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The history of cinema, as experience

Christa Blümlinger

Film as metahistory

In 1998 at the Cannes Film Festival, Jean-Luc Godard – having completed his *Histoire(s) du cinéma* project – presented a special reprint of the magazine *Trafic*. This included an article by the American artist Hollis Frampton.¹ Frampton's essay, 'For a Metahistory of Film: Commonplace Notes and Hypotheses', written in 1971, has traditionally been seen as the manifesto of the experimental avant-garde or of structural film. How can this spiritual kinship, unexpectedly embraced by Godard, be explained? Frampton does not appear in Godard's *Histoire(s)*, any more than Peter Kubelka, Ernie Gehr or Michael Snow does. What lurks behind this suddenly close relationship between two different traditions of the avant-garde? To use Peter Wollen's terminology, is it a matter of bringing the 'introverted ontology' of 'pure' cinema, concerned with its own essence, into contact with the 'extraverted ontology', influenced by André Bazin, of what has become known as the second avant-garde?² Should the dissociation between these two avant-gardes, maintained over the years by both filmmakers and critics, be symbolically removed after the fact? In Frampton's attempt to take an aesthetics of form and material and from it develop a conception of history making it possible to think of cinema as art, Godard seems to recognize the inspiration behind his own *Histoire(s)*. Starting in the early 1970s, probably under the influence of his discovery of electronic image technologies, Godard also became interested in thinking about history in a filmic form. Like Frampton, he sought to develop from within cinema a form equivalent to the theory of knowledge, one which would not concern the construction so much as the function of (film) history.

Frampton considered cinema an epistemological model, when seen as a whole.³ He published his text on the 'metahistory of film' in the magazine *Artforum*, in order to present one of his fundamental ideas on the 'metahistorical' function of avant-garde cinema to a readership made up of art enthusiasts. 'I was

born during the Age of Machines', said the filmmaker, who was born in the mid-1930s, in other words at a time when '[t]he physical principles by which machines "worked" were intuitively verifiable'.⁴ For Frampton, who in his last films came to grips with the electronic era and digital effects, cinema is in this sense 'the last machine', and also 'the last art to address intelligence through the senses'. According to Frampton, the end of this Age of Machines arrived in the early 1940s with the invention of radar, enabling the observation of airspace by mechanical means via an 'anonymous' black box. Frampton associates this quantum leap into the techniques of control with the birth of American avant-garde cinema as an independent movement, represented by the films of Willard Maas or Maya Deren.

At the same moment when Frampton was working on grounding American avant-garde cinema in the history of technique – by defining the art of cinema through the historicity of its material and its mechanical *dispositif*⁵ – Godard had written a project for a 'cinematographic essay', *Moi Je*, whose second part was entitled 'I Am a Machine' ('Moi, je suis une machine'). However, unlike Frampton, Godard did not aim to establish a material aesthetics. Various influences can be identified in his unfinished project: cybernetic models, concepts borrowed from Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari,⁶ but also, already, the will to work with video and to think about cinema afresh.⁷ In 1973, Godard asked a question in this context: 'Who will write a real history of cinema and television someday?'⁸ Although the project is presented in the form of a collage of appropriated material with glaring joins between some elements and shattered associations among others, *Moi Je* is clearly intended to be taken as an essay, not a self-portrait in the pictorial sense of the term, much less an autobiography.

When Frampton started concentrating on film in the 1960s, alongside photography, he decided to come to terms with the art of his friends Frank Stella and

Carl Andre,⁹ who were working with serial and geometric forms in order to emphasize the materiality of the canvas or to translate the principle of repetition into a sculptural form. With films like *(nostalgia)* (1971) or *Poetic Justice* (1972), Frampton contributed on the level of image and language theory, asking radical questions that subjected cinema to a new grammatical treatment, revealing its signitive nature. In *(nostalgia)*, he pushes the mimetic faculty of photography to its limits in a twofold movement: first, by presenting his own photographs on screen and by literally giving them an incandescent quality, burning them one after the other, before the eyes of the viewers, leading them to study the images more closely; then, by describing the images with a time lag, through the use of a falsely autobiographical voice (in reality that of Michael Snow). Finally, with *Poetic Justice*, Frampton gives radical form to the question of the semiotic relationships of designation, by making words the only subject of his film. It is composed of a series of words written down on separate sheets that are placed one after the other in front of the camera. Their succession and accumulation conjure up a screenplay, a *possible* film, the result of a mnemonic construction on the part of the viewer.

In his outline for a 'metahistory' of cinema, Frampton simultaneously emphasizes the critical and metahistorical functions of the art of film, by introducing an unusual distinction between historians and metahistorians. For Frampton, the first stands before a multitude, a 'treasure' of films, not all of which are masterpieces – far from it – and that belong to domains as different as educational films, amateur films, or what Frampton calls 'endoscopic cinematography',¹⁰ in other words utilitarian cinema. The historian answers 'for every existing filmic image'. The metahistorian, on the other hand, invents a tradition, by selecting and defining a single artistic domain. Starting from the archive as a material basis, Frampton – by way of a positivist exaggeration – thus sees the film historian as confronted by the virtual corpus of all existing films, while associating the metahistorian – who is ultimately a metaphor for an avant-garde film-maker – with another form of virtual infinity. This infinity is no longer connected to the macro-level of the corpus of all films, but to the micro-level of the body of an individual film. Frampton stresses the reiterable nature and the malleability of the 'filmed material': 'There is no evidence in the structural logic of the filmstrip that distinguishes 'footage' from a 'finished' work. Thus, any piece of film may be regarded as 'footage', for use

in any imaginable way to construct or reconstruct a new work'.¹¹

Cinema as a medium and a vector of historical thought is therefore the potential to rewrite; the possibility of re-creation. The machinic character of the metacritical function of filmic art is associated by Frampton with another essential dimension: film is 'kinema', the illusion of a movement, based on a minute variation of the speed of the film's passage in the projector; 'There is nothing in the structural logic of the filmstrip that can justify such an assumption'.¹² This is why an 'infinite film', according to Frampton, should contain both the possible identity *and* difference of its component images. Frampton conceives of film as a system of notation that, as in Western music, is fulfilled only in execution. 'The film strip is an elegant device for modulating standardized beams of energy'.¹³ The projector or the system of projection is thus raised to the status of a central element of the filmic experience.

The history of images: Fisher

The same year that Hollis Frampton died, Morgan Fisher – an artist and avant-garde film-maker – made a film that could be seen as homage to *(nostalgia)*, but also as an application of Frampton's schema of a 'metahistory of film'. His experimental 'documentary' *Standard Gauge* (1984) is constructed, with a rare level of radicalness, out of the material and the *dispositif* of film-making. In line with Frampton's work in *(nostalgia)*, small pieces of footage collected from the trash cans of the editing rooms of American studios offer an opportunity to make associations of an autobiographical nature. On the 'metahistorical' level, it is again a matter of demonstrating the limits of a memorializing narrative founded on the signifying dimension of images, and of establishing the fictional character of factographic constructions. On the 'historical' level, the film presents fragments of a subhistory of Hollywood that concerns itself with the economic and social determinations of technique. The standardization of the 35mm format, which serves as an explanation of the film's title, is presented through stories tied to the production of a particular film (an appearance in and a job as an assistant on a film by Roger Corman), personal tastes (the archive of stock shots), technical specifics (the use of Technicolor or Cinemascope) or the recontextualization of a frame of film by the soundtrack. Starting with a simple fragment, Fisher retraces the origin of a film, whether through the images it contains, its soundtrack, its sprockets or its formal construction.



