetes). For the phenomenon of the face in film, see Christa Blümlinger, Karl Sierek, eds. *Das Gesicht im Zeitalter des bewegten Bildes* (Vienna: Sonderzahl 2002); see also Joanna Barck, Petra Löffler, eds. *Gesichter des Films* (Bielefeld: transcript 2005), here particularly F. T. Meyer, "Hand," 109–120.

Overcoming the distance between viewer and action has a further consequence, which can be described as the isolation and parceling of the human body. What Rilke depicts as a disturbing effect of alienation and division is one of the most common cinematic techniques. Balázs primarily describes this in relation to the face, but his remarks can readily be applied to the hand as a filmic topos, as viewing is first and foremost the result of a technical process, independent of the filmed object:

> For the close-up does not just isolate its object, [...] it raises it out of space altogether. No longer bound by space, the image is also not bound by time. In this psychological dimension of the close-up, the image becomes concept and can be transformed like thought itself.[42]

With regard to the question of concretion and abstraction posed in chapter one, the close-up is paradoxically able to combine proximity and distance. By drawing close to the object portrayed, thus showing it more substantially and precisely than before, the camera also detaches it from all context and turns it into freely disposable material. Interestingly, Balázs describes this not as a change that is purely immanent in the image but as a categorical leap from image to concept. He thinks of the camera—and here his attitude is comparable to that of Godard and Farocki—as a research instrument, as a tool that can amalgamate art, science, and politics into a joint complex. And indeed the "intellectualization" of film, as can be seen with Eisenstein, for example, can only be achieved through deliberate montage.

At this point, it is helpful to point out a different connection between the hand and (cinematic) narration: the development from the concrete (the individual frame) to the abstract (through the linking of several images) correlates with the evolutionary development of the hand, in which the transition can be observed from the deictic gesture, which can only show the individual and concrete, to a mimetic ability to convey more abstract content: "Early on, the hand was only able to point the index finger in the direction of an object in order to indicate it. But it could only point out individual things, which, moreover, had to be present and visible. Then came the imitating hand, which created a bridge to the general, where language is located and the intelligence at its base."[43]

42 Béla Balázs, *Early Film Theory*, 134.

43 Isabelle Létourneau, "La main humaine. Lieu de manifestation et condition d'actualisation," *Sagesse du Corps*, ed. Gabor Csepregi (Aylmer: Éditions du Scribe 2001), 174–191: 177.

Following this cursory look at some of the ways of portraying the hand and the patterns of thought to which it refers, I will now consider some hand scenes related to this tradition from the films of Godard and Farocki.

Asking Oneself: La Chinoise / Vent d'est

In Godard's film La Chinoise from 1967, the relationship between theory and practice is a central element of the plot. A group of students have withdrawn to a temporarily empty apartment in order to study the theoretical basis of Marxism–Leninism and Maoism. Through reading and discussion, they hope for clarification as to the next stage in the revolutionary struggle: how might one think about a link between theory and practice, and how can abstract thought be translated into political action? The fact that the division between intellectual and manual activity is an important part of this problem becomes clear when Véronique (Anne Wiazemsky) talks about studying philosophy at Nanterrre during one of the film's numerous interview scenes.[44] She speaks about the principles of Marxism, praising first and foremost its "lack of differentiation between intellectual and manual labor."

Even the film's opening credits have a programmatic character: instead of the title, which is never mentioned, the red, white, and blue letters familiar from Pierrot le fou appear on the screen, inserting the film into a wider project in its first image.[45] "Un film en train de se faire," we read, a film in the act of making itself; the words emerge slowly, one after the other, and proclaim the simultaneity of production and reception. The film presents itself as provisional—a contemporary example of the interpenetration of conception and realization. After the opening credits, and a scene in which Henri (Michel Séméniako) reads a passage of Marxist social analysis, we see a white wall. A forearm swings into the image from below. It belongs to a woman standing off-screen to the right. The palm is turned towards the wall, and a ring can be seen on one finger. Slowly, the fingers edge leftwards: "Un mot, qu'est-ce que c'est?" What is a word? asks a female voiceover (ill. 82).

44 The interviewer, recognizable by his voice, is Godard himself.

45 Pierrot le fou was the first of Godard's films in which the opening credits are gradually assembled from simple red, white, and blue letters—the colors that can ambivalently stand for both the tricolor and the American flag. Apart from La Chinoise, Godard returned to this technique in Made in USA and Week End.

Ill. 82 and ill. 83

The viewer initially sees nothing but the arm and hand and is compelled to turn the lack of information into a provisional whole: Who does the hand belong to? Who is speaking? To whom is the question addressed? As if in answer to the sudden question, which it almost looks as if the hand itself has posed, a man's forearm, sleeved in green, swings symmetrically into view from the other side of the screen (ill. 83).

The two hands meet in the middle of the screen, overlap, touch one another; sometimes the palms touch, sometimes a palm touches the back of the other hand. "Un mot, c'est ce qui se tait," a word is what remains silent: what we get is a contradictory intensification instead of an explanation. And without being able to see who is uttering these words, this second voice is identifiable for most viewers: it is that of Jean-Pierre Léaud, who featured in many of Godard's films during the 1960s and is one of the icons of the New Wave.[46] Here, he plays the young actor and revolutionary Guillaume Meister—the name is borrowed from Goethe—who dreams of a revolutionary theater updating the theories of Bertolt Brecht. None of this is contained in the image of the two hands: the information accumulates in the course of the film. In both form and content, it is a puzzling and enigmatic image which captures the properties of the hand in its ambiguity. Through the off-screen voices and the bodies, whose continuation the viewer automatically imagines, it is characterized in every way as an excerpt, as the germ of an action that is continued elsewhere, off screen.

46 Léaud is even more closely associated with François Truffaut, for whom he played the figure of Antoine Doinel in five films. For Godard, Léaud appeared in Made in USA and Masculin Féminin before La Chinoise.

Corresponding to the excerpt-like quality of the image, there is a short dialogue that is difficult to place and detaches itself from the figures.[47] It seems to have less to do with the story of two protagonists than with the development of practice and communication, or basic research. With her question about what a word is, Véronique raises the issue of communication in a fundamental way: How is it possible to convey political or other kinds of messages? How does one get from the concrete subject to a valid generalization? The short dialogue between Véronique and Guillaume is as follows:

Véronique.	A word: what is a word?
Guillaume.	A word is what remains silent.
Véronique.	And you?
Guillaume.	Me?
Véronique.	Yes, you. The one for the other.
Guillaume.	Me.
Véronique.	No, you. Someone who tries to tame the unforgettable other one who dares to surprise us.
Guillaume.	And me now.
Véronique.	Yes, the me of excuses, of rejection, almost always.
Guillaume.	And what are we, now?
Together:	We are the discourse of the others.

47 Along with the interest that visual artists, above all sculptors, have in the hand as an expressive medium, there is a direct line here to Richard Serra's films from 1968 and 1969. In an interview Serra tells of how, after studying in the US, he went to Paris, where he came across the films of Robert Bresson and Jean-Luc Godard. His three films Hand Catching Lead, Hands Tied, and Hands Scraping can be seen as a direct response to these cinematic impulses. It would be worthwhile to look at the explosion of film and video production in the visual arts from the mid-1960s onwards in the light of its portrayal of hands. If the hand of the artist belongs to the traditional repertoire of biographical, personalizing art, whose restrictions the art of the 1960s attempted to abolish (seriality, Minimalism, dismissal of the artwork in favor of the concept), a re-evaluation of the hand as form can also be observed in some cases. For Serrra's films, see Kunibert Bering, *Richard Serra. Skulptur, Zeichnung, Film* (*Arcus – Schriftenreihe des Forum Kunst und Wissenschaft Landau e. V.*, vol 3) (Berlin: Reimer 1998), 41–49. See also Benjamin Buchloh, "Process Sculpture and Film in Richard Serras's Work," *Richard Serra: Arbeiten/Works 66–77*, Tübingen: Kunsthalle 1978 (exh. cat. Tübingen March 8–April 2, 1978/Basel April 22–May 21, 1978), 228–239: 234: " There for the hypothesis can be stated that sculptural reflection reaches its most advanced position precisely at the point where sculpture as a concrete phenomenon is transcended and transformed into sculptural film, i.e. in works such as Richard Serra's early films 'Hand Cathching Lead,' 'Hands Scraping,' 'Hands Tied' (1968), which are no longer sculpture and no longer film, but induce the viewer's access to more modes of perceiving active physiological and psychological identity than the traditions of these two categories used to permit.'

The hands reach for one another during the back and forth of the words and sentences. After Véronique's question ("And you?"), Guillaume initially withdraws his hand. When he passes the ball to her with his "And me now," her hand disappears from view. During the final words spoken in unison, the two hands once again meet in the center of the frame and join together: "the discourse of the others." In this short sequence one can see a literal filming of the dialogue, a transfer of text into image, a permutation of the language of words into that of the hand. In terms of content, this corresponds to the step from an individual position, which defines itself through a power relation ("tame") and is anxious to defend itself, to a collective stance of the shared "discourse of the others." "Hand in hand" symbolizes a gesture of solidarity here, which includes "the others" who are repeatedly and representatively given a voice in the film: the Vietnamese, the Chinese, the workers, the blacks.

The ambiguity of the opening scene of La Chinoise becomes particularly apparent in a comparison with the function of the hand in Vent d'est, which was made two years later, in 1969. Between the two films lies the disruption of May 1968, which separates Godard's previous works from the more aggressive, politicized films of the Groupe Dziga Vertov. This collective, which functioned as "author" of the films, and which mostly consisted of Jean-Pierre Gorin and Godard himself[48] sought to break radically with the rules of film production.[49] The films between 1968 and 1972, more than those preceding May 1968 or those Godard worked on during the remainder of the 1970s, were intended to attack the viewer. In Vent d'est, the attacks are not only directed against the audience's visual faculties but also at the images themselves.

In political terms, the development from La Chinoise to Vent d'est can be seen as an attempt at disambiguation. It's no longer a matter of

48 Godard met Gorin before beginning to shoot La Chinoise, when he was looking for students who had been involved with the politicization of the university in Nanterre.

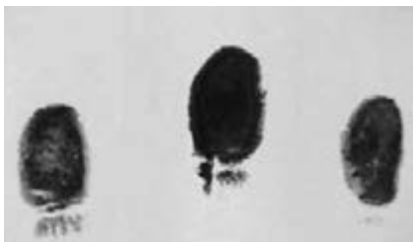
49 This implies a move away from Godard's working methods of the 1960s: away from the production and performance location of the cinema to television productions, which at least theoretically meant moving into the homes of those addressed by the agitation; away from France into various other European countries (the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, Czechoslovakia), whose national television channels he was able to gain as co-producers; and also away from a type of filmmaking that was "culinary" in Brecht's sense of being easily digestible. Thanks to David Faroult, we have a complete filmography of the group. See David Faroult, "Filmographie du Groupe Dziga Vertov," *Jean-Luc Godard. Documents*, eds. Nicole Brenez, David Faroult, Michael Temple, James Williams and Michael Witt (Paris: Édition du Centre Pompidou 2006), 132–133.

keeping questions open but of turning them into action: theory becomes didactics. This step is also readable in a scene that again shows two hands. Here they stand for a possible (and radical) answer to Lenin's famous question "What to do?" which can frequently be seen in intertitles. While La Chinoise still attempted to discuss the problem of politicization in communicative terms ("A word: what is a word?") and showed the protagonists in search of a language appropriate to describing the social situation (the language of Brecht, the language of Mao, the language of Mayakovsky), in Vent d'est politics and action are directly combined. In the second part of the film, which is conceived as a radical critique of the first part, the didactic, subversive impetus is particularly evident: Godard and Gorin disband the model-like attempt to compare the conventions of the Western with those of capitalist film production and direct their aggression against their own concept of filmmaking: "Second part of the film," declaims a voiceover, and continues, "You have shown a mechanism—the strike, the delegate, the general assembly, the repression, the police state, and so on. From a real movement, May '68 in France, '68–69 in Italy. You made a film. How did you make it? Criticize now, fight now, transform now."[50]

The criticism demanded here is not restricted to attacking the image verbally; it also affects the image itself when the film material is painted over, scratched, and replaced for long sections by a monochrome red. Godard has rarely made such extensive use of experimental techniques in order to bring about his "destruction of the forms."[51] Criticism no longer means differentiation and investigation here but the abolition of differentiation in favor of the act. There is a corresponding interest in the second part of the film in how to give instructions on militant action through flyers or leaflets. In 1968, at the DFFB film school in Berlin, a commotion was caused by the film Herstellung eines Molotovcocktails (Production of a Molotov Cocktail), which precisely shows what the title announces and ends with a shot of the Springer building, the headquarters of a right-wing news publisher—a shot that was seen by many, with good reason, as an

50 The film text is available in *Cahiers du cinéma* no. 240, July/August 1972, 31–50: 42.

51 Yvonne Spielmann adopted this term from Godard's interviews during his Dziga Vertov period. See Yvonne Spielmann, "Zerstörung der Formen: Bild und Medium bei Jean-Luc Godard," *Theater und Kino in der Zeit der Nouvelle Vague*, eds. Volker Roloff, Scarlett Winter (Tübingen: Stauffenburg 2000), 111–124. Spielmann's concept of an analytic film practice converges with the idea of film as theory proposed here.



Ill. 84 and ill. 85

incitement to violence.[52] Vent d'est seeks a similar link between film and militant action. Unlike La Chinoise, in which the endeavor to turn thought into deed leads to suicide, exclusion from the group, and an unsuccessful assassination attempt, Vent d'est no longer wishes to show a failed transition to terrorism but to terrorize in its own right. Accompanied by the words "to reflect—to be early—to be late—to think—to produce—to simplify—to construct—to wait," Godard and Gorin show the production of a bomb from simple, readily available components. The completed item is followed by a fadeout, while an off-screen explosion can be heard. The next shot shows a wrecked building, surrounded by smoke. Such a sequence contains a deliberate simplification and reduction of complexity, and the hand, as an organ of pure practice, is integrated into the logic of militancy. A didactic series of shots shows how police record-taking can be avoided: a tube of glue is enough to obscure one's fingerprints and foil investigations. "Advice to the militant: caution," Anne Wiazemsky's voice reiterates like a mantra (ill. 84 and 85).

In relation to the difference between the concrete and the abstract, these images could scarcely be further from the theoretical. They attempt to overcome the distance between image and deed as much as possible and to allow little interpretive leeway. They are evidence of the desire to speak concretely rather than abstractly. And yet even here, where the hand has an entirely executive function, an allegorical reading is possible. For the fingerprint also stands for the individual attribution of a deed, which can be interpreted as Godard's imagination as an author. If on one level the subject matter is political disguise and militancy, it certainly also refers to Godard's renunciation of "authorial politics" and his own "disappearance"

52 The film, which is generally thought to have been made by Holger Meins, a later RAF terrorist who was one of the DFFB's first students, was shown to an audience of 1,500 on February 1, 1968 at the Technische Universität Berlin at a planning event for a "Springer tribunal"; the windows of the *Berliner Morgenpost*, a Springer newspaper, were in fact smashed the following morning. See Tilman Baumgärtel, *Harun Farocki. Vom Guerillakino zum Essayfilm. Werkmonografie eines Autorenfilmers* (Berlin: b_books 1998), 67–72: 71.

into the Group Dziga Vertov in 1968. The person who blurs his fingerprints in order to withdraw behind the deed may be both the political activist and the auteur filmmaker Godard, who after 1968 was interested in breaking as much as possible with the conventional idea of authorship. So there are at least two types of reading: a literal one, which translates the call to violence into non-film reality, and a figurative one, which sees the sequence as an allegory. It is possible that the two types of reading correspond to its two directors—the allegorical approach would then have to be ascribed to Godard, the activist to Gorin. Vent d'est shows how the hand, as an executive organ, becomes a tool for translating political theory into militant action.

Offering Oneself: Nouvelle vague

Nouvelle vague (1990) is a long way from such a transformation of theory into practice. Here, the hand has returned to its open, ambivalent character and has been separated from the context of militant action. Following Godard's political gestures of 1968 and his tentative exploration of video during the 1970s—"My hand is a machine that operates another machine," goes a line from Numéro deux—the hand is now closely linked to the phenomenon of mercy and gains moral qualities connected to its implicit ethic of offering.[53]

Nouvelle vague is full of doublings. It begins with a road accident and the "saving" of Roger Lennox (Alain Delon) by the wealthy Elena Torlato (Domiziana Giordana). Closeness to death and the blessing, against all probability, of not dying are an important motif in what follows. After this opening, the film shows the two living as an unequal couple on Elena's estate on Lake Geneva, playing out their positions of power over one another: In the first part of the film Elena has the advantage over Lennox, who is lethargic and shows little interest in business, and she is openly dominant. In approximately the middle of the film, during a boat trip on the lake, she pulls Lennox into the water and ignores his cries for help and the pleading gesture of his outstretched hand. Lennox seems to be dead but reappears a

53 "The most important sign, the leitmotiv of the film, is the raised hand. Hands of casualties, of women, of men. The question is, will the hand be seized? And with what motivation? For the hand can also pull us into a disaster." Hanno Möbius, "Godards *Nouvelle Vague* in der Kulturgeschichte des Fragments," *AugenBlick* 34, December 2003 (special issue on "Godard and the consequences"), 6–19: 18.

Ill. 86 and ill. 87

while later—this time, as he claims, as Richard Lennox, brother of the deceased. Towards the end of the film, during a second boat ride, Lennox pushes Elena into the lake but pulls her back into the boat shortly afterwards.

While in PASSION the narration of the plot misses the point because it disregards the images, in NOUVELLE VAGUE a summary says little about the film because it can't do justice to its landscapes and gestures. NOUVELLE VAGUE ascribes more importance to the topography of Lake Geneva and the estate, which are filmed in slow, almost hovering tracking shots, and to the movements and communicative gestures of the protagonists than a conventional narrative would. Along with this, Godard extends and intensifies his already excessive practice of quotation. Almost the entire dialogue is made up of quotes from such different authors as Marcel Proust, Dante, Raymond Chandler, Friedrich Schiller, Denis de Rougemont, Karl Marx, Ernest Hemingway, Jacques Lacan, and Arthur Rimbaud, and there are obvious borrowings from the films of Murnau, George Stevens, or John M. Stahl.[54] At the press conference in Cannes, Godard maintained, not without coquetry, that the quotations served to stretch out a story that would only have lasted two minutes over a period of one and a half hours: "My assistant and I said to one another, 'Take all the novels that you love, and I'll give you mine. And take sentences from Hemingway, Faulkner, Gide.' And today we simply don't know who three quarters of it came from."[55] In fact, Godard continued, he hadn't written a single sentence of the film. A correspondence to the use of the hand motif can be seen in this radical liberation from context, which has always determined Godard's approach to images and texts. Even in the first scene of the film, a kind of prologue or motto, the hands—as

54 For the cinematic tradition of the lake motif, which Godard joins with NOUVELLE VAGUE, see Alain Bergala, "Le lac des signes mortels. Autour d'une scène de *L'Aurore*," *Cahiers du cinéma* no. 608, January 2006, 86–88.

55 Jean-Luc Godard, "Tout ce qui est divisé m'a toujours beaucoup touché…" [1990], *Godard par Godard II*, 200–203: 201.

in La Chinoise—stand only for themselves and seem to have no connection to the rest of the film (ill. 86 and 87).

Ills. 88-90

The camera initially shows an open left hand in close-up. Why it is open or what it is waiting for is uncertain. Then, just before the cut to the list of actors, a right hand clenched into a fist brushes the palm of the left hand from the same direction. Do the two hands belong to the same person? Does the second hand place something in the first? Or does it take something from it that we don't notice because of the brevity of the shot? What does this gesture stand for? Isolating the hands from the remaining image, and thus disconnecting them from the "corpus" (the human body, the body of the film), mimics the quotation with which the film begins: "But I wanted to tell a story..." says an off-screen voice, and continues, "... and I still do."[56] The conjunction "but," just like the hands, seems to come from nowhere and refer to something preceding the film. But given Godard's inclination for wordplay it is equally conceivable that he was guided by the phonetic similarity between the words "mais" [but] and "mains" [hands], thus bringing hand and action together. Godard also conspicuously splices the scene, which oscillates between giving and taking, reception and production, into the place where the name of the director usually appears. Nouvelle vague, like La Chinoise, dispenses with the name of its author, which is replaced by an empty hand: the author as receiver.

In contrast to the films of Godard I have analyzed up to now, hands don't just set a particular accent or tone of voice: hands attempting to intertwine are central to three decisive points in the film and link the various "movements" of the film like conjunctions. At the beginning, after the enigmatic

56 All film quotes are taken from the film text in *L'Avant-scène Cinéma*, 1990, vol. 396/397, 8–135.

opening scene, Lennox is met with an accident on a country road. Instead of the accident, we see a large truck approaching a pedestrian and then hear loud hoot. Elena's BMW convertible, apparently being overtaken by the truck, breaks suddenly and stops. Meanwhile, the camera has wandered several times through the branches of the tree Lennox is lying beside. Its gaze is not allocated to a particular person, but it also doesn't merely record unobtrusively. In its calm movements, it functions like a third actor.[57] After Elena has asked Lennox several times if he is in pain, he raises his hand and slowly extends it towards her. This gesture is accompanied by a short dialogue that explicitly refers to the hands: "How wonderful to be able to give something one doesn't have," says Elena, to which Lennox replies, "Miracle of our empty hands" (ill. 88–90).[58] After the exchange of words and the handshake there is a short cut to a series of blurred lights in a nocturnal city, and the film continues with the couple's life on Elena's estate.

How radical this sequence differs from the visual economy of classical narration is apparent in its composition. In terms of spatial organization and lighting, there is a clear break between the first image and the second.[59] While the first is easily recognizable as part of the narration, the composition of the second seems more like a painting. Through its shadows and the lack of a middle ground—it almost looks like a back projection, not a real background—the image is perceptible as an image. As Harun Farocki says:

> The image of Elena's and Lennox's hands reaching out to each other is shot as if it were a painting. Usually when hands are shown in close-up, the background is closed down rather than opened up. They are held against a body, or rest on a musical instrument or table. But Lennox's and Elena's hands are shot as if they were human or mythological figures in a three-dimensional space.[60]

57 Godard does in fact refer to this in the press release for the film: "The camera is one of the figures in the film. If I had done the press book, I would have listed it under the cast." Jean-Luc Godard, "Res, non verba," *Press Book for Nouvelle vague*, ed. Kinowelt (n.p.: 1990)

58 The idea of the "miracle of our empty hands" doesn't come from Godard himself but from Georges Bernanos's *Journal d'un curé de campagne*, a novel that Robert Bresson filmed in 1951. To a certain extent, the scene is a further expression of the "special language of hands," to whose grammar Bresson had contributed.

59 Here the montage produces one of the many false connections ("faux raccords") that pervade Godard's films and divert the attention from the action to the conjunction of images.

60 Harun Farocki, Kaja Silverman, "The Same, Yet Other," ibid., *Speaking about Godard* (New York/London: New York UP 1998), 197–227: 202.

To the same degree with which NOUVELLE VAGUE departs at this point from the usual cinematic portrayal of hands, film once again approaches painting here. The image takes up Michelangelo's ceiling fresco *The Creation of Adam* (1508–1512) in the Sistine Chapel and thus codes Elena's assistance as an act of creation. If the dialogue is taken seriously, this act of creation not only disrupts the economy of the narration but is also inconsistent with the usual understanding of giving and taking. The paradoxical idea of an offering of nothing is neither equivalent to an exchange nor to a classical gift, which presupposes a giver and a receiver. Rather, it recalls what Jacques Derrida describes as the "pure gift" in his critical reading of texts by Marcel Mauss and Charles Baudelaire: "But is not the gift, if there is any, also that which interrupts economy? That which, in suspending economic calculation, no longer gives rise to exchange?"[61] Derrida pursues the aporetic structure of the gift, identifying it a little later with the figure of the "impossible." Analogous to love in NOUVELLE VAGUE, the gift can only be thought of as an aim, as a utopian place that is repeatedly contaminated by various hierarchies (male/female, rich/poor, house/nature). It belongs to this context that Godard's film is structured on almost every level by the principle of economics. Financial transactions dominate both the business contacts and the relationship between Elena and Lennox, as well as the dealings between mistress and servant. "We are poor, don't forget," say Elena's servants stereotypically in order to exhort one another to good work. "A woman can't do much harm to a man," Lennox often repeats, and the couple's conversation is full of references to the exchange rate of the dollar, company shares, business trips, and expensive cars, along with quotations from philosophical and literary works. The scenes in which hands occupy the foreground stand out from this monetized field of communication, in which kudos accumulates through the recognition of quotations.[62] They are accordingly not subject to the law of the house (*oikos*) or factory, which is featured in one of the film's first scenes, but are closely associated with landscape and nature; that is, with topographies that tend to evade human access. The first

61 Jacques Derrida, *Given Time. I. Counterfeit Money*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 1994), 7. Later, Derrida remarks: "From the moment the gift would appear as gift, as such, as what it is, in its phenomenon, its sense and its essence, it would be engaged in a symbolic, sacrificial or economic structure that would annul the gift in the ritual circle of the debt" (23).

62 A figure named Dorothy Parker has the function of identifying the quotes and applauding those who recognize them.

Ill. 91 and ill. 92

of these scenes takes place in a landscape of reeds and trees, the others on Lake Geneva.

Acts of rescue are shown in two such scenes in the course of the film. When Lennox and Elena drive out onto the lake on a speedboat in the middle of the film, their relationship has already cooled. Elena goes swimming and tries to persuade Lennox to come into the water as well. He repeatedly assures her that he can't swim. Finally, she pulls him out of the boat with a single jerk and ignores his drowning cries. His hand sinks. Back in the boat, Elena squints downwards and then into the sun (ill. 91 and 92).

While the film's first hand scene shows an act of creation resulting in the love between Elena and Roger Lennox, this one marks love's apparent end. The life that was "given" in an act without presuppositions is taken away here; death and the absence of the helping hand coincide. Godard summarizes the action of the film, with reference to the hinging points at which the hand is grasped or rejected, as follows:

> What happens in this film is quite elementary: there is a woman who runs into a man with her car. They clasp hands. Then you see two or three things. And then you see the man extending his hand and the woman doesn't take it. Five minutes later, the talk is of winter being over, summer having returned. This is said in a way that certain friends call poetic. And then it is the other way round: it is the woman who is drowning, or wants to drown. She extends her hand; the man hesitates for a moment and finally takes it. And then the woman says to him: "So it was you." That's it. There is nothing else.[63]

According to Godard, human beings are thrown back to basics in extending and grasping the hand: to a giving beyond giving and a taking beyond taking, in which they only give or take of themselves. This reflexive component,

63 Godard, "Tout ce qui est divisé m'a toujours beaucoup touché...," 203.

which reduces matters to their anthropological core and is central to NOUVELLE VAGUE, is also portrayed as a process of recognition in which the two people concerned—Lennox and his apparent *Doppelgänger*—are identified with one another. As in the crime novel (*The Long Goodbye*) to which NOUVELLE VAGUE refers in several intertitles and in borrowing the name of its main character from Raymond Chandler, the death is only feigned and Lennox reappears a little later. The hierarchy between the two protagonists is now reversed: he conducts the business; she lets herself go, and takes little interest in the downfall of the company and the sale of the estate.