The tangible gesture of presentation – the insertion of a short strip of film into the camera’s field of vision – is the starting point for the film-maker’s subtle reflections regarding a material history of cinema.

The film is built upon a rigorous formal principle: after an introductory text, a ‘crawl’, scrolls by on the screen going over the history of the standardization of the 35mm format, the actual presentation of that standardization begins, in the form of a succession of snippets of film, examined very closely on a light table. Fisher first has a voice-over tell a story for each frame of film, paying homage to an unknown group of workers in the film industry: the ‘China Girls’, incarnated by anonymous women whose images’ only function was to test the colors, or the translators who handled subtitling. There is a latent reference to Godard’s *La Chinoise* (literally ‘The Chinese Woman’) in the form of subtitles, which had even been printed on the film’s leader (Fisher was present at the first test projection of the English-subtitled print). Fisher pays particular attention to the film’s head leader and to the control frames: those pieces of film that are never seen during a projection, but that are an indispensable element of every reel, and that constantly become worn and are replaced.

‘Great’ films like *The Band Wagon* or *Under Capricorn* are not the only ones that appear here to be integrated into a tale of the material history of the different versions of these works: there is also material that Fisher *no longer* has at his disposal and that he remembers when the title *The Naked Dawn* appears on screen. This gives him the excuse for a small digression in his comments, a confession that he is partial to a film, and to the pleasure of bringing it to life by retelling it: Edgar Ulmer’s *Detour*, which inserts itself like a strip of absent film, like a memory communicated by sound alone, by the narrator’s voice-over. At the end of Fisher’s film, the spectators

are left alone: for a long time no voice guides them further in the exploration of the material.

Fisher works in what Frampton would see as a ‘metahistorical’ perspective in several respects: through the *dispositif* of the light table and leftover footage from the editing room, *Standard Gauge* highlights the physical act of editing and in so doing illustrates its own production techniques. By emphasizing the materiality of its visual component, the film references the conditions of its presentation, in other words the celluloid that passes through the projector during the projection and never appears as such. He therefore shows the ‘other’ film – to borrow Thierry Kuntzel’s expression.¹⁴ Fisher emphasizes an active dimension to the extent that, instead of copying the found footage, he slides them by hand onto the light table. Fisher’s voice-over in *Standard Gauge* contributes a ‘realm of possibilities’ to every piece of film: this shot could have been edited in one way or another, but it landed on the cutting room floor or was spliced into the leader and thus taken away from the light of the projector. No film can ever be considered ‘finished’: it can always be virtually reassembled or presented differently. One can also classify Fisher as a ‘historian of cinema’ by Frampton’s definition, in so far as he writes his subhistory of the studios on the basis of a corpus that does not encompass the ‘best’ of all films in their official versions, but that references mainly obscure footage that was shot and edited for arbitrary purposes within the studios. Finally, *Standard Gauge* constitutes a reflection on the question of what images can bring about, as far as memories, words and possible associations are concerned. Through the rigorous *dispositif* of the stationary camera and the concentrated voice-over, the search for the exact words, the right tone that the images call for, takes shape. Occasionally, we see on screen the material inscription of the soundtrack on



History, made into image: Godard

Ultimately, Godard also carries on the utopian project of a history of cinema that would be conceived in relation to 'all the (hi)stories of the films that were never made' (as the title of chapter 1A of *Histoire(s) du cinéma* puts it). His film on German reunification, *Germany Year 90 Nine Zero* (*Allemagne année 90 neuf zéro*, 1991), which was produced while Godard was working on *Histoire(s)*, thus includes films shot after the defeat of the Third Reich, but not in Germany or not by Germans. It is a *pars pro toto* comprising for example *The Passenger* (*Pasazierka*, 1961/1963), the 'expiatory' film of the Polish director Andrzej Munk, or Roberto Rossellini's *Germany Year Zero* (*Germania anno zero*, 1948). The slowed-down and anamorphically distorted excerpt from Munk's film – left incomplete at his death – marks it as a fragment and as a presentation of that which was not filmed. The shots taken from Rossellini's film are also called upon as examples: with their insistence on the motif of ruins, the excerpts from Rossellini demonstrate the function of cinema as trace or as symbol of history. This synecdochical or metaphorical construction of the history of cinema conforms with an integrative and at the same time representative mode.

At an early stage, Godard started incorporating direct quotes from other films in his fiction films, from the postcards in *Les Carabiniers* (1963) and the images from Resnais's *Night and Fog* (*Nuit et brouillard*, 1955) in *A Married Woman* (*Une femme mariée*, 1964), to the opening of *Notre musique* (2004), which through a rapid montage of news clips evokes the ambivalent place that the Yugoslav Wars hold in the collective memory. In his essayistic body of work, his reliance on the debris of cinema history became increasingly more important starting with *Ici et ailleurs* (1976), where for the first time Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville systematically incorporate archival material in order to develop a critique of television and a utopia of video. Even in his avowed self-portrait, *JLG/JLG – Self-Portrait in December* (*JLG/JLG – autoportrait de décembre*, 1995), Godard uses film clips taken from his personal archives, freezing the images or reframing them, showing them at normal speed or in slow motion, associating them with different musical, spoken or textual fragments, and improvising as he goes along. With *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, his magnum opus completed in 1998, Godard presents for the first time a pure palimpsest whose aim is to construct the history (the histories) of cinema exclusively out of pre-existing material. In *Vrai faux passeport* (2006), a video produced for his *Voyages en utopie* exhibition

a piece of found footage. This indicates that sound, unlike the 'commented' image, cannot be made readable or audible without a technical apparatus.

'The metahistorian of cinema', writes Frampton, 'is occupied with inventing a tradition, that is, a coherent wieldy set of discrete monuments, meant to inseminate resonant consistency into the growing body of his art.'¹⁵ Jean-Luc Godard, who was apparently a latecomer to Frampton's work, also seems to react to the romantic aspect of Frampton's definition of the task of the metahistorian of cinema when he decides to include this text in his presentation of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, and consequently to establish the link with an avant-garde that remains completely absent from the corpus of his own film. But while Frampton, speaking of the 'resonant consistency' of the art of cinema, is ultimately concerned with the 'intentional precincts'¹⁶ of the American avant-garde as it had constituted itself since Maya Deren, Godard references another 'resonant' corpus entirely. *Histoire(s) du cinéma* is concerned with the requirement, as extensive as it is metaphorical, to encompass 'all the (hi)stories' ('Toutes les histoires', the title of the first chapter, 1A) in order to bring them together in 'a single (hi)story' ('Une histoire seule', chapter 1B), through a monumentalization not only of the history of cinema, but also of cinema as history.

at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the film-maker is so ensconced in his role as a teacher that he has no problem giving out pluses and minuses to fragments of the audiovisual history of the twentieth century, in order to cite his own positions and situate them, from the critique of revolutionary rhetoric of Palestinian fighters in *Ici et ailleurs* (1976) to his nostalgic homage to modern Italian cinema in episode 3A of *Histoire(s)*.