In keeping with the mirror-image constellation there is a second boat ride, during which Lennox now pulls Elena into the water and hesitates for a long time before saving her from drowning. Only the repetition of the situation causes Elena to recognize her previous lover in Richard: a superimposition of two images (a kind of mental montage) depicts this act of perception. The two images of Lennox (as Richard and as Roger) lie one above the other, like the hand scenes, and combine into a third, in which Lennox is characterized as "the same, yet other."[64]

Expressing Oneself: GEORG K. GLASER / THE EXPRESSION OF HANDS

It is surprising that none of the prominent scenes in NOUVELLE VAGUE are quoted and commented on in Harun Farocki's study THE EXPRESSION OF HANDS. This film, made in 1997, combines film history, film analysis, and film theory and links to several other of Farocki's films, particularly to INTERFACE. Farocki's interest in hands goes further back, however. Sensitized to the motif in Farocki's work, one will also discover it in less prominent places: for example, in a short passage from the portrait GEORG K. GLASER – WRITER AND SMITH, from 1988. Farocki had conducted an interview with Glaser five years previously and contributed to a special edition of *Filmkritik* on him.[65] However, difficulties in financing the project prevented its realization earlier. In Glaser's fascinating biography, which he described after the Second World War in *Geheimnis und Gewalt*,[66] the upheavals and catastrophes of the twentieth century are reflected in unparalleled clarity:

64 This is the title that Farocki and Kaja Silverman gave to their conversation about NOUVELLE VAGUE. It derives from Rimbaud's famous "Je est un autre," which Godard also quotes in an intertitle. Harun Farocki, Kaja Silverman, "The Same, Yet Other," ibid., *Speaking about Godard*, 197–227.

65 *Filmkritik* 7/1982. The edition contains a long interview with Glaser, together with his story "Die Nummer Eins der Rotfabrik" and an extract from his autobiography *Geheimnis und Gewalt*.

66 Georg K. Glaser, *Geheimnis und Gewalt. Ein Bericht* [1951] (Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld 1989).

Ill. 93 and ill. 94

early unemployment and homelessness during the 1920s, reform school, political activity in left-wing youth groups, prison, first publications in 1930 in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* and other newspapers. After fleeing to France, Glaser worked as a fitter in Toulouse, then for the French National Railroad. He was conscripted into the French army, then deserted, and at the end of the war earned his living with various jobs until founding his own smithy in 1949. Farocki's primary interest in Glaser, apart from his political independence, is his ability to operate on both sides of the division between manual and intellectual labor, or to disallow the distinction. Glaser is an example of the productive communication between the mental work of the writer and the very concrete work of the smith, and in this respect he is a model for Farocki's own understanding of himself as an "audiovisual artisan."[67] Farocki visits Glaser in his workshop in the Paris neighborhood of Marais. He observes the individual phases in the production of a copper bowl and listens to Glaser talking about his manual labor and his writing. The difference between individual work and factory work, between the artisanal "outsmarting of the form" through thousands of even blows of the hammer and the violation of the material by an industrial mold, are discussion topics that relate to Farocki's status as an auteur, in contrast to the industrial film business. In one of the texts, Glaser himself reads in voiceover while images of him at work can be seen (ill. 93 and 94), he describes how metalworking is only imaginable as a close combination of perception and action, of thinking and doing:

> I once described what occurs during only one of the ten thousand hammer blows that are needed to make a jug. It took days to think out sentences

67 The term is a translation of Tilman Baumgärtel's "audiovisueller Handwerker." See Baumgärtel, *Harun Farocki*, 129ff.

> that explained the interaction of brain, hands, and eyes, that illustrated the appropriate forms of the required tools, and gave an understanding of what is involved in outsmarting the original material. For although the number of hammer blows subject the piece of work to a total pressure of several hundredweight, the aim is ingenuity, not violence. Abused material takes its revenge. Reading back these sentences or listening to them took a hundred times longer than the single hammer blow to which they applied.

What is characterized here as the "interaction of brain, hands, and eyes" is expanded a little later in the formulation that the "body's knowledge" lies in this complex interplay, and in the case of the smith one would have to speak of "thinking hands." The thinking hand, which to varying degrees of explicitness has characterized the discourse since Aristotle, has to be taken quite literally with Glaser. The expression indicates an ability and a "knowledge" that is not directed by reason but is stored within the body. With every blow of the hammer, a complex calculation takes place of the various angles in which the work in progress has to stand in relation to tool and arm in order to place the strike correctly: "It becomes a skill. It is the body's knowledge," says Glaser about these sequences of movement.

The film about Georg K. Glaser is concerned with the observation and commentary of gestures that occur in a space between art and craftsmanship, and in several places it establishes relationships between the gestures of manual labor and those of writing. In The Expression of Hands, Farocki films himself at his place of work and connects the gestures of work with those of cinematic narrative. The Expression of Hands links closely to the installation Interface. "Gestic thinking," which the installation presents in the gestures of counting money, verification, and cutting, is the central focus of attention in this film. The Expression of Hands shares with Interface the basic constellation of showing the author in front of two monitors, which in this case don't serve as an editing suite or to theorize about a particular type of montage. In the slow tracking shots between the two monitors, on which scenes are played, paused, rewound, and replayed, Farocki's own hands repeatedly appear, in their turn leafing through books, imitating gestures from the films, writing key concepts on the palm of a hand, or outlining sequences on a sheet of paper. The reflexivity of the hand, which is often emphasized in the film, here consists in its role as an intermediary between the meta-level (Farocki's own work) and the object level (the work of films).

Farocki's brief analysis of a scene from Samuel Fuller's film-noir classic Pickup on South Street,[68] with which The Expression of Hands begins, makes his strategy clear. On one of the two monitors, and then, after a visible freezing of the image and a rewinding of the tape, on the other, the author—with us, the viewers—watches a pickpocket at work in a crowded tram. A man deftly opens a woman's handbag and removes her purse. As he does so, a complex pantomime of attempted closeness and rejection, seduction, and rebuff takes place between the thief and his victim, accentuated by inserted close-ups of hand and face. Fuller's montage, in its opposition of gesture and facial expression, makes what at first sight appears to be a conventionally narrated, casual event into an occurrence that requires as much interpretation from the viewer as it does from the plain-clothes policeman standing nearby. With the words "It isn't easy to grasp this sequence of images," Farocki begins his interpretation of the scene.

> The pickpocket effects a distancing, forbidding expression, while his hand tries to make contact. The hand does something entirely different from what the face shows. The thief opens the woman's purse, the woman opens her lips. It seems as though the thief has opened her lips. She seems seduced rather than robbed. The hand that commits a crime seems to engender desire.

Following this pattern, which works through and reenacts the productive friction between two types of communication, Farocki then relates a number of film scenes to one another in which the hand is variously made into the main protagonist and deployed as the "narrative agent" of the body. The selection of films is instructive, as Farocki doesn't distinguish between fiction and documentary but takes feature films—Hitchock's North by Northwest,[69] Robert Wiene's The Hands of Orlac, Robert Florey's The Beast with Five Fingers, and Robert Bresson's L'Argent—as much into account as National Socialist "Kulturfilme" or American war time propaganda. The project sees itself as an iconographic examination of the expressive forms of cinema and makes use of all imaginable films as material.

Several strands of argumentation need to be distinguished. The first is a historical examination of the status assigned to the hand in the

68 Pickup on South Street, USA 1953, director: Samuel Fuller.
69 North by Northwest, USA 1959, director: Alfred Hitchcock.

silent film, where elegant narration required each spoken word to be translated into a gesture. Here, a film by David Wark Griffith exemplifies the narrative innovation made possible by the introduction of the close-up. The Stolen Jewels from 1908, the earliest film Farocki includes in his montage, shows a thief hiding the title-giving necklace in a hollowed-out bar of soap (ill. 95 and 96). Farocki refers to the uniqueness of this shot in his commentary: it is the only close-up in the entire film, and Griffith uses it to direct the eye and make the action clear. Farocki explains this following image, in which pictorial contrast is accentuated, as follows:

Ill. 95 and ill. 96

> This woman, who will later become the thief in pajamas, has here an expression and a posture that signifies anger or even evil intentions. Today we are used to seeing and to receiving a film in fragmented images. The fragments direct our vision. Without this image-guidance and dialog it is difficult for us to understand what is going on.

Here, too, Farocki resorts to the gesture of additional framing familiar from the photograph accompanying Images of the World. His fingers show how the cinematographic arsenal of close-up, tracking shot, or zoom would direct our attention to the protagonist today. The deictic potential that Farocki's hand indicates was integrated into the formal canon of cinema soon after Griffith's film. Farocki doesn't pursue this idea further here, but Hartmut Bitomsky, who collaborated with Farocki on several films during the early 1970s and like him was one of the most influential editors of *Filmkritik*, expanded the idea of the close-up in a text on Griffith, where he also speculates about a potential background:

> Viewers apparently reacted to the first close-ups as if something had been cut away. Every close-up has an element of shameless violation, but this stands

Ill. 97

to reason. The fact that the human being can be reduced to individual parts, and that these parts, such as head, hand, and foot, can live a life of their own separate from the whole, must have been a new experience, coming directly from factory work.[70]

Bitomsky combines a thought about the technical novelty of the close-up with a surprising idea from economic history. In The Expression of Hands, Farocki soon also abandons the historical viewpoint for a systematic one. The modern viewer's incomprehension of an action narrated without close-ups leads Farocki to a general question: how did the gestural language of the silent film evolve in order to establish visual modes of expression that compensated for the lack of speech and minimized the use of the written word? The background to this is the book *Gestologie und Filmspielerei* [Gestology and Film Acting],[71] by Dyk Rudenski (ill. 97).

It was written in the year of the breakthrough of the sound film and was intended as the program for a future school for film actors. Alongside thoughts about movements and gestures adequate to the medium, Rudenski also proposes a differentiated curriculum for the school's individual semesters. Apart from "Semiotics and Aesthetics," anatomical studies in the vein of Leonardo da Vinci, and other exercises in gesture and facial expression, the curriculum also includes an introduction to "Taylorism (Economics) in Kinesics."[72] This enables Farocki to move from the development of a gestural language in the silent film to the incorporation of the hand into industrial contexts. The detachment of the hand from the rest of the body follows a different logic from that of the horror film, in which one's own hand, now alien, turns against its owner. In the industrial film, the hand is reduced to standardized procedures and thus robbed of its individuality; it becomes replaceable by machines. Increasing rationalization and de-individualization represent an abstraction of the working process and the idiosyncratic gestures of the hand, but taken alone the hand offers the possibility of self-referentiality:

70 Hartmut Bitomsky, "Die Großaufnahme," *Filmkritik* 4/1975 [special edition on David W. Griffith], 167–170: 168.

71 Dyk Rudenski, *Gestologie und Filmspielerei. Abhandlungen über die Physiologie und Psychologie des Ausdrucks*, with a foreword by Franz Blei, 2nd unchanged edition (Berlin: Hoboken-Presse 1927).

72 Ibid., 50.

> We can turn our hands and observe it from all angles. This is impossible with every other part of the body. A hand can pose before its owner's eyes, like a man turning in front of a mirror. And it can also be thought of as a mirror, a tablet, or a stage.

Ill. 98

Here, Farocki summarizes (ill. 98) the topoi that have evolved over time through thinking about the hand. The hand "speaks," can be read, and moves between artistic expression and industry, aesthetic surplus and efficient working processes. Farocki's own hand, which both analyzes and aligns itself with the hand gestures in the films he discusses, is an organ of intervention. It stands for the attempt to unite thought and action.

***

In my readings of the films of Godard and Farocki, the hand turns out to be as ambiguous a term as the concept of abstraction, from which my examination proceeded. When it is released in close-up from the rest of the narration, the hand can appear as a concrete and unique organ. Nouvelle vague or La chinoise stand for an ethics of the hand: primarily through reaching for a partner, the hand points beyond itself and stands for abstract contexts and concepts such as salvation, community, solidarity, conjunction. It is also, as Farocki's portrait of Georg K. Glaser shows, an intelligent limb, whose abilities exceed those of a merely executive organ. In Glaser's case, it represents a type of labor that resists the mechanization and automation that characterized the twentieth century. The Expression of Hands, by contrast, is devoted to two further dimensions of the hand: its potential—particularly inherent in the silent film—for independent articulation, and its detachment from its owner, which initiates thoughts about the alienation of one's own body. Inserted into standardized procedures at the assembly line—Taylorism—the hand labors at its own abolition. It would be going too far to see a link, at this cultural-critical point, between the history of labor and that of the cinema, but a closer look at Godard's Histoire(s) du cinéma might follow up the question as to whether it was not only cinema (as Godard understands it) that came to an end in the late twentieth century but also the function of the hand.

Conclusion

My point of departure was to ask whether film, despite its inherent necessity of concretion, could be considered a medium in which theorizing were possible. After analyzing the work of Harun Farocki and Jean-Luc Godard and reconstructing their own evaluations, the ambiguous answer has to be: yes, but. On the one hand, relating different types of images to one another always results in a change of level, which does in fact enable a leap from direct description to analysis and theory: "realistic" film sequences, when linked through montage, are able to become general statements about the medium. On the other hand—and this is the "but"—this form of abstraction can't be separated from its respective subject matter. The images' implicit theory, which articulates itself non-predicatively and independent of language, only becomes productive in examination and translation, and is therefore only conceivable as an act of theorization—working at the editing table, writing and thinking about film, analyzing images in circulation. As autonomous as the image cosmos appears to be since its technologization through photography and more recent techniques, the theory that images potentially offer can only be gained through direct involvement with them. Furthermore, Farocki's theorizations of operational images since the 1990s show particularly clearly that the increasing degree of abstraction in this type of image holds the danger of eliminating the viewer. The images with the greatest effect—those that will most substantially determine our everyday life in future—are also the most invisible, whose "singularity" has entirely retreated into numbers and algorithms.

At first sight, this speculation seems to be far away from cinema as it has developed for over a century. The images to which Harun Farocki has increasingly turned his attention since the late 1990s are produced in the civil or military sectors, apparently nowhere near the entertainment industry or the arts. They have no aesthetic function. Conversely, it can also be concluded that there has always been more at stake for Godard and Farocki than the silver screen. Cinematic images, either from their own films or those of other directors, serve both filmmakers to instruct the eye and as the building blocks of a wide-ranging image critique. Harun Farocki's and Jean-Luc Godard's films are examples of a consistent and unswerving attempt to think *about* images *with* images. Both directors counter the usual procedure of adding the spoken word to the image with a model that proceeds from the power of images themselves and argues from within them. Godard and Farocki have thus ambivalently contributed

to the discourse about visuality, which has attracted increasing attention since the 1960s.