In his speech in Frankfurt upon receiving the Adorno Award in 1995, Godard clarified both his conception of history and his relationship to German culture, by linking both of them to his idea of cinema. He places cinema, through the force of its 'eloquent and profound' images, alongside philosophy, politics and literature. Godard is probably thinking here of the 'progressive universal poetry' and the theory of the fragment in the first German Romantic movement. Images can do without words, for they are filled with special kinds of expressive force and historicity. But for Godard, only cinema is capable of communicating a 'seen'¹⁷ history, constructed out of confrontation and montage.

Through the overdetermination of the material – whether filmed or found – and through the juxtaposition of these diverse sources, Godard's palimpsest develops an infinite number of connections between edited elements. It has often been said that this technique is derived from a form of expression characteristic of German Romanticism, where history no longer constitutes itself as a narrative, but as a mode of resonance. The film establishes relationships not only from image to image, but also between the word and the image, for example through the representation *within* the image of a white rose, which through a long chain of associations around the colour white, goes from Goethe to Hans and Sophie Scholl (members of the anti-Nazi resistance movement The White Rose, which then appears here as a

verbal image). Ultimately, it seems as though Godard strives to translate his material into a hieroglyphic form of writing, in the sense that Freud describes with his concept of displacement and condensation. In this passage from word to image, Raymond Bellour suggests that we see, in Maurice Blanchot's terms, a movement from 'black writing' to 'white writing',¹⁸ which is dedicated solely to the image and can be understood as preceding law and interpretation.

So Godard, advancing through his imaginary museum of cinema beyond 'black writing', takes the unusual step of presenting several minutes of film without words (not taking into account the lyrics of the accompanying song), in order to give resonance to the emotional effect created by a montage of the great moments of postwar Italian cinema, which progressively opened the field from where the New Wave emerged later (chapter 3A, 'La monnaie de l'absolu', The Coin of the Absolute). This sequence is preceded by a voice-over in the mumbling style that characterizes the film-maker, expressing his astonishment and nostalgia concerning 'the crop of great Italian cinema'. Confronted by a cinema that never recorded sound and image at the same time, Godard wonders about its expressive power: 'Only one answer / The language of Ovid and Virgil / of Dante and Leopardi / had passed into the images.' In this sequence, the spectators find themselves literally submerged by an Italian *canzone*, which binds the various excerpts together in the style of an elegy: an ode to the Italian culture and language, Riccardo Cocciante's 'La nostra lingua italiana', accompanies to the end this collection of essential attitudes and movements taken from *Stromboli*, *La Strada*, *The Leopard (Il gattopardo)*, and *The Gospel According to St. Matthew (Il vangelo secondo Matteo)*. In this montage, Godard uses the melodramatic tone of the music to highlight the emotional dimension of his filmic memory, accentuating the



Jean-Luc Godard, *Histoire(s) du Cinéma, 1A*

figurative work on body language, gestures and the handling of space through slow motion, superimpositions and repetitions.

Godard takes a different approach in chapter 4A of *Histoire(s)*, when he credits Alfred Hitchcock – ‘the greatest creator of forms of the twentieth century’ – with the ‘control of the universe’. Here, the quoted elements are not displayed in their pure presence of mnemonic affects; rather, the voice-over comments on their character as images. In this way, Godard monumentalizes some selected fragments from the history of cinema, by ascribing a poetic quality to their organic unity and to their mimetic force, a quality through which not only a response to classic cinema can be created, but also its equivalent – a quality for which the presence of criticism is crucial.

Jean-Luc Godard, *Histoire(s) du Cinéma*, 28
and *Allemagne année 90 neuf zéro*



In the unfolding of this chapter, Jacques Rancière¹⁹ detects not so much the refusal of narrative as the symbolist, non-dialectical implementation of an association of images by which Godard transforms Hitchcock's shots into pure icons, in the same way that he promised Edmund – the young suicide victim in Rossellini's *Germany Year Zero* – a cinematographic resurrection, a promise made in a passage at the beginning of *Histoire(s)*. Bellour can thus identify in the first two parts of *Histoire(s)* a form of iconolatry, in accordance with which he associates Godard with the Byzantine patriarch Nicephorus, who believed in the image and thought that the biblical message of the icons was not only equal but superior to that of the Gospels.²⁰ In ‘Une histoire seule’, Godard says, word for word: ‘Cinema, like Christianity, is not based upon historical truth.’

Starting with the metaphorical use of objects and shots taken from *Vertigo*, *Suspicion* or *Marnie* – with spots, or stains, that become charged with disturbing strangeness and deform the representation²¹ – Godard constructs his personal celebration in the form of a

commemoration of ‘strong’ images, which stand like ruins observing the retreat of grand narratives.

In *Histoire(s)*, the specific use of montages and collages of images, of texts (titles and intertitles) and commentary, the subtle blend of fragments of sound and music – forming just so many enigmas that call upon the spectator's knowledge – all this ultimately moves, like the footnotes of a book, into the heart of Godard's intentions. Indeed, Suzanne Liandrat-Guigues and Jean-Louis Leutrat see in this aspect Godard's connection with Montaigne: cinema (in the sense of the history of cinema, but also of films as a whole) is in their view the absent text to which the compendium of Godard's interpretations refers.²²

It is significant that the divergent readings of *Histoire(s) du cinéma* correspond to different theories of the image, each of which claims to have entered into a sort of philosophical dialogue with the filmmaker. This becomes very apparent in a commentary by Georges Didi-Huberman concerning Jacques Rancière, a commentary whose focus is provided by a collage in chapter 1A, ‘Toutes les histoires’: we see Giotto's Mary Magdalene turned horizontally, floating like an angel in the sky, above Liz Taylor blithely frolicking in a scene from George Stevens's film *A Place in the Sun*. We hear a voice-over by Godard establishing an ambiguous link between this shot from the American melodrama and the images filmed by the same director during the liberation of the concentration camps. Jacques Rancière analyses Godard's constellation of the two as a representation of an angel of the Resurrection in a symbolist ‘image-phrase’ devoid of any dialectic.²³ According to Georges Didi-Huberman, on the other hand, one should read that figure positively as the Angel of History (so therefore, in Benjaminian terms, like a deliverance from catastrophe).²⁴ These are not only two readings, but above all two conceptions of the image that can both be derived from Godard's aesthetic: on the one hand, the image as metamorphic object and as speculation (which for Godard can also turn into nostalgia); on the other, the image as evanescence and as trace (which, seen from the present, carries within it the utopia of redemption).

The star/camp victim constellation appears, immediately before this collage discussed by Rancière and Didi-Huberman, in the form of a confrontation between two shots superimposed upon each other: we see Liz Taylor in black and white, beside a lake, smilingly taking Montgomery Clift in her arms, while colour images evoke the unspeakable horror of the piles of cadavers in the liberated camps.

Godard himself explains this pairing in an interview with Serge Daney, going into more detail than in the voice-over in *Histoire(s)*:

In *A Place in the Sun*, there's a deep feeling of happiness that I've rarely encountered in other films, even much better ones. It's a simple secular feeling of happiness, one moment with Elizabeth Taylor. And when I found out that Stevens had filmed the camps and that for the occasion Kodak had given him their first rolls of 16mm color film, that explained to me how he could do that close-up of Elizabeth Taylor that radiated a kind of shadowed happiness...²⁵

For Godard, montage is therefore a means to express the simultaneity of parallel (hi)stories, far apart in space, a means also to confront an actual image with a virtual one, and finally a means for understanding a filmic image through that which, from within it, refers to something beyond representation or, at least, touches the limits of the representable. This is not the only place where the ambivalence of this reference to the emaciated, mummified cadavers of camp prisoners is revealed. The clips showing the victims of Nazi terror come back regularly to haunt the overall composition of *Histoire(s)*, like the images separating the real from fiction, but which also transform themselves too easily into icons – Rancière's symbolist 'image-phrases' – as Jacques Aumont has already noted in his vast analysis devoted to *Histoire(s)*.²⁶

Godard's belief in the force of images as archives of their time can also be linked to the ambivalence of the figure of the historian, such as *Histoire(s)* sheds light on it, especially through the myth of Orpheus. Orpheus turns around towards Eurydice/the past, consigning her/it irrevocably to hell/oblivion. In cinema, says Godard (in chapter 3A), Eurydice does not have to die; we may again turn towards the past thanks to the silver halide crystals in film emulsions. But Eurydice, adds Aumont, is then transformed into a salt statue, one that can be loved or adored, but only from across the great distance of myth.²⁷ In one of his later videos, *The Old Place*, Godard explicitly associates his melancholic method with Benjamin's thinking. In an off-screen conversation with Anne-Marie Miéville, we hear him say: 'For Benjamin, the totality of all ideas is a primordial landscape, always present.'

If one wanted to describe in Freudian and Benjaminian terms the ambivalent function of memory in Godard's work, we could establish that forgetting makes it possible to 'protect our impressions',²⁸ to

ensure their conservation in the mind, while memory 'decomposes' and destroys them. For Godard, quoting other films is also, and always, carrying out a 'post-humous operation'²⁹ on the monuments to be remembered of the rubble-strewn field of (cinema) history. *Germany Year 90 Nine Zero* seems to radicalize this constellation. We could transpose Benjamin's conceptions to a visual framework by saying: faced with the rubble-strewn field, in the here and now of historical survival, it is a question of reading the past in an allegorical mode,³⁰ while at the same time bringing out a utopian element from within it. Here, Godard develops a mnemonic principle along the lines of hieroglyphic writing, where culture replays natural history and at the same time sets it down in the encoded writing of the past.

Although Godard also plays with indirectly quoting a series of characters from his own films, *Germany Year 90 Nine Zero* presents itself, through its direct appropriation of images and sounds, like a kind of extension of *Histoire(s)* – like an essay on history. Fragments détourned from musicals, drawings, photos, paintings, but also from archived films, are associated here with images and sounds recorded by the film-maker himself, which are then in turn subjected to reworking and variation. As an example, in chapter 2B of *Histoire(s)* we see the reappearance of an emblematic shot from *Germany Year 90 Nine Zero* showing Eddie Constantine walking across a frozen pond. In his film on Germany, the soundtrack accompanying this shot consists of Wilhelm Hauff's romantic *lied* 'Morgenrot, Morgenrot, leuchtest mir zum frühen Tod', the allegorical image of 'beauty on the last day'. With that, he already marks the 'original' shot as a quotation.

In the middle of *Germany Year 90 Nine Zero*, in the third variation entitled 'All the Dragons of Our Life' ('Tous les dragons de notre vie'), Godard symbolically brings to life a statue erected in front of the Altes Museum in Berlin, representing a Greek horseman fighting a lion. He sets the bronze sculpture in motion by framing it in a series of still shots of different durations, at different distances and different angles, before finally filming the statue so that the background features a portion of the Berlin Cathedral that faces the museum. In this way a figure of confrontation appears, the dynamic representation of an idea of openness in museum architecture. At the same time, this 'animation' references the symbolic awakening of the stone lions in Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin*, a film for which Godard erects a monument in the first part of *Histoire(s)*, in the form of a direct

quotation. The film-maker transposes the motif of the statue into his film on Germany, by creating like Eisenstein bodily movement through the variation of the shots. He carries out a similar transposition on the soundtrack, with variations on a musical theme from the second movement of Beethoven's 7th Symphony. Godard commented on Eisenstein's method in his speech in Frankfurt: 'if the three lions create a montage effect, it's because the shots are from three different angles, not because there is montage.'³¹ It is therefore the variation on *several levels*, transposed repetition, that according to Godard produces the figures of cinema. The sense of history emerges out of these very displacements.

Thought-images of contemporary history: Kluge

Unlike Godard – who in his *Histoire(s)* usually relied upon the canon of classic and modern cinema in the tradition of the cinephilic critics of the *Cahiers du cinema* – and also unlike Fisher – for whom Hollywood similarly represents a primary corpus of reference – Alexander Kluge, when he refers to cinema in his audiovisual essays, typically prefers to use material taken from early silent cinema, or from forgotten films. Kluge, too, writes history on the basis of rediscovered films: not in the Godardian sense of the utopia of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, as an all-encompassing unit where all the arts are combined, nor in the epistemological sense of Frampton's *metahistory*, but as a composite, transmedial work, located within the framework of a historico-critical understanding of the public space. For Kluge, cinema is therefore not so much confronted by other arts as it is by the conditions of production of electronic media³² and their antecedents.

As one of the signatories of the Oberhausen Manifesto, published by a collective of young German film-makers in 1962, Alexander Kluge emphasized the experimental function of the short film for the cinema to come. In a personal declaration published later, *Die Utopie Film* (The Utopia Film) (1964),³³ Kluge – as a writer, lawyer, researcher and film-maker – called for the state's financial support of film essays and first drafts in order to renew the form of the screenplay. The concept of utopia thus prefigures the vision of an *auteur* cinema and a political cinema that, of course, is only a far-off goal. This proposition corresponds to the idea of an 'impure cinema', which should not be thought of as something definitive, but as a 'programme' or a 'construction site', as something 'imperfect', to borrow the term that Kluge will later

use to clarify his vision of cinema in relation to the problem of realism.³⁴ He frequently describes his own films as a mixed bag of 'materials', or even as 'ruins'.