The theory that can be gleaned from Godard's and Farocki's visual practice is by no means unambiguous in its relationship to the image. While the two directors approach media images with great skepticism and resulting distancing strategies, in which Brecht's reservations about the apparently "realistic" photographic image can be recognized, their films should nevertheless be seen as antithetical to the "anti-ocularcentric discourse" analyzed by Martin Jay. Godard's films from his Groupe Dziga Vertov phase have indubitably iconoclastic traits and break with most narrative, compositional, and dramaturgical principles in their search for a different visual language; Farocki's work—particularly during the 1970s—also shows a polemic attempt to realize his films in opposition to the image production and economics of television. But within this recurring, sometimes morally tinged critique of images and image gullibility, a strong belief in the effectiveness and power of the image can also be discerned. This not only pertains to the emotional and aesthetic aspects of film—something that I have largely excluded from this examination—but above all to its analytical and theoretical potential.

Clear differences can be discerned in the two filmmakers' approaches to painting and photography, however. This is easier to see in Godard's work than in Farocki's. The Carabineers exhibits a critical reserve in relation to photography that is particularly noticeable in contrast to Godard's sometimes almost euphoric inclusion of paintings in his films. While painting represents an implicit benchmark for him, and "painterly" aspects—light, visual concentration, expression, stylization—have increasingly featured in his films since the 1980s,[1] photography marks the point of divergence. The photographic image tends toward tautology and operates with deceptive verisimilitude. However, the encounter with a second photograph, through which clarity and unambiguousness are "disturbed" in favor of relationship, can develop into a critical instrument. For this reason, the photograph—along with television images—is located on the side of the visual in Serge Daney's examination of the "image" and the "visual": it is "full," complete in itself, as Farocki's Images of the World and the Inscription of War particularly shows, and easily included in a logic of fulfillment. The interpretation and theorizing of photography that film can

1 See Sally Shafto, "On Painting and History in Godard's *Histoire(s) du cinéma*," *Senses of Cinema*, 40 (July 2006) [special dossier: *The Godard Museum*], http://sensesofcinema.com/2006/the-godard-museum/histoires-du-cinema/ [accessed July 15, 2014].

accomplish is thus possible either through relating images to one another or explicitly through words.

It is different with painting. What Daney identifies as a simultaneous surplus and insufficiency can be seen quite literally in the staged paintings in Passion. The "translations" in the film offer resistance. They lack something—the right light, the final pose, the decisive moment—while also endeavoring, like the El Greco painting, to escape their frames and project out of the medium of painting and into that of cinematography. For this reason, too, Godard associates Manet's paintings with "thinking forms" ("une forme qui pense") and sees them as a model for the cinema. The photographic image, by contrast—as Before Your Eyes Vietnam and Images of the World and the Inscription of War show particularly clearly—is one that was born from a concept, and in this calculability it is susceptible to appropriation by operative processes. It paves the way for the operational image, in which the visual is secondary to mathematical and technical processes and ultimately obsolete. The imperative derived from this entails confronting images that have become so "theoretical" and questioning their empty abstraction of the "visual" as a reading and interpreting subject.

Farocki and Godard are equally against having images disappear in technical operations. At this point, the dialectic between objective and subjective, which conceives the image as something made and to be presented as such, takes hold. The explicit recourse to an understanding of theory developed in early Romanticism as a utopia of the simultaneity of object language and meta-language can particularly be seen in Godard (this would be worthy of further examination). The production of images that also contain a theory of image production was always one of his pressing aims and distinguishes him from the other filmmakers of the New Wave—such as François Truffaut, who remained much more attached to the established forms of narrative cinema. When Godard, writing in 1959 at the same time as his own first film, declared that Man of the West was an example of "both art and the theory of art [...] of the Western, the most cinematographic genre in the cinema,"[2] it was a provocation in several respects. Anthony Mann's film, and thus the genre of the Western, then barely considered art at all, was not only defined as the essence of cinema[3]

2 Jean-Luc Godard, "Supermann" [1959], *Godard on Godard*, ed. Tom Milne (New York: Da Capo 1986), 116–119: 117.

3 It is not by chance that Godard's assertion almost literally repeats a remark he makes about Jean Renoir quoted earlier in the introduction to this book.

but also as a highly self-reflexive art form in the tradition of early Romantic thought. In Godard's own work, this desire to be simultaneously film and film theory can be seen at every moment. The films I have analyzed here all set in motion a theoretical reflection on the status of images—on their possibilities, limitations, dangers, and potentials—in each case through a contrast with other types of images. Whether this is the paintings—either integrated into the narrative or jumping out of it—that are juxtaposed with film in Breathless or Pierrot le fou, or the literal "translation" of original canvases as tableaux vivants in Passion, the break line between original and copy, the difference between source and quotation, literalness and metaphor, is the point at which cinema comes into view as a moving, frameless visual form that tends to encompass the other arts. In this sense, Raymond Bellour describes Godard as the "last Romantic," as the "final incarnation of the Jena School of Romanticism."[4]

This is not to say that cinema is the media "fulfillment" of the early Romantic call for a fusion of art and life; rather that film—primarily through the technique of montage—provides an instrument with which comparison, contrast, and collision become possible as analytical and theoretical operations. The achievement of the Russian theorists and practitioners—above all Sergei Eisenstein and Dziga Vertov—lies in having conceptualized and expanded the medium's discursive and theoretical aspect, which today remains marginal beside cinema's entertainment function. Of course, it would be wrong to categorize Godard's films solely under the heading of "intellectual montage"—their backgrounds and points of reference are far too comprehensive, and their allusions to the history of the cinema, art, and literature too eclectic. Godard's recent works also explore the interferences between image and music and often replace editing by superimposition. The most obvious examples of this can be found in Histoire(s) du cinéma, whose excess of visual and aural material would need a study of its own and has only made a peripheral appearance here.[5]

In Farocki's case, the question of theoretical orientation needs to be answered differently, even though his methods often link to Godard's. While he names Brecht's techniques of alienation and Pop Art as important impulses, this primarily refers to a critique of a simple concept of

4 Raymond Bellour, "For Ever Divided," *For Ever Godard*, ed. Michael Temple, James S. Williams, Michael Witt (London: Black Dog Publishing 2004), 11.

5 Most recently, Michael Witt has provided a comprehensive account of Histoire(s) du cinéma from its origins in the 1970s to its various iterations on video, CD, as a museum show, etc. See Michael Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard. Cinema Historian* (Bloomington: Indiana UP 2013).

realism and representation understood as mimesis. Like Godard, Farocki also responds to the challenges of a "functional" society—which can no longer be adequately described by mere depiction but rather through the relationship between images—with a specific form of montage. With Farocki, saying something theoretically informed about processes of image production, despite, against, and at the same time utilizing the concretion of photographic film images, largely goes in the direction of a confrontation with other visual media—and I have given particular attention to this aspect of his work here. The fact that this not only occurs in the classical documentary framework, as in the case of STILL LIFE, but also makes use of various intermediate forms in which the distinction between fictional and documentary work become problematic, once again links Farocki to Godard, whose image research never categorically distinguishes between the modi of cinematic utterance.

The work begun here could be continued in various directions: For one thing, it would require a more exact analysis than I have been able to undertake of the differences between video, cinema, and television—which are essential to Godard's film NUMÉRO DEUX, for example. The decision to restrict my analytical framework to photography and painting wasn't only determined by the idea that the functioning of inter-media reflection could be most clearly shown in relation to the unmoving single image: it was also taken in view of the films themselves, in which Godard's and Farocki's similarities and differences in their recourse to painting and photography are most sharply recognizable. Furthermore—aside from a systematic and synchronously organized examination of theoretical speaking in film—the continued work should be supplemented by an examination of the respective status of film history in the work of Farocki and Godard. Through diverse forms of quotation and allusion—and not just since HISTOIRE(S) DU CINÉMA—Godard's films have always obtained their dynamics from a "dual" view of the image of reality and the reality of the image, and at least as much from their references to earlier cinematic practice. When Godard casts Fritz Lang as the director of a screen adaptation of the *Odyssey* in LE MÉPRIS, or has Samuel Fuller expound his ideas about cinema in PIERROT LE FOU, or when, in VIVRE SA VIE, Nana S. sees her tears reflected in those of Carl Theodor Dreyer's JEANNE D'ARC, this speaks of a consciousness of the forms that have defined cinema over the decades. It is a gesture of quotation that—like the hands touching in NOUVELLE VAGUE—both takes and gives, that affiliates itself with cinema history, only to distance itself from it in order to create new forms. Farocki's approach to film is no less oriented to

cinema history. Three works from the 1990s, devoted to cinematic topoi,[6] are particularly clear examples of his collecting, montaging, and anatomizing of historical material. Farocki's method, which is oriented towards a "dictionary of cinematic expression,"[7] follows a completely different principle from Godard's Histoire(s) du cinéma, which should be understood more as the result of a kind of "wild philology." Nevertheless, both procedures are similar in closely linking history, film, and montage—in Godard's case they are even brazenly identified with one another.[8] On the threshold of the twenty-first century, this is a melancholy view of film history. Particularly with Godard, during the past twenty-five years it has also been a view of things ending, disappearing, passing: the vanishing GDR, which he portrayed in 1990 as an "état de la solitude" in Allemagne Neuf Zéro, confronting it with the now unemployed secret agent Lemmy Caution (Eddie Constantine); his contribution to the episode film Ten Minutes Older, wistfully and repeatedly showing "final minutes" ("final minutes of silence," "final minutes of cinema"). In his interplay of music, image, and voice, Godard has adopted a cinematic stance that makes what he films look as if it has been exposed to death. These more recent works, and his look back at cinema history, mark a clear difference from Farocki. Since the 1990s, Farocki's interest has increasingly been drawn to images that lie outside the context of cinema and television but that can be assessed and theorized in the light of his long experience of looking at films, paintings, and photographs. Footage from surveillance cameras in American prisons and image-processing software for civilian and military use is now the intensified focus of his work: "It is no longer about an ultimately cinephile view of cultural products [...], but involves gaining access to an image production whose aim is no longer that of making something public."[9] In such a situation, cinema has two functions: It offers a reservoir of images and forms of presentation to which automated operational images are still to some degree oriented. It also stands for a

6 Apart from The Expression of Hands, these are Prison Images (and its installation version I Thought I Was Seeing Convicts) and Workers Leaving the Factory, made for the hundredth anniversary of the medium of film.

7 See Harun Farocki and Wolfgang Ernst, "Towards an Archive of Visual Concepts," *Harun Farocki. Working on the Sight-Lines*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2004), 261–286.

8 See Godard's acceptance speech on receiving the Adorno Prize in 1995: Jean-Luc Godard, "À propos de cinéma et d'histoire" [1996], *Godard par Godard II*, 401–407. See also the extensive discussion with Youssef Ishagpour: Jean-Luc Godard, Youssef Ishagpour, *Cinema: The Archaeology of Film and the Memory of A Century*, trans. John Howe (New York: Bloomsbury Academic 2005).

9 Bert Rebhandl, "Harun Farocki: Nachdruck/Imprint" [review.], *Springerin* 1/02, 40–41: 40.

potentially redundant type of image that belongs primarily to the twentieth century and is currently disappearing in favor of data streams. Before the image liquefies entirely into data, Farocki collects and analyzes its traces.

***

Every desk—as Farocki's Interface and Godard's Histoire(s) du cinéma show—is also an editing table, a place of montage, at which heterogeneous material is brought together and one's own thinking is confronted with a different mindset that has sedimented into texts and images. And, just as a final image and sound have to be found at the editing table, here, too, the final decision must be for the closing word, which should rather be a closing image.

Ill. 99

Bibliography

Adorno, Theodor W. "The Essay as Form," [1958] trans. Bob Hullot-Kentor and Frederic Will, *New German Critique*, no. 32. Spring–Summer 1984, 151–171.

Alberti, Leon Battista. *On Painting*. trans. Rocco Sinisgalli, Cambridge/New York: Cambridge UP 2011.

Alpers, Svetlana. *The Art of Describing. Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century.* Chicago: Chicago UP 1983.

Alter, Nora M. *Projecting History. German Nonfiction Cinema 1967–2000.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 2002.

Amengual, Barthélemy. "Jean-Luc Godard et la remise en cause de notre civilisation de l'image," in *Jean-Luc Godard au-delà du récit*. ed. Michel Estève, 113–178. Paris: Minard 1967.

Aragon, Louis. "What is Art, Jean-Luc Godard," [1965] trans. Royal S. Brown, in *Focus on Godard.* ed. Royal S. Brown, 135–146. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall 1972.

Aristotle. *On the Parts of Animals*. trans. William Ogle. London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co 1882.

Arnheim, Rudolf. *Film as Art.* [1932] Berkeley: Universtiy of California Press 2006.

Arthur, Paul. "Essay Questions," *Film Comment* 1/2003, 58–63.

Astruc, Alexandre. "The Birth of a New Avant-Garde: La Caméra-Stylo," [1948] in *The French New Wave. Critical Landmarks*. ed. Peter Graham, 31–38. London: BFI 2009.

Aumont, Jacques. "Projektor und Pinsel. Zum Verhältnis von Malerei und Film," *montage/av* 1/1, 1992, 77–89.

Aumont, Jacques. "The Variable Eye, or The Mobilization of the Gaze," in *The Image in Dispute. Art and Cinema in the Age of Photography*. ed. Dudley Andrew, 231–258. Austin: University of Texas Press 1997.

Aumont, Jacques. *L'œil interminable. Cinéma et peinture.* Paris: Seghers 1989.

Aurich, Rolf and Ulrich Kriest, eds. *Der Ärger mit den Bildern. Die Filme von Harun Farocki.* Konstanz: UVK 1998.

Aurich, Rolf and Ulrich Kriest. "Werkstattgespräch Harun Farocki," in *Der Ärger mit den Bildern. Die Filme von Harun Farocki.* eds. Rolf Aurich and Ulrich Kriest, 325-347. Konstanz: UVK 1998.

Baecque, Antoine de. "Godard in the Museum," in *For Ever Godard.* eds. Michael Temple, James S. Williams, Michael Witt, 118–125. London: Black Dog Publishing 2004.

Baecque, Antoine de. *La cinéphilie. Invention d'un regard, histoire d'une culture. 1944-1968,* Paris: Fayard 2003.

Bakhtin, Michail. *Rabelais and His World.* [1965] trans. Hélène Iswolsky, Bloomington: Indiana UP 1984.