Kluge's 'cluttered construction sites' are the result of a kind of *bricolage*, with the added touch of a marked taste for leftovers. In a 1976 interview with Ulrich Gregor, the film-maker puts forth the idea of seeing most of his films, in particular the short films, as 'screenplays built out of cinematic material'.³⁵ The short *Feuerlöscher E.A. Winterstein* (1968) is perhaps the most obvious example of this, as it recycles discarded footage from *Yesterday Girl* (*Abschied von Gestern*, 1965/1966): during his lean years and his experimental phases, Kluge only shot parts of films, completing them with quotes and pre-existing material. As with the plan of action set out by Frampton in 1971, each piece of film can serve as material for the metahistorian of cinema to build a new work. But whereas for Frampton this process of appropriation must participate in the tradition of avant-garde film,³⁶ for Kluge it means above all doing without a screenplay. In this respect, his approach comes very close to the one used by Godard in his video essays whose titles begin with *Scénario...*³⁷ but which were all – except for *Scénario de Sauve qui peut (la vie)* (1979) – made *after* their respective films, despite presenting themselves as their rough drafts.

Feuerlöscher E.A. Winterstein explores the various functions of a figure, the panoply of possibilities of a narrative principle, which through a collage of sounds and images is deposited in several successive layers. This 'Winterstein principle'³⁸ is sometimes built out of a visible form (for example, people marching in uniform, or pyrotechnic displays), sometimes out of audible material (a dramatic *aria* or a narration spoken like a nursery rhyme). Here, the soundtrack does not take precedence over the image, or vice versa: Kluge's intent is rather a kind of parallel development. In a text Kluge wrote in 1965 with Edgar Reitz and Wilfried Reinke, the film-maker calls for a new association between sound and image, which he called the 'double-track description'.³⁹

When Kluge's polyphonic narrations make the most of the powers of the false – precisely in the domain of the documentary – his target is the mechanisms of meaning production. As an example, with Peter Berling he wrote *Protokoll einer Revolution* (1961), a film that used appropriated newsreel footage to construct a pastiche of a report on the fall of a fictitious dictator. The film served as a model for the two men's later work on television. In *Rennen* (1961), a short film that Kluge co-directed with Paul

Kruntorad, it is not a matter of deconstructing a genre, but of hyperbolizing a theme from film and television history, one that is deeply connected with the taste spectators have for catastrophes: car racing. Accompanied by a critical voice-over whose inspiration clearly comes from Adorno, this compilation film is certainly less Dadaist, but no less ironic nor less tightly edited than one of the classics of found footage film, incidentally treating a similar theme: Bruce Conner's *A Movie* (1957).

In *Feuerlöscher* E.A. Winterstein, fictional bodies come face to face with the definite will to incorporate the found material: in it we see solemn parades, mechanical teddy bears marching like 'bachelor machines', or burlesque races that appear to hark back to the silent-film era. Like these reworked images, the voice-over leads the spectator onto an uncharted route between imagination and reality. By free association involving the character of Winterstein, we go from the part Spencer Tracy played in an American comedy (Cukor's *Adam's Rib*, with Katharine Hepburn), to his role in *Judgment at Nuremberg*; such an association, motivated at the most by Spencer Tracy's career as an actor, presents a high degree of abstraction.

Kluge's approach is based less on the concept of a reality that reveals itself merely through its manifestation than it is on the activity of desire – its structure in humans – and on 'the form in which facts are assimilated'.⁴⁰ This concept of realism comes from Lukács and Brecht's materialist aesthetics, partially taken up in the Marxist theory of cinema developed by Günter Peter Straschek.⁴¹ Kluge's film portraits, which stand in resolute contrast to existing genres, often present a particular blend of fiction and documentary. For example, the police official Karl Müller-Seegeberg in *Porträt einer Bewährung* (1964) is a literary invention as imagined by the film-maker and his sister Alexandra Kluge. This 'portrait' presents the history of a German career throughout the twentieth century in a quite suggestive manner. Kluge gives a multi-levelled form to the repetition compulsion of a former policeman, forced into retirement in the early 1960s for reckless use of his service weapon. While the film portrays the protagonist's retirement through his daily routine, it recounts the phases of his career through the use of archival footage. The story is told essentially on the soundtrack, where a laconic and distanced narration of the 'hero's' daily activities alternates with the voice of the policeman himself, giving a satisfied first-person description of the past.

Here, the serial layout of the photographs and the archival film material suggests an unchanging state of mind. Mass ornaments, as represented by the geometric patterns of marches, police training sessions and parades (from World War I to the postwar period), respond to the dictates of an unbending, rule-driven mentality, which invariably calls upon secondary German virtues, such as obedience, seriousness and the sense of order. Although the ornaments appear here as an end in themselves, they serve as a counterpart to the protagonist's political consciousness, precisely as Kracauer puts it: 'Only as parts of a mass, not as individuals who believe themselves to be formed from within, are human beings components of a pattern.'⁴² Occasionally, intertitles echo the spoken narrative and punctuate it. This man, the voice-over states, saw any change in regime as a new challenge. Each time, it was a matter of 'proving himself': on the Eastern Front when he was in the Wehrmacht, then later during the Allied occupation, and finally within the re-established democratic order as we know it today.

The archival images, however, do not serve to illustrate this monstrous testimony: they form a kind of counterpoint that gives historical depth to what the spectator sees. The gaps and holes in the story are consciously used here as a structuring principle: during moments of stillness (when an intertitle, a drawing or a photograph is shown), the narrative sometimes comes to a stop in order to open an empty space, a zone for thought. Conversely, Kluge will present filmic images in such a way as to create a *punctum* in Barthes' sense, through the insertion of a moving element within a montage of immobile images. For example, two dynamic series of photographs representing police actions during the Weimar Republic era are interrupted by two clips of moving affection-images, one showing a Nazi parade and the other a close-up of Müller-Seegeberg from the period in which the film was shot. Kluge associates this filmic *punctum* with the former policeman's voice-over, in which he recalls an event from 1926. This involved his use of deadly physical force when he was serving in the Prussian police, the only result of which was his transfer to the food safety department: his name had not been disclosed during the affair. The irony of this invented destiny, which Kluge emphasizes, is that the victim was apparently a Nazi demonstrator. With these 'microstories', then, Kluge does not focus on History on the grand scale, with its events and its transitions: he constructs a filmic equivalent of the 'new' historiography of daily life



Die Nationalsozialisten
kommen!

Neue Bewährung!

Alexander Kluge, *Porträt einer Bewährung*

as embodied in particular by the French Annales School. This new historiography, concentrating on mentalities, requires a different mode of temporality and duration. As Jacques Rancière points out,⁴³ it is also new in its form, inasmuch as it undermines the traditional opposition and the hierarchical relationship between discourse and narrative.

In this way, the film constructs a complex web of correspondences and paradoxes, functioning on three levels of expression: through the passage from the fictional present of the narrative to the historical past of the archival footage; through the uncoupling of voice and image; and finally through the modulation between movement and immobility. By regularly interrupting the archival images with close-ups of the narrator dissociated from his voice, the film emphasizes a detail inscribed in the defensive form of memory, bolstering the character's petrified expression. Here, Kluge's editing corresponds to Kracauer's idea according to which the passage from the group shot to the close-up gave cinema the means to reproduce on a structural level the relationship between macro-history and micro-history.⁴⁴

Ultimately, for Kluge, cinema is an intermediary form between 'sociology and storytelling',⁴⁵ through which he comes into contact with Kracauer's conception of a rationality emerging from the 'reason of the folk tales', bringing truth to light by replaying history as a process of demythologization.⁴⁶ In his later feature films as well, Kluge will regularly work with material from film, photography and music archives, so as to contaminate his fictional historical (de)constructions and weigh the possibility of a historical narration. According to Peter Lutze, the function of the found footage in Kluge's major films is to resist the images shot by the film-maker himself, to preserve their specificity and to see dramatic actions in the light of everyday or trivial ones.⁴⁷ Concerning

Kluge's strategies of incorporation, Miriam Hansen refers to three essential elements: the contrapuntal use of music as Kluge developed it in collaboration with Theodor W. Adorno and Hanns Eisler (involving both popular songs and classical works); the historical consciousness of forms in the use of filmic materials; and finally the function of interrupting the narrative flow through the inclusion of archival images.⁴⁸

Artists Under the Big Top: Perplexed (Artisten unter der Zirkuskuppel: ratlos, 1967) can serve as an illustration of the functions that Miriam Hansen assigns to the use of pre-existing material in Kluge's work. The film opens with newsreel footage showing Nazi parades, which Kluge marks with a touch of irony by accompanying them with an electronic cover of the Beatles' song *Yesterday*. The images are also submitted to the distancing effect of an intertitle that presents these scenes as the object of a 'work of mourning' for Germans. The heroine, Leni Peickert (Hannelore Hoger), will later go to the cinema like Anna Karina in *My Life to Live (Vivre sa vie, Godard, 1962)* – but unlike Godard's Nana, who shed tears watching a Dreyer film, she will adopt a pensive pose in the reflection of the images projected on the screen, between a Soviet montage film and pornography. In many of Kluge's features, such as *Germany in Autumn (Deutschland im Herbst, 1978)* or *The Power of Emotion (Die Macht der Gefühle, 1983)*, the audiovisual fragments taken from works in the public domain often appear in the form of projections or spectacle, already framed by vignettes or given a distancing effect through choices of sound and editing. The inserted elements thus present themselves immediately as archeological fragments or as visual images of thought.

As a lawyer who is not indifferent to matters of politics and culture, Kluge has staked out for himself a 'cultural' window within the sphere of commercial German television, for which since 1987

he has obtained a series of licences under the aegis of the DCTP consortium. Since then he has produced various cultural programmes for the German television networks SAT.1, RTL and Spiegel TV.⁴⁹ For Kluge, television is the place where he can write history, where he can ‘repeat’ all the visual forms of expression that have ever existed. ‘Television is the test tube in which experiences fossilized over centuries blend together anew.’⁵⁰ Consequently, Kluge does not consider himself primarily as a film historian (not even in Frampton’s sense), but as a historian of culture: as such, his thinking goes well beyond the temporal and media framework of cinema.

Much has been made of the sketch-driven dramaturgy that Kluge uses to structure both his films and his television programmes: it comes from the world of variety shows and the circus, a world that film in its early days received as a legacy. Miriam Hansen emphasizes the connection between the idea of ‘public space’, which Kluge takes from the thinkers of the Frankfurt School, and their taste for ‘primitive diversity’ that leads the film-maker, along the lines of the earlier forms of attractions, to skip back and forth between genres, styles and forms of representation. But the return to early cinema also lets Kluge take a different tack from some official historiographies of film, in showing an interest in the ‘sidetracks, detours, and ostensible dead ends of mainstream cinema’. Referencing Benjamin and Kracauer, Hansen argues that the fragmentary outlook and the insistence on the discontinuous and ‘shock-like’ character of cinema underline Kluge’s ‘preclassical’ temporality. In this context, ‘distraction’ refers less to Brechtian distancing than it does to ‘the “pure nonsense” of popular amusement’ as it was before the industrial-scale development of picture palaces, and to the desire to elicit ‘sense impressions and associations’ in the spectator.⁵¹ The purpose of Kluge’s recourse to early cinema is ‘to remain radically open to the elementary roots of film’⁵² – as such, his project has some affinities with the American avant-garde.

The concept of a ‘time-place’ (*Zeitort*), a term that Kluge uses to define cinema, sees the medium more as a temporal mode of perception than a spatial one, fluctuating in projection between immobility and movement, between light and darkness.⁵³ According to Miriam Hansen, in Kluge’s work ‘this metaphor translates into an aesthetics of montage, of gaps and pauses in which the spectator’s “inner film” swerves from the film’ as it is created in that spectator’s mind. The choice of material is equally significant.

For example, in one of his programmes Kluge highlights the fundamental function of cinema as a temporal experience when he digitally alters an old film by Edison that best embodies the modern experience of ‘shock’: the killing of an elephant at Coney Island in 1903 was filmed as an execution and projected in theatres as a cinematic attraction. In this scene, Kluge sees the prefiguration of that aura of immediacy that surrounds today’s news programmes.

In one of Kluge’s programmes on cinema, *Eisenstein 2000*,⁵⁴ we see him in person for a change – only in a three-quarter rear medium shot, however. It is significant that this appearance takes place at the point where he asks the Russian film-maker Oleg Kovalov, Eisenstein’s biographer, the question that interests him the most, concerning a project that Eisenstein was never able to accomplish: the adaptation of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*. Kluge has himself borrowed a model of cinematic realism from Joyce’s heterogeneous and complex narrative form.⁵⁵ It is not a matter here of analysing Eisenstein’s method, and in any case the successive cuts at the beginning of the programme, where the expanse of the large city is multiplied and criss-crossed horizontally and vertically by streetcars, owes more to Vertov’s montage style than to Eisenstein’s. As already in *Ulmer Dramaturgien*, Kluge’s aim is to sketch out a ‘map of the white spaces’, to situate an unrealized project that would have had the ‘filmed’ undergo the critique of the ‘unfilmed’.⁵⁶ This unfulfilled film project returns the spectator to his or her origin – which is a book. At the end of this programme on Eisenstein, materials, documents and images are assembled together on-screen, which seems to indicate Kluge’s desire to return to writing. The way in which he discusses and presents the assembled material demonstrates that he bases his conception of cinema on books, and does not have the slightest nostalgia, the kind of nostalgia Godard has, for a world before writing – for a *white* writing in Blanchot’s sense. In his thinking on what is possible and what has been achieved, Kluge is more interested in the dialectics of cultural production than in the question of the relationship between writing and film work.