Balázs, Béla. *Early Film theory, Visible Man and The Spirit of Film*. trans. Rodney Livingstone. New York/Oxford: Berghahn Books 2010.

Barck, Joanna and Petra Löffler, eds. *Gesichter des Films.* Bielefeld: transcript 2005.

Barthes, Roland. "Dear Antonioni," [1980] in Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, *L'Avventura*. 63–69. London: BFI 1997.

Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography.* [1980], trans. Richard Howard. London: Vintage 1993.

Barthes, Roland. *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath, London & New York: Fontana Press and Hill And Wang 1977.

Barthes, Roland. *The Rustle of Language*. trans. Richard Howard. Berkeley & Oxford: University of California Press and Blackwell 1986.

Baudrillard, Jean. *The System of Objects.* [1968] trans. James Benedict. London: Verso 2006.
Baudry, Jean-Louis. "Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus," in *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology.* ed. Philip Rosen, 286–298. New York: Columbia UP 1986.
Bauer, Gerd. "Jean-Luc Godard: Ausser Atem/À bout de souffle (Frankreich 1959)," in *Kunst und Künstler im Film.* eds. Helmut Korte and Johannes Zahlten, 111–119. Hameln: Niemeyer 1990.
Baumgärtel, Tilman. *Harun Farocki. Vom Guerillakino zum Essayfilm. Werkmonografie eines Autorenfilmers.* Berlin: b_books 1998.
Bazin, André. "Letter from Siberia." [1958] *Film Comment*, July/August 2003, 44-45.
Bazin, André. "The Ontology of the Photographic Image." trans. Hugh Gray, *Film Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 4, summer 1960, 4–9.
Bazin, André. *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma*, vol. I, *Ontologie et langage.* Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf 1958.
Bazin, André. *What is Cinema?* 2 vol., trans. and ed. Hugh Gray. Berkeley: University of California Press 2004.
Bazin, André. *What is Cinema?* trans. Timothy Barnard. Montreal: Caboose 2009.
Becker, Jörg. "Der Ausdruck der Hände. Ein filmischer Terminus," in *Suchbilder. Visuelle Kultur zwischen Algorithmen und Archiven*. eds. Wolfgang Ernst, Stefan Heidenreich, Ute Holl, 30–45. Berlin: Kadmos 2003.
Bellour, Raymond and Mary Lea Bandy, eds. *Jean-Luc Godard. Son + Image 1974-1991.* New York: Museum of Modern Art 1992.
Bellour, Raymond, ed. *Cinéma et peinture. Approches.* Paris: PUF 1990.
Bellour, Raymond. "Analysis in Flames," *Diacritics*, vol. 15, no. 1, spring 1985, 52–56.
Bellour, Raymond. "The Pensive Spectator," [1984] trans. Lynne Kirby, *Wide Angle,* 19:1, 1987, 6–10.
Benjamin, Walter. *Selected Writings*, vol. 1, eds. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings. Cambridge: Harvard UP 2002.
Benjamin, Walter. *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility and other Writings on Media*. eds. Michael W. Jennings, Brigid Doherty, Thomas Y. Levin, Cambridge, Mass. & London: Harvard UP 2008.
Bergala, Alain. "Le lac des signes mortels. Autour d'une scène de *L'Aurore*," *Cahiers du cinéma* no. 608, January 2006, 86–88.
Bering, Kunibert. *Richard Serra. Skulptur, Zeichnung, Film*. Berlin: Reimer 1998.
Beringer, Johannes. "Hand und Auge," *Zelluloid* no. 28/29, May 1989, 64–68.
Bickenbach, Matthias, Annina Klappert and Hedwig Pompe, eds. *Manus loquens. Medium der Geste – Geste der Medien.* Cologne: DuMont 2003.
Bippus, Elke. "'Das Wunder unserer leeren Hände.' Jean-Luc Godards Erzählmodus in Nouvelle Vague," in *HAND. Medium – Körper – Technik*. eds. Ulrike Bergermann, Andrea Sick, Andrea Klier, 285–297. Bremen: Thealit 2001.
Bitomsky, Hartmut. "Die Großaufnahme," *Filmkritik* 4/1975, 167–170.
Bitomsky, Hartmut. "Ohne Alibi sein," *Filmkritik* 1–2/1984, 17–24.
Bloom, Harold. *The Anxiety of Influence. A Theory of Poetry.* New York: Oxford UP 1973.
Blümlinger, Christa and Karl Sierek, eds. *Das Gesicht im Zeitalter des bewegten Bildes.* Vienna: Sonderzahl 2002.
Blümlinger, Christa. "'La Jetée.' Nachhall eines Symptom-Films." in *Chris Marker. Filmessayist.* eds. Birgit Kämper and Thomas Tode, 65-72. Munich: Cicim 1997.
Blümlinger, Christa. "Mediale Zugriffe," *Texte zur Kunst*, September 2001, 166–170.
Blümlinger, Christa. "Prozession und Projektion: Anmerkungen zu einer Figur bei Jean-Luc Godard," *Zwischen-Bilanz. Eine Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Joachim Paech*. online at www.uni-konstanz.de/paech2002.

Boehm, Gottfried. "Die Wiederkehr der Bilder," in *Was ist ein Bild?* ed. Gottfried Boehm, 11–38. Munich: Fink 1995.

Boehm, Gottfried. "Jenseits der Sprache? Anmerkungen zur Logik der Bilder," in *Iconic Turn. Die neue Macht der Bilder.* eds. Hubert Burda, Christa Maar, 28–43. Cologne: DuMont 2004.

Böhme, Hartmut. "Fetischismus im 19. Jahrhundert. Wissenschaftshistorische Analysen zur Karriere eines Konzepts," in *Das schwierige neunzehnte Jahrhundert. Festschrift für Eda Sagarra,* eds. Jürgen Barkhoff, Gilbert Carr, Roger Paulin, 445–465. Tübingen: Niemeyer 2000.

Bonitzer, Pascal. *Décadrages. Peinture et Cinéma.* Paris: Cahiers du cinéma 1985.

Bordwell, David and Noël Carroll. "Introduction," in *Post-Theory. Reconstructing Film Studies* eds. David Bordwell and Noël Carroll, xiii-xvii. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press 1996.

Bordwell, David, Janet Staiger and Kristin Thompson. *The Classical Hollywood Cinema. Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960.* New York: Columbia UP 1987.

Bordwell, David. *On the History of Film Style.* Cambridge: Harvard UP 1997.

Brecht, Bertolt. "The Three Penny Trial: A Sociological Experiment." [1931/32] in *German Essays on Film*, eds. Richard W. McCormick and Allison Guenther-Pal, 111–132. London: Continuum 2004.

Bredekamp, Horst. "Kunstgeschichte im 'Iconic Turn.' Ein Interview mit Horst Bredekamp," *kritische berichte* 1/1998, 85–93.

Brenez, Nicole, David Faroult, Michael Temple, James Williams and Michael Witt, eds. *Jean-Luc Godard, Documents.* Paris: Centre Pompidou 2006.

Brougher, Kerry, ed. *Hall of Mirrors. Art and Film since 1945*. New York: Monacelli Press 1996.

Bryson, Norman. *Looking at the Overlooked. Four Essays on Still Life Painting*. London: Reaktion 1990.

Buchloh, Benjamin. "Process Sculpture and Film in Richard Serras's Work," in *Richard Serra: Arbeiten/Works 66–77.* 228–239. Tübingen: Kunsthalle Baden-Baden 1978.

Bulgakowa, Oksana. "Montagebilder bei Sergej Eisenstein," in *Handbuch der Filmmontage. Praxis und Prinzipien des Filmschnitts*. ed. Hans Beller, 49–77. Munich: TR-Verlagsunion 1993.

Cameron, Ian, ed. *The Films of Jean-Luc Godard.* London: Studio Vista 1967.

Carrière, Jean-Claude and Pascal Bonitzer. *Praxis des Drehbuchschreibens.* Berlin: Alexander Verlag 1999.

Caughie, John, ed. *Theories of Authorship. A Reader.* London: Routledge 1990.

Cavell, Stanley. "What Photography Calls Thinking," *Camera Austria* 19/20, 1985, 32–43.

Cavell, Stanley. *The World Viewed. Reflections of the Ontology of Film*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP 1979.

Céline, Louis-Ferdinand. *Romans* III, ed. Henri Godard. Paris: Gallimard 1988.

Cerisuelo, Marc. "Godard et la théorie: tu n'as rien vu à Pesaro," *CinémAction*, no. 52, 1989 [special edition on "Le cinéma selon Godard"], 192–198.

Collet, Jean. *Jean-Luc Godard.* Paris: Seghers 1967.

Comolli, Jean-Louis. "Machines of the Visible," in *The Cinematic Apparatus,* eds. Teresa de Lauretis and Stephen Heath, 121–142. New York: St. Martin's Press 1980.

Crary, Jonathan. *Techniques of the Observer. On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century.* Cambridge: MIT Press 1990.

Culler, Jonathan. *Literary Theory. A Very Short Introduction.* Oxford & New York: Oxford UP 1997.

Daney, Serge. "Montage Obligatory. The War, the Gulf and the Small Screen," *Rouge* no. 8, 2006, online at www.rouge.com.au/8/montage.html.

Daney, Serge. "The T(h)errorized (Godardian Pedagogy)." [1976] trans. Bill Krohn, Charles Cameron Ball, online at http://www.diagonalthoughts.com/?p=1620

de Baecque, Antoine and Gabrielle Lucantonio, eds. *Théories du cinéma. Petite anthologie des* Cahiers du cinéma. Paris: Collection Cahiers du cinéma 2001.

de Man, Paul. *The Resistance to Theory*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota 1986.

Debord, Guy. *Contre le cinéma.* Aarhus: Institut scandinave de vandalisme comparé 1964.

Debord, Guy. *Society of Spectacle.* [1967] trans. Ken Knabb. Wellington: Rebel Press 2006.

Deleuze, Gilles. "Three Questions About Six fois deux," [1976] in *Jean-Luc Godard. Son+Image, 1974-1991*, eds. Raymond Bellour and Mary Lea Bandy, 35–41. New York: Museum of Modern Art 1992.

Deleuze, Gilles. "Three Questions on Six Times Two," in *Negotiations*, trans. Martin Joughin, 37–45. New York: Columbia UP 1995.

Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinema 1: The Movement Image* [1983]. trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. Mineappolis: University of Minnesota Press 2009.

Derrida, Jacques. *Deconstruction and Philosophy. The Texts of Jacques Derrida*. ed. John Sallis. Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1987.

Derrida, Jacques. *Given Time. I. Counterfeit Money*. trans. Peggy Kamuf. Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 1994.

Diderot. "Addition to the Letter on the Blind," [1749] in *Diderot's Early Philosophical Works*, ed. Margaret Jourdain, 142–157. New York: Lenox Hill 1972.

Diederichs, Helmut M. "Zur Entwicklung der formästhetischen Theorie des Films," in *Geschichte der Filmtheorie.* ed. Helmut M. Diederichs, 9-27. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 2004.

Eakin, Emily. "The Latest Theory Is That Theory Doesn't Matter," *The New York Times*, April 19, 2003, p. A17.

Ebert, Jürgen. "Der Film von Morgen. Chris Marker und das Kino," in... *sie wollen eben sein, was sie sind, nämlich Bilder... Anschlüsse an Chris Marker.* eds. Natalie Binczek and Martin Rass, 113–125. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 1999.

Ehmann, Antje and Harun Farocki, eds. *Cinema like never before.* Cologne: Walther König 2006.

Ehmann, Antje and Kodwo Eshun, eds. *Harun Farocki, Against What? Against Whom?* London: Raven Row/Koenig Books 2009.

Eisenstein, Sergei. "Notes for a Film of 'Capital,'" trans. Maciej Sliwowski, Jay Leyda, Annette Michelson, *October* 2, summer 1976, 3–26.

Eisenstein, Sergej. *Cinématisme. Peinture et Cinema*. trans. Anne Zouboff. Brussels: Édition complèxe 1980.

Eisenstein, Sergej. *Selected Works*. vol. II. *Towards a Theory of Montage.* eds. Michael Glenny, Richard Taylor. London: BFI 1991.

Elsaesser, Thomas. "'Mit diesen Bildern hat es angefangen.' Anmerkungen zum politischen Film nach Brecht. Das Beispiel Harun Farocki," in *Der Ärger mit den Bildern. Die Filme von Harun Farocki.* eds. Rolf Aurich and Ulrich Kriest. Konstanz: UVK 1998.

Elsaesser, Thomas. "Harun Farocki. Obituary." *Frieze.* online at http://frieze-magazin.de/archiv/features/harun-farocki/ (accessed August 16, 2014).

Elsaesser, Thomas. "Making the World Superfluous: An Interview with Harun Farocki," in *Harun Farocki. Working on the Sight-Lines.* ed. Thomas Elsaesser. Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2004.

Elsaesser, Thomas. "Political Filmmaking after Brecht: Harun Farocki, for example," in *Harun Farocki. Working on the Sightlines*. ed. Thomas Elsaesser, 133–153. Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2004.

Elsaesser, Thomas. *New German Cinema. A History.* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press 1989.
Engell, Lorenz. *Bilder des Wandels.* Weimar: VDG 2003.
Engels, Friedrich. *Dialectic of Nature.* [1873-1883] Moscow: Foreign Languages Press 1954.
Ernst, Wolfgang and Harun Farocki. "Towards an Archive for Visual Concepts," in *Harun Farocki. Working on the Sightlines,* ed. Thomas Elsaesser, 261-286. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press 2004.