Kluge’s aesthetics are, like Godard’s, eminently transmedial. Even his books on films like *The Power of Emotion* or *The Female Patriot* (*Die Patriotin*, 1979) present themselves as vast collections of material that constitute, as Matthias Uecker points out,⁵⁷ a permanent invitation to reuse that material, to recombine them in a new medium. Stretching the polemical

point a little, Thomas Elsaesser thus declares that the thoroughgoing illustrated book *History and Obstinacy* (*Geschichte und Eigensinn*, 1981) is Kluge's most important 'film'.⁵⁸

In his programmes, Kluge does not ask himself how to transpose the writing through the 'void' of which Blanchot speaks,⁵⁹ from the literary process to cinema, because for him there is no categorical difference between the two genres. Godard, on the other hand – despite his inclination toward a 'writer's' solitude – insists on that difference, which is a result of the abstraction of words. Flaubert would mull over the phrase 'The sky is blue' for days, says Godard in an interview with J.M.G. Le Clézio,⁶⁰ but when one films, the sky is simply there, blue or grey – a given fact. So Godard, in the tradition of Bazin, believes religiously in the filmic inscription of the image and its return through projection. As an eschatological phrase puts it in chapter 1B of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, 'The image will come at the time of the Resurrection.' Kluge, however, clearly favours the word in his programmes on film history. His comments, which come most often from an unseen off-screen source, are like the patter of the impresarios of early cinema, who did not attempt to explain the plot of a story but simply presented the various attractions.

*

Within the framework of the strategies of appropriation that we have compared here as examples, we see word and image interacting with each other in different configurations. Frampton and Fisher give each of them a great deal of autonomy in order to be able to call on language and visual analytics, respectively. For Frampton and Fisher, the main accent is on the connection that binds the history of cinema to the historicity of its technical and economic apparatuses, in terms of an esthetics of material that is understood as the foundation of their cinematic art. Godard is more interested in the poetic force that is born of the interpenetration of the word and the image, which benefits the image most of all. Finally, Kluge's montages develop an authentically Benjaminian dialectics, focused on a mode of thinking by way of images, but which nonetheless remains connected to language. As for the incorporation of pre-existing material, this difference can be seen in the relationship that each of these film-makers maintains with the history of cinema. While Kluge, in the tradition of late Kracauer, is interested primarily in the narrative forms of microhistory in the web of macrohistory, for Godard it is a question of cinema's particular function relative to History on the grand scale.

Notes

This text is a shortened version of the second part of a chapter on film history and experience, originally entitled 'Film als Metageschichte (Morgan Fisher, Jean-Luc Godard, Alexander Kluge)', from Blümlinger's book *Kino aus zweiter Hand. Zur Ästhetik materieller Aneignung im Film und in der Medienkunst*, Vorwerk 8, Berlin, 2009, pp. 178–208, which was published in French in 2013. It is here translated from French and German by Allyn Hardyck and published with the kind permission of Vorwerk 8.

1. See Hollis Frampton, 'For a Metahistory of Film: Common-place Notes and Hypotheses', *On the Camera Arts and Consecutive Matters: The Writings of Hollis Frampton*, ed. Bruce Jenkins, MIT Press, Cambridge MA, 2009, pp. 131–9.
2. See Peter Wollen, 'The Two Avant-Gardes', *Readings and Writings. Semiotic Counter-Strategies*, Verso, London, 1982, p. 97.
3. See Annette Michelson, 'Hollis Frampton: poïésis et mathésis', in *Hollis Frampton: L'écliptique du savoir – Film photographie vidéo*, ed. Michelson and Jean-Michel Bouhours, Pompidou Centre, Paris, 1999, p. 11.
4. Frampton, 'For a Metahistory of Film', p. 135.
5. Blümlinger's use of the term *dispositif* is similar to that of Michel Foucault, and as such 'apparatus', 'environment' or 'construction' are in her view inadequate translations. Among other factors, her sense encompasses both the spatio-temporal context of the spectator's gaze and the metapsychological approaches of such theoreticians as Baudry and Lyotard [translator's note].
6. See Jean-Luc Godard, 'Moi je', in *Jean-Luc Godard: Documents*, ed. Nicole Brenez et al., Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2006, p. 199; as well as Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *L'Anti-Œdipe: Capitalisme et schizophrénie*, Éditions de Minuit, Paris, 1972 (*Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1983).
7. Godard, 'Moi je', p. 237; as well as Michael Temple, 'Inventer un film. Présentation de "Moi je"', in *Jean-Luc Godard: Documents*, pp. 189–94.
8. Godard, 'Moi je', p. 238.
9. See Michelson, 'Hollis Frampton', p. 16.
10. Frampton, 'For a Metahistory of Film', p. 136.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*, p. 137.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
14. See Thierry Kuntzel, 'Le Défilement', *Cinéma. Théorie, Lectures*, ed. Dominique Noguez, Klincksieck, Paris, 1973, pp. 97–110 ('Le Défilement: A View in Close-up', trans. Bertrand Augst, in *Apparatus*, ed. Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Tanam Press, New York, 1980).
15. Frampton, 'For a Metahistory of Film', p. 136.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Godard, 'Moi je', p. 403.
18. See Raymond Bellour, 'L'autre cinéaste: Godard écrivain', in *L'Entre-Images 2, Mots, Images*, P.O.L., Paris, 1999, p. 134.
19. See Jacques Rancière, 'Godard, Hitchcock and the Cinematographic Image', in James S. Williams, Michael Temple and Michael Witt, eds, *For Ever Godard*, Black Dog Publishing, London, pp. 214–31.
20. See Bellour, 'L'autre cinéaste', p. 135.
21. See *Jean-Luc Godard: Documents*, p. 142.
22. This definition of the essay – as *marginia* of a book – is found in Montaigne's *Essays* (chapter 28, First Book, 'On Friendship'), and Michel Butor in particular wrote on it. See Michel Butor, *Essai sur les essais*, Gallimard, Paris, 1968, pp. 65–71; and Suzanne Liandrat-Guigues and Jean-Louis Leutrat, *Godard, simple comme bonjour*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 2004, pp. 214, 221.
23. See Jacques Rancière, *La Fable cinématographique*, Le Seuil, Paris, 2001, p. 232 (*Film Fables*, trans. Emiliano Battista, Berg, Oxford, 2006, p. 184); and also his book *Le Destin des*

- images, La Fabrique, Paris, 2003, p. 73 (*The Future of the Image*, trans. Gregory Elliott, Verso, London, 2007, p. 63).
24. See Georges Didi-Huberman, *Images malgré tout*, Éditions de Minuit, Paris, 2003, pp. 182–7, 206 (*Images in Spite of All: Four Photographs from Auschwitz*, trans. Shane B. Lillis, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2008, pp. 143–50, 170–71).
 25. See 'Godard fait des histoires': Entretien avec Serge Daney, in *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard tome 2 (1984–1998)*, ed. Alain Bergala, Cahiers du Cinéma, Paris, 1998, quoted in Alan Wright, 'Elizabeth Taylor at Auschwitz: JLG and the Real Object of Montage', in Michael Temple and James S. Williams, eds, *The Cinema Alone: Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard, 1985–2000*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam, 2000, p. 51.
 26. Aumont explains this ambivalence in the following way: 'but all that also, immediately, threatens to become image, icon, subject to adoration like an icon and exchangeable like an image. (The most scandalous gesture of exchange: showing the camp and the obscene together – the camp and bestiality, the camp and pornography'. Jacques Aumont, *Amnesies: Fictions du cinéma d'après Jean-Luc Godard*, P.O.L., Paris, 1999, p. 38.
 27. Ibid., pp. 40, 44.
 28. See Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin, Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA and London, 2002, p. 402.
 29. Benjamin, quoted by Bettine Menke, 'Da Nach-Leben im Zitat: Benjamins Gedächtnis der Texte', in Anselm Haverkamp and Renate Lachmann, eds, *Gedächtniskunst: Raum-Bild-Schrift: Studien zur Mnemotechnik*, p. 85; Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. IV, ed. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1991, pp. 85–6.
 30. For Benjamin the allegory is not, of course, in regard to visual images, but to texts and to verbal images of thought. See Menke, 'Da Nach-Leben im Zitat', pp. 79 and 86.
 31. Godard, 'Moi je', p. 403.
 32. See Miriam Hansen, 'Reinventing the Nickelodeon: Notes on Kluge and the Early Cinema', *October* 46, 1988, p. 184.
 33. Alexander Kluge, 'Die Utopie Film' (1964), reprinted in *In Gefahr und größter Not bringt der Mittelweg den Tod. Texte zu Kino, Film, Politik*, ed. Christian Schulte, Vorwerk 8, Berlin, 1999, pp. 46–7.
 34. Alexander Kluge, *Gelegenheitsarbeit einer Sklavin. Zur realistischen Methode*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1975, p. 220.
 35. Kluge, 'Interview mit Ulrich Gregor' (1976), reprinted in *In Gefahr und größter Not bringt der Mittelweg den Tod*, p. 241.
 36. Frampton has a paradoxical way of describing this nexus between old and new works: 'Therefore, it may be possible for the metahistorian to take old work as "footage," and construct from it identical new work necessary to a tradition.' Frampton, 'For a Metahistory of Film', p. 136.
 37. See Christa Blümlinger, 'Lire/Entre les images', trans. Pierre Rusch, in *L'essai et le cinéma*, ed. Suzanne Liandrat-Guigues, Champ Vallon, Paris, 2004, pp. 49–66.
 38. Kluge describes the principle behind this character as follows: 'Fireman Winterstein means: always arriving too late. You try to find your proper place in society, but you always come too late.' Kluge, 'Interview mit Ulrich Gregor', p. 242.
 39. Alexander Kluge, Edgar Reitz and Wilfried Reinke, 'Wort und Bild' (1965), reprinted in Kluge, *In Gefahr und größter Not bringt der Mittelweg den Tod*, p. 33.
 40. Alexander Kluge, 'Die realistische Methode und das sogenannte "Filmische"', in *Gelegenheitsarbeit einer Sklavin*, p. 204.
 41. Kluge's book *Gelegenheitsarbeit einer Sklavin* features extensive quotes from Straschek's *Handbuch wider das Kino*; both were published by Suhrkamp in 1975.
 42. Siegfried Kracauer, 'Das Ornament der Masse', *Das Ornament der Masse: Essays*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1977, p. 51 (Siegfried Kracauer, 'The Mass Ornament', trans. Barbara Correll and Jack Zipes, *New German Critique* 5, Spring 1975, p. 68).
 43. See Jacques Rancière, *Les noms de l'histoire: Essai de poétique du savoir*, Le Seuil, Paris, 1992, pp. 27–33 (*The Names of History: On the Poetics of Knowledge*, trans. Hassan Melehy, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1994, pp. 10–23).
 44. Kracauer illustrates this idea with an example from Pudovkin on how to film demonstrations. See Siegfried Kracauer and Paul Oskar Kristeller, *History: The Last Things Before the Last*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1969, p. 122.
 45. Klaus Eder and Alexander Kluge, *Ulmer Dramaturgien. Reibungsverluste*, Hanser, Munich, 1980, p. 7.
 46. See Kracauer, 'Das Ornament der Masse', p. 56 ('The Mass Ornament', p. 71).
 47. See Peter Lutze, *Alexander Kluge: The Last Modernist*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1998, p. 99. Lutze presents a detailed analysis of the opening scene of *Die Macht der Gefühle* and the excerpts from Fritz Lang's *Die Nibelungen*, as well as the use made of music in the film (p. 116).
 48. See Miriam Hansen, 'The Stubborn Discourse. History and Story-Telling in the Films of Alexander Kluge', *Persistence of Vision* 2, Fall 1985, pp. 19–29.
 49. On this conception of integrated production, from theatrically distributed films to television programmes, see Peter Lutze, 'Alexander Kluge und das Projekt der Moderne', in Christian Schulte and Winfried Siebers, eds, *Kluges Fernsehen: Alexander Kluges Kulturmagazine*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 2002, pp. 11–38. On the 'mixed form' and the collages of material in Kluge's television programmes, see Christian Schulte, 'Fernsehen und Eigensinn', in *ibid.*, pp. 65–81; as well as Matthias Uecker, 'Rohstoffe und Intermedialität. Überlegungen zu Alexanders Kluges Fernsehpraxis', in *ibid.*, pp. 82–104.
 50. Alexander Kluge, quoted in Andreas Kilb, 'Der lange Abschied von Herrn K.', *Die Zeit*, 24 June 1988, quoted in Lutze, 'Alexander Kluge und das Projekt der Moderne', p. 37.
 51. See Hansen, 'Reinventing the Nickelodeon', pp. 182, 188, 190.
 52. Kluge, *Gelegenheitsarbeit einer Sklavin*, p. 220.
 53. See Alexander Kluge et al., *Industrialisierung des Bewusstseins: eine kritische Auseinandersetzung mit den 'Neuen Medien'*, Piper, Munich, 1985, p. 105, quoted in Hansen, 'Reinventing the Nickelodeon', p. 186.
 54. 10 vor 11, RTL, 5 August 1996.
 55. See Kluge, *Gelegenheitsarbeit einer Sklavin*, p. 221.
 56. Eder and Kluge, *Ulmer Dramaturgien. Reibungsverluste*, p. 138.
 57. See Matthias Uecker, 'Rohstoffe und Intermedialität. Überlegungen zu Alexander Kluges Fernsehpraxis', in Schulte and Siebers, *Kluges Fernsehen*, p. 99.
 58. Thomas Elsaesser, 'Mélancolie et mimétisme: les énigmes d'Alexander Kluge', *Trafic* 31, Fall 1999, p. 84.
 59. Maurice Blanchot, 'Literature and the Right to Death', in *The Work of Fire*, trans. Charlotte Mandell, Stanford University Press, Stanford CA, 1995, p. 300.
 60. See *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, Cahiers du cinéma, Paris, 1985, p. 286; Richard Roud and Michael Temple, *Jean-Luc Godard*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2010, p. 66; Raymond Bellour, *L'Entre-Images* 2, P.O.L., Paris, 1999, p. 126.