Farocki, Harun and Kaja Silverman. "To Love to Work and To Work to Love. A Conversation about 'Passion'," *Discourse* vol. 15, no. 3, spring 1993, 57–75.
Farocki, Harun and Kaja Silverman. *Speaking about Godard.* New York/London: New York UP 1998.
Farocki, Harun. "Biographical Note," in *Harun Farocki. A Retrospective*. eds. Neil Christian Pages and Ingrid Scheib-Rothbart. New York: Goethe House New York 1991.
Farocki, Harun. "Commentary from *Bilder der Welt und Inschrift des Krieges*," *Discourse* vol. 15, no. 3, spring 1993, 78–92.
Farocki, Harun. "Cross Influence/Soft Montage," trans. Cynthia Beatt, in *Against What? Against Whom?* eds. Antje Ehmann and Kodwo Eshun, 69–74. London: Koenig Books 2009.
Farocki, Harun. "Das Universum ist leer," *Der Schnitt* no. 24, 2001, 18–19.
Farocki, Harun. "Der Tod der anderen," *Jungle World* 15, April 2, 2003
Farocki, Harun. "Die Aufgabe des Schnittmeisters: Ökonomie. Gespräch mit Peter Przygodda," *Filmkritik* 10/1979, 487–491.
Farocki, Harun. "Dog from the Freeway," [1982] in *Harun Farocki. Working on the Sightlines*. ed. Thomas Elsaesser, 109–132. Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2004.
Farocki, Harun. "Drückebergerei vor der Wirklichkeit. Das Fernsehfeature/Der Ärger mit den Bildern," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, June 2, 1973.
Farocki, Harun. "Experten und Projektile," *Jungle World* 16, April 9, 2003.
Farocki, Harun. "Filmkritik," in *Fate of alien modes*. eds. Constanze Ruhm et al., 103–104. Vienna: Secession 2003.
Farocki, Harun. "Notwendige Abwechslung und Vielfalt," *Filmkritik* 8/1975, 360–369.
Farocki, Harun. "Passion," *Filmkritik* 7/1983, 317–328.
Farocki, Harun. "Wie man sieht," *Die Republik,* no. 76–78, September 9, 1986, 33–106.
Farocki, Harun. "Zweimal Leacock," in *Das Sichtbare Kino. Fünfzig Jahre Filmmuseum: Texte, Bilder, Dokumente.* ed. Alexander Horwath, 304–306. Vienna: Österreichisches Filmmuseum/ Synema 2014.
Farocki, Harun. *Diagrams*. ed. Benedikt Reichenbach. Cologne: Walther König 2014.
Farocki, Harun. *Nachdruck/Imprint. Texte/Writings.* eds. Susanne Gaensheimer and Nikolaus Schafhausen. Berlin: Vorwerk 8 2001.
Faroult, David. "Filmographie du Groupe Dziga Vertov," in *Jean-Luc Godard: Documents*, eds. Nicole Brenez, David Faroult et al. Paris: Centre Pompidou 2006.
Faure, Élie. *Fonction du cinéma. De la cinéplastique à son destin social*. Geneva: Gonthier 1963.
Feuerbach, Ludwig. *The Essence of Chrisitanity.* [1841] trans. Marian Evans. New York: Calvin Blanchard 1855.
Fisher, Morgan. *Writings*. eds. Sabine Folie and Susanne Titz. Cologne: Walther König 2012.
Flusser, Vilém. *Into the Universe of Technical Images.* [1985] trans. Nancy Ann Roth. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2011.
Flusser, Vilém. *Towards a Philosophy of Photography.* [1983] London: Reaktion Books 2000.
Foster, Hal. "The Cinema of Harun Farocki," *Artforum*, November 2004, 156–161.

Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things. An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* [1966]. New York: Vintage Books 1994.
Fredericksen, Don. "Modes of Reflexive Film," *Quarterly Review of Film Studies*, no. 4, summer 1979, 299–320.
Frey, Hans-Jost. *Lesen und Schreiben.* Basel/Weil am Rhein/Vienna: Urs Engeler 1998.

Gebauer, Gunter. "Hand," *Vom Menschen. Handbuch Historische Anthropologie.* ed. Christoph Wulf, 479–489. Weinheim & Basel: Beltz 1997.
Glaser, Georg K. *Geheimnis und Gewalt. Ein Bericht.* [1951] Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld 1989.
Godard, Jean-Luc and Youssef Ishagpour. *Cinema: The Archaeology of Film and the Memory of A Century*. trans. John Howe. New York: Bloomsbury Academic 2005.
Godard, Jean-Luc. "Le cinéma ne se joue pas à pile ou face: entretien avec Jean-Luc Godard," *L'Humanité*, May 20, 2004.
Godard, Jean-Luc. "Le Gai Savoir (extraits de la piste sonore)," *Cahiers du cinéma* no. 200/201, April/May 1968, 53–55.
Godard, Jean-Luc. "Les carabiniers," [1963] *L'Avant-scène cinéma*, 1976, no. 171–172, 5–38.
Godard, Jean-Luc. "Pierrot le fou," [1965] *L'Avant-scène cinéma*, 1976, no.171/172, 71–111.
Godard, Jean-Luc. "Quand j'ai commencé à faire des films, j'avais zéro an, Rencontre avec Jean-Luc Godard," *Libération*, May 14, 2004.
Godard, Jean-Luc. "Res, non verba," in *Press Book for Nouvelle vague.* ed. Kinowelt. n.p.: 1990.
Godard, Jean-Luc. "Sauve Qui Peut... Godard! (Fragments)," *Framework*, issue 13, autumn 1980, 10–13.
Godard, Jean-Luc. "Struggle on Two Fronts. A Conversation with Jean-Luc Godard," *Film Quarterly*, vol. 22, no. 2, winter 1968–1969, 20–35.
Godard, Jean-Luc. *Godard on Godard*. ed. Tom Milne. New York: Da Capo 1986.
Godard, Jean-Luc. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*. trans. John Howe. Munich: ECM New Series 1999.
Godard, Jean-Luc. *Introduction to a True History of Cinema and Television*. ed., trans. Timothy Barnard. Montreal: Caboose 2014.
Godard, Jean-Luc. *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. 1, 1950–1984, ed. Alain Bergala. Paris: Cahiers du cinéma 1998.
Godard, Jean-Luc. *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. 2, 1985–1998, ed. Alain Bergala. Paris: Cahiers du cinéma 1998.
Godard, Jean-Luc. *JLG/JLG. Phrases.* Paris: P.O.L. 1996.
Grafe, Frieda. "Der bessere Dokumentarfilm, die gefundene Fiktion," in *Schreiben Bilder Sprechen. Texte zum essayistischen Film*, eds. Christa Blümlinger and Constantin Wulff, 138–143. Vienna: Sonderzahl 1992.
Grafe, Frieda. "Jean-Luc Godard: Die Rückseite der Berge filmen," [1981] in ibid. "Beschriebener Film 1974-1985," *Die Republik* nos. 72–75, January 25, 1985, 179–184.
Grafe, Frieda. "Pierrot le Fou," *Filmkritik* 10/1965, 588.
Grafe, Frieda. *Film/Geschichte. Wie Film Geschichte anders schreibt.* Berlin: Brinkmann & Bose 2004.
Grafe, Frieda. *Filmfarben.* Berlin: Brinkmann & Bose 2002.
Grant, Barry Keigh, ed. *Film Genre Reader* III. Austin: University of Texas Press 2003.

Harvey, Sylvia. *May '68 and Film Culture.* London: BFI 1978.
Hediger, Vinzenz. "A Cinema of Memory in the Future Tense: Godard, Trailers, and Godard Trailers," in *For Ever Godard.* eds. Michael Temple, James S. Williams, Michael Witt, 144–159. London: Black Dog Publishing 2004.

Hesper, Stefan. "Berührungen auf Distanz. Kommunikation und Kontakt in Jean-Luc Godards Détective," in *Godard intermedial.* eds. Volker Roloff, Scarlett Winter, 137–152. Tübingen: Stauffenburg 1997.

Holl, Ute. *Kino, Trance und Kybernetik.* Berlin: Brinkmann & Bose 2002.

Horak, Jan Christopher. "Die Jagd nach den Bildern. Fotofilme von Chris Marker," in *Chris Marker. Filmessayist.* eds. Birgit Kämper and Thomas Tode, 73–86. Munich: Cicim 1997.

Horkheimer, Max and Theodor W. Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment.* [1947] ed. Gunzelin Schmid, trans. Edmund Jephcott. Stanford: Stanford UP 2002.

Hurch, Hans and Bert Rebhandl, eds. *That Magic Moment. 1968 und das Kino*. Vienna: Viennale 1998.

Hüser, Rembert. "Etwas Vietnam," in *Der Ärger mit den Bildern. Die Filme von Harun Farocki.* eds. Rolf Aurich and Ulrich Kriest, 215–230. Konstanz: UVK 1998.

Hüser, Rembert. "Nine Minutes in the Yard: A Conversation with Harun Farocki," in *Harun Farocki. Working on the Sight-Lines.* ed. Thomas Elsaesser, 297–314. Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2004.

Hüser, Rembert. "Wo fängt das an, wo hört das auf? Laudatio zum Peter Weiss-Preis für Harun Farocki," in *Peter Weiss Jahrbuch 2003*. St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag 2003.

Jakobson, Roman. *Semiotik. Ausgewählte Texte 1919-1982*, ed. Elmar Holenstein. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1992.

James, Gareth and Florian Zeyfang, eds. *I said I love. That is the promise. The video politics of Jean-Luc Godard/Die TVideopolitik von Jean-Luc Godard.* Berlin: b_books 2003.

Jameson, Fredric. "Symptoms of Theory or Symptoms for Theory," *Critical Inquiry*, no. 30. vol. 2, winter 2004, 403–408.

Jameson, Fredric. *The Geopolitical Aesthetic. Cinema and Space in the World System.* [1992] Indiana: Indiana UP 1995.

Jansen, Peter W. and Wolfram Schütte, eds. *Jean-Luc Godard.* Munich: Hanser 1979.

Jay, Martin. *Downcast Eyes. The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought.* Berkeley: California UP 1994.

Jonas, Hans. "The Nobility of Sight. A Study in the Phenomenology of Senses," *Philosophy and Phenomenologic Research,* 54 /1953, 507–552.

Kaes, Anton, ed. *Kino-Debatte. Literatur und Film 1909-1929.* Munich, Tübingen: dtv, Niemeyer 1978.

Kafka, Franz. *The Blue Octavo Notebooks*. trans. Ernst Kaiser and Eithne Wilkins, ed. Max Brod. Boston: Exact Change 1991.

Kämper, Birgit. "Das Bild als Madeleine. 'Sans Soleil' und 'Immemory'," in *Chris Marker. Filmessayist.* eds. Birgit Kämper and Thomas Tode, 142–159. Munich: Cicim 1997.

Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason.* [1787] trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood. Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1998.

Keenan, Tom. "Light Weapons," *Documents* 1/2, fall/winter 1992, 147–153.

Kersting, Rudolf. *Wie die Sinne auf Montage gehen. Zur ästhetischen Theorie des Kinos/Films.* Basel & Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld 1989.

Kittler, Friedrich. *Optical Media: Berlin Lectures 1999*. trans. Anthony Enns. Cambridge: Polity Press 2010.

Klix, Bettina. "Das Zentralkomittee der Politik des Sehens," *Jungle World* 28, July 4, 2001.

Kluge, Alexander and Dirk Baecker. *Vom Nutzen ungelöster Probleme.* Berlin: Merve 2003.

Kluge, Alexander, Edgar Reitz and Wilfried Reinke. "Wort und Film," [1965] in Klaus Eder and Alexander Kluge. *Ulmer Dramaturgien. Reibungsverluste.* 9-27. Munich: Hanser 1980.

Kluge, Alexander. "Wächter der Differenz. Rede zur Verleihung des Kleist-Preises," in *Kleist-Jahrbuch* 1986, ed. Hans Joachim Kreutzer, 25-37. Berlin: Schmidt 1986.

Kluge, Alexander. *Gelegenheitsarbeit einer Sklavin. Zur realistischen Methode.* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1975.

Kluge, Alexander. *In Gefahr und größter Not bringt der Mittelweg den Tod. Texte zu Kino, Film, Politik*. ed. Christian Schulte. Berlin: Vorwerk 8 1999.

Kracauer, Siegfried. *From Caligari to Hitler. A Psychological History of German Film.* [1947] ed. Leonardo Quaresima. Princeton: Princeton UP 2004.

Kracauer, Siegfried. *Theory of Film. The Redemption of Physical Reality.* New York: Oxford UP 1960.

Kremer, Detlef. *Peter Greenaways Filme. Vom Überleben der Bilder und Bücher.* Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 1995.

Kremer, Detlef. *Romantik*. 2nd edition, Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 2002.

Krohn, Wolfgang. "Technik als Lebensform. Von der aristotelischen Praxis zur Technisierung der Lebenswelt," in *Philosophie der natürlichen Mitwelt. Grundlagen, Probleme, Perspektiven. Festschrift für Klaus Michael Meyer-Abich*. eds. Hans Werner Ingensiep, Anne Eusterschulte, 193–210. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 2002.

Lange, Konrad. *Das Kino in Gegenwart und Zukunft.* Stuttgart: Enke 1920.

Leder, Dietrich. "Begegnungen in Duisburg und anderswo," in *Der Ärger mit den Bildern. Die Filme von Harun Farocki.* eds. Rolf Aurich and Ulrich Kriest, 57–72. Konstanz: UVK 1998.

Leroi-Gourhan, André. *Gesture and Speech*. trans. Anna Bostock Berger. Cambridge: MIT Press 1993.

Lesage, Julia. *Jean-Luc Godard. A Guide to References and Resources.* Boston: Hall 1979.

Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim. *Laocoon. An Essay upon the Limits of Painting and Poetry.* [1766] trans. Ellen Frothingham. New York: The Noonday Press 1957.

Létourneau, Isabelle. "La main humaine. Lieu de manifestation et condition d'actualisation," in *Sagesse du Corps*. ed. Gabor Csepregi, 174–191. Aylmer: Éditions du Scribe 2001.

Leutrat, Jean-Louis. *Des traces qui nous ressemblent.* Paris: Edition Comp'Act 1990.

Lévi-Strauss, Claude. *Myth and Meaning.* [1978] London: Routledge & Keegan Paul 2005.

Linder, Herbert. "Godard. Instinkt und Reflexion," *Filmkritik* 3/1966, 125–138.

Lopate, Phillip. "In Search of the Centaur. The Essay-Film," in *Essays on Nonfiction-Film.* ed. Charles Warren, 243–269. Hanover: University Press of New England 1996.

Lorenz, Thorsten. *Wissen ist Medium. Die Philosophie des Kinos.* Munich: Fink 1988.

Lukács, Georg. "Thoughts toward an aesthetic of the cinema," in *Polygraph*, no. 3, 2001, 13–18.

MacCabe, Colin. *Godard. A Portrait of the Artist at Seventy.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux 2003.

Malraux, André. *The Voices of Silence*, trans. Stuart Gilbert. Princeton: Princeton University Press 1978.

Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. *Capital*. trans. Ben Fowkes, vol. I. London: Penguin Books 1976.

McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man.* [1964] Cambridge: MIT Press 1994.

Menninghaus, Winfried. *Unendliche Verdopplung. Die frühromantische Grundlegung der Kunsttheorie im Begriff absoluter Selbstreflexion.* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1987.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. "Eye and Mind," [1964], in *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader*, ed. Galen A. Johnson, 121–149. Evanston: Northwestern UP 1993.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. "The Intertwining—The Chiasm," in *The Visible and the Invisible.* [1964] trans. Alphonso Lingis, 130–155. Evanston: Northwestern UP: 1968.
Metz, Christian. *Essais sur la signification au cinéma*, vol. 1, Paris: Klincksieck 1971.
Mitchell, William J. T. "The Pictorial Turn," *Artforum*, March 1992, 89–94.
Mitchell, William J. T. *Picture Theory.* Chicago: Chicago UP 1994.
Möbius, Hanno. "Das Abenteuer Essayfilm," *AugenBlick* 10, June 1991, 10–24.
Möbius, Hanno. "Godards *Nouvelle Vague* in der Kulturgeschichte des Fragments," *AugenBlick* 34, December 2003, 6–19.
Montaigne, Michel de. *The Essays of Michel Seigneur de Montaigne*, vol. 2 of 4. Dublin: James Potts 1760.
Morel, Jean-Paul. "Élie Faure, militant du septième art," *Les Cahiers de la Cinémathèque de Perpignan*, no. 70, October 1999, 33–42.
Müller, Jürgen E. *Intermedialität. Formen moderner kultureller Kommunikation.* Münster: Nodus 1996.

Nau, Peter. *Zwischen zwei Kriegen. Film von Harun Farocki. Beschrieben und Protokolliert von Peter Nau.* Munich: Verlag der Filmkritik 1978.
Neubauer, Michael, Karl Prümm and Peter Riedel, eds. *Raoul Coutard. Kameramann der Moderne.* Marburg: Schüren 2004.
Nietzsche, Friedrich. "On Truths and Lies in an Extramoral Sense," [1873] in *Nietzsche and the Death of God Selected Writings*. ed. Peter Fritzsche, 47–51. New York/Boston: Bedford, St. Martin`s 2007.
Novalis. *Werke, Tagebücher und Briefe Friedrich von Hardenbergs*, vol. 2, *Das philosophisch-theoretische Werk*. ed. Hans-Joachim Mähl. Darmstadt: WBG 1999.
Novalis. *Notes for a Romantic Encyclopaedia.* [1798/99] trans. and ed. David W. Wood. Albany: State University of New York Press 2007.

Öhner, Vrath. "Godards Stottern," *Meteor* 6, 1996, 28–31.

Paech, Joachim. "Autorenfilm," in *Deutsche Literatur zwischen 1945 und 1995. Eine Sozialgeschichte.* ed. Horst Albert Glaser, 693–712. Stuttgart: UTB 1997.
Paech, Joachim. "Intermediale Figuration. Am Beispiel von Jean-Luc Godards *Histoire(s) du Cinéma*," *Mediale Performanzen. Historische Konzepte und Perspektiven.* eds. Jutta Eming, Annette Jael Lehmann and Irmgard Maassen, 275–295. Freiburg: Rombach 2002.
Paech, Joachim. "Intermedialität des Films," in *Moderne Film Theorie. Paradigmen, Positionen, Perspektiven.* ed. Jürgen Felix, 287–313. Mainz: Bender 2002.
Paech, Joachim. "Vor 20 Jahren. Das Kino lehnt sich auf," *epd film* 7/1988, 24–27.
Paech, Joachim. *Passion oder die Ein*bild*ungen des Jean-Luc Godard.* Frankfurt am Main: Filmmuseum 1989.
Panofsky, Erwin. *Three Essays on Style*. ed. Irving Lavin. Cambridge: MIT Press 1995.
Pantenburg, Volker. "Aus Händen lesen," *KulturPoetik* vol. 3,1 2003, 42–58.
Pantenburg, Volker. "Die Rote Fahne. Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin, 1966–1968," in *1968. Ein Handbuch zur Kultur- und Mediengeschichte der Studentenbewegung.* eds. Martin Klimke, Joachim Scharloth, 259–268. Cologne/Vienna: Böhlau 2006.
Pantenburg, Volker. "Phantombilder. (Barthes – Kracauer)," *Arcadia 37* (2002), no. 2, 327–343.
Parry, Idris. "Malte's Hand," *German Life and Letters* 11 (1957), 1–12.
Patalas, Enno. "Elf Uhr nachts (Pierrot le Fou)," *Filmkritik* 2/1966, 83–85.
Patalas, Enno. "Godards Film vom Krieg," *Filmkritik* 5/65, 259–266.

Patalas, Enno. "Zum Beispiel Frankreich," *Filmkritik* 8/1968, 553–560.
Pauleit, Winfried. *Filmstandbilder. Passagen zwischen Kunst und Kino.* Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld 2004.
Perloff, Marjorie. "The Invention of Collage," in *Collage*, ed. Jeanine Parisier Plottel, 5–47. New York: New York Literary Forum 1983.
Pinthus, Kurt, ed. *Das Kinobuch* [1913/14] Frankfurt am Main: Fischer 1983.
Pleynet, Marcelin and Jean Thibaudeau. "Economical, Ideological, Formal..." trans. Elias Noujaim, in *May '68 and Film Culture*, ed. Sylvia Harvey, 149–160. London: BFI 1978.
Pudovkin, Vsevolod. *Selected Essays*, trans. Richard Taylor and Evgeni Filippov. London/New York/Calcutta: Seagul 2006.

Rall, Veronika and Klaus Theweleit. "Sachbearbeiter von Wirklichkeiten. Der Diskurs-Jockey," *WOZ. Die Wochenzeitung*, September 11, 2003.
Rebhandl, Bert. "Bildsprache. documenta X: Sieben Filmemacher im Kunstfeld," *Meteor* 9, 1997, 4–12.
Rebhandl, Bert. "Harun Farocki. Nachdruck/Imprint," [review.], *Springerin* 1/02, 40–41.
Rehm, Jean-Pierre. "Lumière au grand jour," *Cahiers du Cinéma* no. 603, July/August 2005, 68–71.
Reverdy, Pierre. *Plupart du temps. Poèmes en prose.* [1915–1922] Paris: Flammarion 1967.
Reynolds, Joshua. *Discourses on Art.* [1797] ed. Robert R. Wark. New Haven/London: Yale UP 1998.
Richter, Hans. "Der Filmessay. Eine neue Form des Dokumentarfilms," [1940] in *Schreiben Bilder Sprechen. Texte zum essayistischen Film*, eds. Christa Blümlinger and Constantin Wulff, 195–198. Vienna: Sonderzahl 1992.
Richter, Hans. *Filmgegner von heute – Filmfreunde von morgen.* [1929] Frankfurt am Main: Fischer 1981.
Riha, Karl. *Das Buch der Hände. Eine Bild- und Textanthologie.* Nördlingen: GRENO 1986.
Rilke, Rainer Maria. *Auguste Rodin.* [1902] trans. Jessie Lemont and Hans Trausil. New York: Sunwise 1919.
Rilke, Rainer Maria. *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge.* [1919] trans. Burton Pike. Champaign: Dalkey Archive Press 2008.
Rimbaud, Arthur. *Collected Poems*. trans. Martin Sorrell. Oxford: Oxford UP 2001.
Rimbaud, Arthur. *Poésies. Une saison en enfer. Illuminations.* [1873/1886] ed. Louis Forestier. Paris: Gallimard 1984.
Rorty, Richard. "Philosophy as a Kind of Writing: An Essay on Derrida," *New Literary History*, vol. 10, fall 1978, 141–160.
Rosen, Philip, ed. *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology*. New York: Columbia UP 1986.
Rosen, Valeska von. *Mimesis und Selbstbezüglichkeit in Werken Tizians. Studien zum venezianischen Malereidiskurs.* Emsdetten/Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag 2001.
Roth, Wilhelm. *Der Dokumentarfilm seit 1960.* Munich/Luzern: Bucher 1982.
Rother, Rainer. "Art. Essayfilm," in *Sachlexikon Film*, ed. Rainer Rother, 81–83. Reinbek: Rowohlt 1997.
Rother, Rainer. "Das Lesen von Bildern. Notizen zu Harun Farockis Film *Etwas wird sichtbar*," in *Der Ärger mit den Bildern. Die Filme von Harun Farocki.* eds. Rolf Aurich and Ulrich Kriest, 231–244. Konstanz: UVK 1998.
Roud, Richard. *Jean-Luc Godard.* London: Secker & Warburg 1967.
Rougemont, Denis de. *Penser avec les mains.* [1936] Paris: Gallimard 1972.
Rudenski, Dyk. *Gestologie und Filmspielerei. Abhandlungen über die Physiologie und Psychologie des Ausdrucks*. Berlin: Hoboken-Presse 1927.

Schärf, Christian. *Geschichte des Essays. Von Montaigne bis Adorno.* Göttingen: Vandenhoek und Ruprecht 1999.

Schaub, Martin. "Filme als Briefe," in *Schreiben Bilder Sprechen. Texte zum essayistischen Film*, eds. Christa Blümlinger and Constantin Wulff, 109–118. Vienna: Sonderzahl 1992.

Scherer, Christina. "Bilder kommentieren Bilder: Die Analyse von Film im Film. Schnittstellen zwischen Harun Farocki und Jean-Luc Godard," *AugenBlick* 34, December 2003, 73–85.

Scherer, Christina. *Ivens, Marker, Godard, Jarman. Erinnerung im Essayfilm.* Munich: Fink 2001.

Schlegel, Friedrich. "Athenäums-Fragmente," [1798] in *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe* vol. II, ed. Ernst Behler, 165–255. Munich/Paderborn/Vienna: Schöningh 1967.

Schlegel, Friedrich. "Brief über den Roman," [1800] in *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe* vol. II, ed. Ernst Behler, 329–339. Munich/Paderborn/Vienna: Schöningh 1967.

Schlegel, Friedrich. "On Goethe's Meister," [1798] in *Classic and Romantic German Aesthetics*, ed. J. M. Bernstein. Cambridge: Cambridge UP 2003.

Schlegel, Hans Joachim. "Eisenstein und die zweite literarische Periode des Films," in *Literaturverfilmungen*. eds. Franz Josef Albersmeier and Volker Roloff, 38–54. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1989.

Schleicher, Harald. *Film-Reflexionen. Autothematische Filme von Wim Wenders, Jean-Luc Godard und Federico Fellini*. Tübingen: Niemeyer 1991.

Schneider, Norbert. "Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichtliche Aspekte des Früchtestillebens," in *Stilleben in Europa*. eds. Gerhard Langemeyer and Hans-Albert Peters, 266–292. Münster: Aschendorff 1979.

Schneider, Norbert. *Stilleben. Realität und Symbolik der Dinge. Die Stillebenmalerei der frühen Neuzeit.* Cologne: Taschen 1989.

Schumm, Gerhard. "Montage, das große Geheimnis," *Der Schnitt* 33 (2004), 54–55.

Schweinitz, Jörg. "'Genre' und lebendiges Genrebewußtsein. Geschichte eines Begriffs und Probleme seiner Konzeptualisierung in der Filmwissenschaft," *montage/av* vol. 3, no. 2, 1994, 99–118.

Shafto, Sally. "On Painting and History in Godard's *Histoire(s) du cinéma*," *Senses of Cinema*, 40 July 2006, online at http://sensesofcinema.com/2006/the-godard-museum/histoires-du-cinema/

Shklovsky, Viktor. "Art as Technique," [1916] in *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays*, trans. Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis, 5–24. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 1965.

Silverman, Kaja and Gareth James. "Son image," in *I said I love. That is the promise. The TVideo politics of Jean-Luc Godard/Die TVideopolitik von Jean-Luc Godard.* eds. Gareth James, Florian Zeyfang, 210–243. Berlin: b_books 2003.

Silverman, Kaja. "The Author as Receiver," *October 96*, spring 2001, 17–34.

Silverman, Kaja. "What is a Camera? or: History in the Field of Vision," *Discourse* vol. 15, no. 3, spring 1993, 3–57.

Smith, Gavin. "Jean-Luc Godard interviewed by Gavin Smith," *Film Comment*, March/April 1996, 31–41.

Sontag, Susan. *On Photography.* London: Penguin 1977.

Sorlin, Pierre. *European Cinemas, European Societies 1939-1990.* New York: Routledge 1991.

Spielmann, Yvonne. "Zerstörung der Formen: Bild und Medium bei Jean-Luc Godard," in *Theater und Kino in der Zeit der Nouvelle Vague.* eds. Volker Roloff and Scarlett Winter, 111–124. Tübingen: Stauffenburg 2000.

Stam, Robert. *Reflexivity in Film and Literature. From Don Quixote to Jean-Luc Godard.* New York: Columbia UP 1992.

Stanitzek, Georg. "Abweichung als Norm? Über Klassiker der Essayistik und Klassik im Essay," in *Klassik im Vergleich. Normativität und Historizität europäischer Klassiken*. DFG symposium 1990, ed. Wilhelm Voßkamp, 594–615. Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 1993.
Sterritt, David. *The Films of Jean-Luc Godard. Seeing the Invisible.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1999.
Stoichita, Victor I. *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting.* trans. Anne-Marie Glasheen. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997.
Sykora, Katharina. *As you desire me. Das Bildnis im Film.* Cologne: Walther König 2003.

Tagg, John. *The Burden of Representation*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1988.
Temple, Michael and James S. Williams, eds. *The Cinema Alone. Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985-2000.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2000.
Temple, Michael, James S. Williams and Michael Witt, eds. *For Ever Godard*. London: Black Dog Publishing 2004.
Theweleit, Klaus. *Das Land, das Ausland heißt. Essays, Reden, Interviews zu Politik und Kunst*. Munich: dtv 1995.
Theweleit, Klaus. *Deutschlandfilme. Filmdenken und Gewalt.* Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld 2003.
Theweleit, Klaus. *ONE + ONE. Rede für Jean-Luc Godard zum Adornopreis, Frankfurt, Paulskirche 17.9.95.* Berlin: Brinkmann & Bose 1995.
Tieck, Ludwig. *The Land of Upside Down.* [1800] trans. Oscar Mandel. Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press 1978.
Tode, Thomas. "Ein Bild ist ein Argument," *Navigationen* 2/2002, 99–108.
Tretjakov, Sergei. "The Biography of the Object," [1929] *October* 188, fall 2006, 57–62.

Ullrich, Wolfgang. *Die Geschichte der Unschärfe.* Berlin: Wagenbach 2002.

Vacche, Angela Dalle. "Jean Luc Godard's *Pierrot le Fou*. Cinema as Collage against Painting," *Literature-Film Quarterly* vol. 23 (1995), no. 1, 39–54.
Valéry, Paul. *Occasions.* trans. Roger Shattuck and Frederick Brown. Princeton: Princeton UP 1970.
Virilio, Paul. *Desert Screen. War at the Speed of Light.* London: Continuum 2002.
Virilio, Paul. *The Vision Machine*, trans. Julie Rose. Bloomington/London: Indiana UP, BFI 1995.
Virilio, Paul. *War and Cinema. The Logistics of Perception.* [1984] London: Verso 2000.

Wagner, Thomas. "Wie es euch regiert," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 2, 2004.
Waugh, Patricia. *Metafiction. The Theory and Practice of Self-conscious Fiction.* London: Routledge 1993.
Wetzel, Michael. "La Japonaise. Die Faszination des Fernöstlichen in den Filmen Chris Markers," in... *sie wollen eben sein, was sie sind, nämlich Bilder... Anschlüsse an Chris Marker.* eds. Natalie Binczek and Martin Rass, 159–172. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 1999.
Wiehager, Renate, ed. *Moving Pictures. Fotografie und Film in der zeitgenössischen Kunst*. Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz 2001.
Williams, Alan. "Pierrot in Context(s)," in *Jean-Luc Godard's* Pierrot Le Fou. ed. David Wills, 43–63. Cambridge: Cambridge UP 2000.
Winkler, Hartmut. *Diskursökonomie. Versuch über die innnere Ökonomie der Medien.* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 2004.
Winkler, Hartmut. *Docuverse. Zur Medientheorie der Computer.* Munich: Boer 1997.

Witt, Michael. "Archaeology of 'Histoire(s) du Cinéma'," in *Introduction to a True History of Cinema and Television*. ed., trans. Timothy Barnard, xv-lxix. Montreal: Caboose 2014.

Witt, Michael. "Montage, My Beautiful Care, or Histories of the Cinematograph," in *The Cinema Alone. Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985–2000*, eds. Michael Temple and James S. Williams, 33–50. Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2001.

Witt, Michael. *Jean-Luc Godard. Cinema Historian.* Bloomington: Indiana UP 2013.

Wollen, Peter. "Passion 1," *Framework* 21, 1983.

Wollen, Peter. *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema*. London: British Film Institute 1998.

Wright, Alan. "Elisabeth Taylor at Auschwitz: JLG and the Real Object of Montage," in *The Cinema Alone. Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985–2000*, eds. Michael Temple and James S. Williams, 51–60. Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2001.

Wulffen, Thomas. "Blick zurück auf die eigenen Zustände," *Der Standard,* February 23, 2004.

Zielinski, Siegfried. *Audiovisions. Cinema and Television as Entr'actes in History.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 1999.

Zima, Peter V. *Was ist Theorie? Theoriebegriff und Dialogische Theorie in den Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften.* Tübingen/Basel: Francke 2004.

Acknowledgments

My first thanks goes to Michael Turnbull for his thorough and meticulous translation of the book. He had the patience to wait for my comments and suggestions for much longer than I had hoped for. I also want to thank Thomas Elsaesser, whose long and continuous engagement with Farocki's and Godard's work has been a constant inspiration and who was so generous to include the book in his book series. At Amsterdam University Press, Jeroen Sondervan, Simon Forde, and Chantal Nicolaes were always helpful and reliable in guiding the book through the publication process. Transcript, which published the German version in 2006, were kind enough to agree to the English translation.

The translation of this book was funded by Volkswagen Foundation. At the Internationales Kolleg für Kulturtechnik und Medienphilosophie (IKKM) in Weimar, Lorenz Engell and Bernhard Siegert provided the necessary institutional support and decided to make the book part of the IKKM book series. At different stages of the project, Susanne Wagner and Johannes Hess were instrumental in putting the manuscript together and assisting in the editorial process. I am also grateful to Matthias Rajmann and Antje Ehmann who provided frame enlargements from Harun Farocki's films and video works.

Illustration Credits

Illustrations 1-2: Still from Inextinghuishable Fire by Harun Farocki (Unlöschbares Feuer, 1969)

Illustrations 3-4: Stills from La Chinoise by Jean-Luc Godard (1967)

Illustrations 5-10: Stills from Breathless by Jean-Luc Godard (À bout de souffle, 1959)

Illustrations 11-28: Stills from Pierrot le fou by Jean-Luc Godard (1965)

Illustrations 29-35: Stills from Still Life by Harun Farocki (Stilleben, 1997)

Illustrations 36-40: Stills from Passion by Jean-Luc Godard (Passion, 1981)

Illustrations 41-43: Still from Interface by Harun Farocki (Schnittstelle, 1995)

Illustrations 44-45: Stills from Histoire(s) du Cinéma by Jean-Luc Godard (1988-1998)

Illustrations 46-50: Stills from JLG/JLG by Jean-Luc Godard (1994)

Illustrations 51-54: Still from Les Carabiniers by Jean-Luc Godard (1963)

Illustrations 55-58: Still from Before your Eyes Vietnam by Harun Farocki (Etwas wird sichtbar, 1982)

Illustration 59-64: Stills from Images of the World and the Inscription of War by Harun Farocki (Bilder der Welt und Inschrift des Krieges, 1988)

Illustrations 65-70: Stills from Histoire(s) du Cinéma by Jean-Luc Godard (1988-1998)

Illustrations 71-72: Stills from Between two Wars by Harun Farocki (Zwischen zwei Kriegen, 1978)

Illustrations 73-75: Press Material accompanying Images of the World and the Inscription of War by Harun Farocki (Bilder der Welt und Inschrift des Krieges, 1988).

Illustration 76-78: Stills from Money by Robert Bresson (L'Argent, 1983)

Illustrations 79-81: Stills from Histoire(s) du Cinéma by Jean-Luc Godard (1988-1998)

Illustrations 82-83: Still from La Chinoise by Jean-Luc Godard (1967)

Illustrations 84-85: Stills from Wind from the East by Jean-Luc Godard / Jean-Pierre Gorin (Le Vent d'est, 1969)

Illustrations 86-92: Stills from Nouvelle Vague by Jean-Luc Godard (1990)

Illustrations 93-94: Stills from Georg K. Glaser – Writer and Smith by Harun Farocki (Georg K. Glaser – Schriftsteller und Schmied, 1988)

Illustrations 95-98: Stills from The Expression of Hands by Harun Farocki (Der Ausdruck der Hände, 1997)

Illustration 99: Still from La Chinoise by Jean-Luc Godard (1967)

Index of Film Titles

Index of Names

Film Culture in Transition

General Editor: *Thomas Elsaesser*

Thomas Elsaesser, Robert Kievit and Jan Simons (eds.)
Double Trouble: Chiem van Houweninge on Writing and Filming, 1994
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 025 9

Thomas Elsaesser, Jan Simons and Lucette Bronk (eds.)
Writing for the Medium: Television in Transition, 1994
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 054 9

Karel Dibbets and Bert Hogenkamp (eds.)
Film and the First World War, 1994
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 064 8

Warren Buckland (ed.)
The Film Spectator: From Sign to Mind, 1995
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 131 7; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 170 6

Egil Törnqvist
Between Stage and Screen: Ingmar Bergman Directs, 1996
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 137 9; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 171 3

Thomas Elsaesser (ed.)
A Second Life: German Cinema's First Decades, 1996
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 172 0; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 183 6

Thomas Elsaesser
Fassbinder's Germany: History Identity Subject, 1996
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 059 4; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 184 3

Thomas Elsaesser and Kay Hoffmann (eds.)
Cinema Futures: Cain, Abel or Cable? The Screen Arts in the Digital Age, 1998
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 282 6; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 312 0

Siegfried Zielinski
Audiovisions: Cinema and Television as Entr'Actes in History, 1999
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 313 7; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 303 8

Kees Bakker (ed.)
Joris Ivens and the Documentary Context, 1999
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 389 2; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 425 7

Egil Törnqvist
Ibsen, Strindberg and the Intimate Theatre: Studies in TV Presentation, 1999
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 350 2; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 371 7

Michael Temple and James S. Williams (eds.)
The Cinema Alone: Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985-2000, 2000
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 455 4; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 456 1

Patricia Pisters and Catherine M. Lord (eds.)
Micropolitics of Media Culture: Reading the Rhizomes of Deleuze and Guattari, 2001
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 472 1; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 473 8

William van der Heide
Malaysian Cinema, Asian Film: Border Crossings and National Cultures, 2002
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 519 3; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 580 3

Bernadette Kester
Film Front Weimar: Representations of the First World War in German Films of the Weimar Period (1919-1933), 2002
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 597 1; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 598 8

Richard Allen and Malcolm Turvey (eds.)
Camera Obscura, Camera Lucida: Essays in Honor of Annette Michelson, 2003
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 494 3

Ivo Blom
Jean Desmet and the Early Dutch Film Trade, 2003
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 463 9; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 570 4

Alastair Phillips
City of Darkness, City of Light: Émigré Filmmakers in Paris 1929-1939, 2003
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 634 3; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 633 6

Thomas Elsaesser, Alexander Horwath and Noel King (eds.)
The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood Cinema in the 1970s, 2004
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 631 2; ISBN hardcover 978 905356 493 6

Thomas Elsaesser (ed.)
Harun Farocki: Working on the Sight-Lines, 2004
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 635 0; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 636 7

Kristin Thompson
Herr Lubitsch Goes to Hollywood: German and American Film after World War I, 2005
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 708 1; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 709 8

Marijke de Valck and Malte Hagener (eds.)
Cinephilia: Movies, Love and Memory, 2005
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 768 5; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 769 2

Thomas Elsaesser
European Cinema: Face to Face with Hollywood, 2005
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 594 0; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 602 2

Michael Walker
Hitchcock's Motifs, 2005
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 772 2; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 773 9

Nanna Verhoeff
The West in Early Cinema: After the Beginning, 2006
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 831 6; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 832 3

Anat Zanger
Film Remakes as Ritual and Disguise: From Carmen to Ripley, 2006
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 784 5; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 785 2

Wanda Strauven
The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded, 2006
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 944 3; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 945 0

Malte Hagener
Moving Forward, Looking Back: The European Avant-garde and the Invention of Film Culture, 1919-1939, 2007
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 960 3; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 961 0

Tim Bergfelder, Sue Harris and Sarah Street
Film Architecture and the Transnational Imagination: Set Design in 1930s European Cinema, 2007
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 984 9; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 980 1

Jan Simons
Playing the Waves: Lars von Trier's Game Cinema, 2007
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 991 7; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 979 5

Marijke de Valck
Film Festivals: From European Geopolitics to Global Cinephilia, 2007
ISBN paperback 978 90 5356 192 8; ISBN hardcover 978 90 5356 216 1

Asbjørn Grønstad
Transfigurations: Violence, Death, and Masculinity in American Cinema, 2008
ISBN paperback 978 90 8964 010 9; ISBN hardcover 978 90 8964 030 7

Vinzenz Hediger and Patrick Vonderau (eds.)
Films that Work: Industrial Film and the Productivity of Media, 2009
ISBN paperback 978 90 8964 013 0; ISBN hardcover 978 90 8964 012 3

François Albera and Maria Tortajada (eds.)
Cinema beyond Film: Media Epistemology in the Modern Era, 2010
ISBN paperback 978 90 8964 083 3; ISBN hardcover 978 90 8964 084 0

Pasi Väliaho
Mapping the Moving Image: Gesture, Thought and Cinema circa 1900, 2010
ISBN paperback 978 90 8964 140 3; ISBN hardcover 978 90 8964 141 0

Pietsie Feenstra
New Mythological Figures in Spanish Cinema: Dissident Bodies under Franco, 2011
ISBN paperback 978 90 8964 304 9; ISBN hardcover 978 90 8964 303 2

Eivind Røssaak (ed.)
Between Stillness and Motion: Film, Photography, Algorithms, 2011
ISBN paperback 978 90 8964 212 7; ISBN hardcover 978 90 8964 213 4

Tara Forrest
Alexander Kluge: Raw Materials for the Imagination, 2011
ISBN paperback 978 90 8964 272 1; ISBN hardcover 978 90 8964 273 8

Belén Vidal
Figuring the Past: Period Film and the Mannerist Aesthetic, 2012
ISBN 978 90 8964 282 0

Bo Florin
Transition and Transformation: Victor Sjöström in Hollywood 1923-1930, 2012
ISBN 978 90 8964 504 3

Erika Balsom
Exhibiting Cinema in Contemporary Art, 2013
ISBN 978 90 8964 471 8

Christian Jungen
Hollywood in Canne$: The History of a Love-Hate Relationship, 2014
ISBN 978 90 8964 566 1

Michael Cowan
Walter Ruttmann and the Cinema of Multiplicity: Avant-Garde Film – Advertising – Modernity, 2014
ISBN 978 90 8964 585 2

Temenuga Trifonova
Warped Minds: Cinema and Psychopathology, 2014
ISBN 978 90 8964 632 3

Christine N. Brinckmann
Color and Empathy: Essays on Two Aspects of Film, 2014
ISBN 978 90 8964 656 9

François Albera and Maria Tortajada (eds.)
Cine-Dispositives: Essays in Epistemology Across Media, 2015
ISBN 978 90 8964 666 8